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Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MFA DIGEST

CENTRE FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

General Qasem Soleimani: Iconic Martyr of the Century



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BIOGRAPHY OF MARTYR QASEM SOLEIMANI



It was during the first days of 2011 that the flames of war were gradually rising in some of the cities of Syria, a country located in West Asia—the eastern bank of the Mediterranean. In those days, a terrorist group found the ground prepared for them to cause havoc by ruthlessly attacking innocent people. ISIS—the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria—was a malicious, sinister tree that caused grave tragedies for the two countries of Syria and Iraq with the purpose of creating discord in the world of Islam. It wanted to pursue other sinister goals in the region as well after dominating these two countries, but its dream of forming a government based on terror and murder turned into a dark nightmare not so long later.

“With the completion of the operation to liberate Abu Kamal, which was the last stronghold held by ISIS, and after bringing down the flag of this American-Zionist group and hoisting the flag of Syria, this humble person announced the end of the dominance of this vicious, evil tree.” Seven years after the emergence of that group, on November 21, 2017, General Qasem Soleimani wrote a letter to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution making these statements to officially announce the end of the rule of ISIS. He was a General whose courage during those seven years was no secret to anyone and he had even been admired by his enemies on numerous occasions. He was a soldier whose country was the whole world as he had cultivated a lofty ideal in his head—the end of oppression throughout the world.

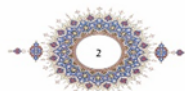


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He experienced a difficult childhood. His father was a laborer who was not well off financially. From the first years of his life, he tasted deprivation. He was a shepherd from the age of five, and his share of clothing each year were used clothes and two pairs of shabby rubber shoes. He would graze the sheep wearing this same clothing, and as he himself said, he was not afraid of anything. In his memoirs, he describes those days this way, “I used to go to the wild almond forest without fearing the wolves that were waiting to hunt the sheep in the winter.” But sometimes in those comings and goings, his toes would stick out of his tattered shoes and bleed due to them striking the stones on the way.

He was 15 when he went to the city to work and help pay his father’s debts. It was the first time he saw automobiles. Amid all those attractions in the city, he felt lonely but he had to be strong. He had to find a job one way or another, but his small figure and his physical weakness discouraged the shopkeepers from hiring him as an apprentice. He related, “I knocked on the door of every shop, café, restaurant and workshop asking, ‘Do you need a worker?’ Everyone would look at my small stature and turn me down.” There was no giving up for him though. His insistence and perseverance eventually paid off. Finally, a builder doing construction work liked him and hired him to carry bricks. It was a difficult, exhausting job. Although his hands were injured while working, the joy of receiving his weekly wages removed all that tiredness from his aching body. He said, “With two rials, I bought a pack of small Minoo biscuits and four bananas for five rials. I really enjoyed them. All the tiredness I had been feeling was gone. It was the first time I ate a banana.” Finally after six months, he sent the money his family needed to the village, and after that he continued working in other jobs.



