

In Memoriam

Houshang Arjmand

1930-2015



Mr. Houshang Arjmand, the grandson of the illustrious Bahá'í scholar and teacher Haj Mehdi Arjmand and the fourth child of Habibullah Arjmand and Monireh Mobine, was born in Tehran, Iran on March 20, 1930. He finished his high school education in Tehran, and thereafter, pursued a higher education in engineering in Germany, France, and the United States.

Upon his return to Iran, he partnered with his brother-in-law Mr. Yadollah Mahboubian and together they founded the "Iran Electric Company," which became the largest importer,

distributor, and manufacturer of electrical cables and equipment in Iran. After the Iranian revolution in 1979, Houshang's life changed drastically when his partner and brother-in-law, Mr. Mahboubian, was arrested and imprisoned by the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for his belief in the Bahá'í Faith, and ultimately martyred in the path of the Blessed Beauty. This tragic loss affected Houshang greatly. With unconditional love, he looked after his sister Parvin Mahboubian, the widow of Mr. Mahboubian, and selflessly took on the guardianship of their daughters, Shiva and Nikoo Mahboubian.

Mr. Houshang Arjmand had a commitment and dedication to promote the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. In 1993, through his ardent efforts, he created the Háj Mehdi Arjmand Memorial Fund at the Bahá'í National Treasurer's Office in the United States as a tribute to his grandfather who as part of his scholarly work authored the book *Gulshan Haqayiq*. This book, which was approved by 'Abdul-Bahá through a Tablet addressed to Haj Mehdi, is a study on the fulfillment of the prophecies mentioned in both the Old and New Testaments with the coming of Bahá'u'lláh. The 'Irfán Colloquium was established in 1993 and has been mainly supported by the Haj Mehdi Arjmand Memorial Fund. The aim of this colloquium is to encourage and support scholarly studies of the sacred writings, verities, and fundamental principles and the belief system of the Bahá'í Faith. This Colloquium is also an attempt to encourage and support studies aimed at correlating Bahá'í teachings with intellectual schools of thought, the scientific perspective, various religious traditions and current challenges in human society.

In a message conveyed to Mr. Arjmand's family, the Universal House of Justice states, "His generous support for a wide range of Bahá'í activities bears testimony to his magnanimity and ardent desire to promote the interests of the Cause." Additionally, in a letter of condolence from the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States to Mrs. Mahboubian, the Assembly writes: "As we call to mind

Mr. Arjmand's devoted efforts through the Haj Mehdi Arjmand Memorial Fund to provide needed resources to worthy Bahá'í initiatives and enterprises, our hearts are moved to gratitude and warmest appreciation." The Fund's assistance has enabled the Irfán Colloquium, for one, to carry on with its noble, far-sighted, knowledge-building conferences and publications. The Universal House of Justice welcomed and encourages this initiative and, following the guidance received from the Supreme Body, it became one of the activities affiliated with the Bahá'í National Center of the United States.

During the past twenty-two years Irfán Colloquium has convened one hundred thirty-five times in North America and Europe. At these sessions of the Irfán Colloquium a total of one thousand five hundred research papers were presented in the English, Persian, and German languages by scholars, and fifty volumes containing those research papers have so far been published. All these achievements are due to generous support of Houshang Arjmand, his sister Mrs. Parvin Mahboubian and his brother Mr. Sohrab Arjmand. Houshang Arjmand always insisted that no mention of gratitude and appreciation of himself and his other family members should be made at Irfán Colloquium sessions and in Irfán publications, to avoid giving the impression of any pretensions. This was not the only project that received Mr. Arjmand's munificent care and attention

Well known for his generosity, discretion and humility, Houshang lived his life according to the Bahá'í Principles. He passed away on 20 August 2015 in San Diego, California, He is survived by his sisters Mahin Banayan, Parvin Mahboubian, and Minou Manuchehri; and his brother Sohrab Arjmand. Although he did not have any children of his own, he was undoubtedly a devoted father to all his nieces and nephews, as well as an affectionate grandfather to their children. He will always be remembered as a true humanitarian who selflessly dedicated his life to love, kindness and friendship towards all.