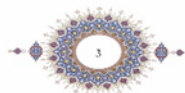


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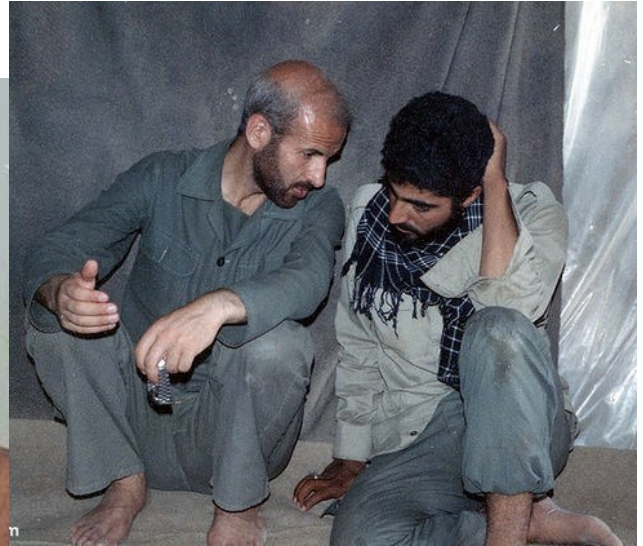
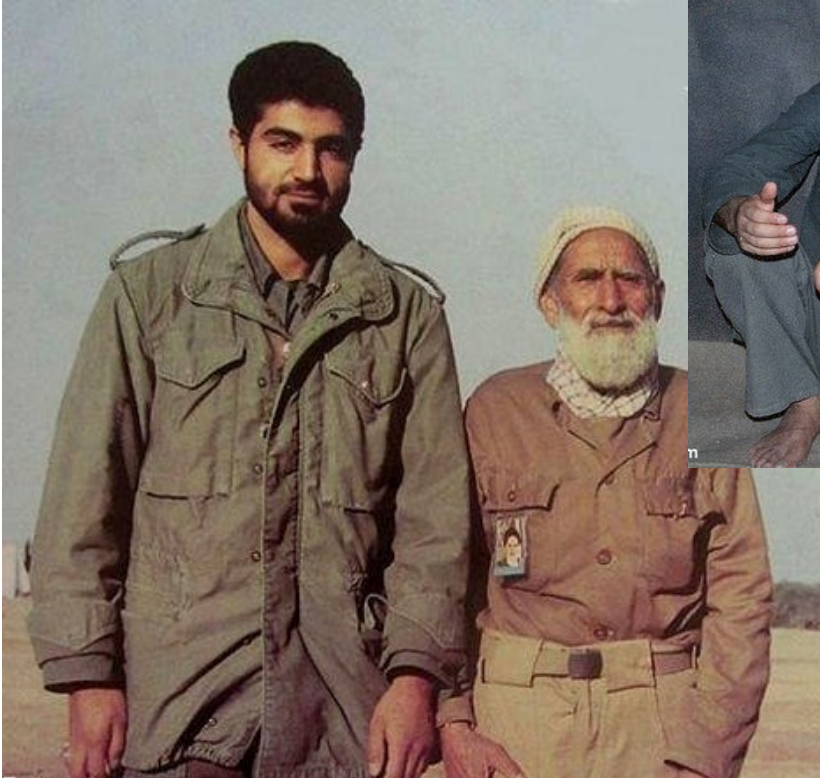
Some of the most important activities that he pursued as a teenager were Martial Arts and Zurkhaneh sports (a traditional sport in Iran). As he said, “Sports had a great impact on my religious morality. One of the most important reasons why I wasn’t pulled into immoral activities was sports despite my youth, particularly traditional sports which have a moral and religious base and principle.” All these efforts and activities led to him becoming a professional athlete with an agile, muscular body at the age of 21.

His youth coincided with the extensive activities that were being carried out against the regime of the Shah of Iran. In those days, thanks to the friends he had found, he became familiar with Imam Khomeini. This awareness that he had obtained caused his mind to become more enlightened and for him to become more infatuated with Imam Khomeini's personality. He took the path of revolutionary activities with that same brave spirit that he possessed. Although he was sometimes trapped and beaten by the regime’s agents, he said, “I could not move for three days because of the extreme pain, but I felt a new energy in me. The fear of being beaten and tortured had disappeared because I thought to myself that whatever could have happened has already happened.”

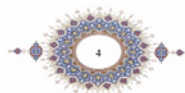




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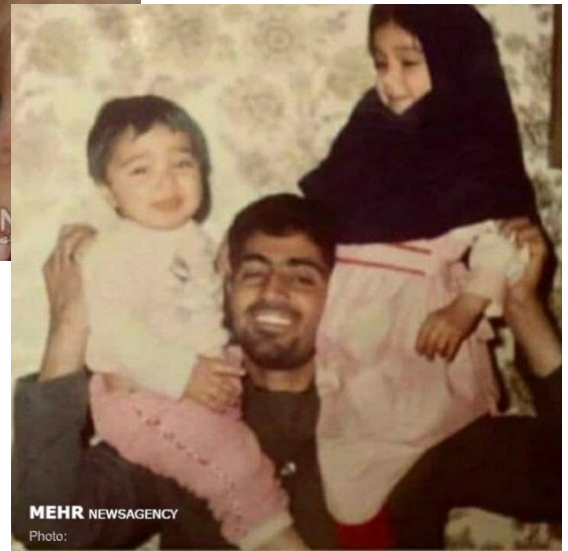


After the victory of the Islamic Revolution, he became an honorary member of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps in Kerman in February 1979. Two years after the outbreak of the Imposed War, which was waged by Iraq against Iran, he began to receive military training. Later, he was appointed Commander of the Kerman division and he played an important role in the successful execution of many operations. He was a commander, but his behavior with the soldiers under his command was not based on a superior-inferior relationship. He loved them and established a close relationship with them. One of his comrades described the way he commanded as follows, “Haj Qasem was a commander who would move ahead of his forces so that they would feel that their commander was like a shield and a source of safety for them. This caused the soldiers to believe in themselves, to have courage and to be brave. This enabled them to be able to remove all obstacles. When a commander wears the same uniform that the soldiers under him do and when he eats the same food that they eat, he wins their hearts.” He was a true manifestation of the holy verse from the Qur’an, “...hard against the faithless, and merciful amongst themselves.” [Holy Qur’an, 48:29] He was tough in the field of battle, but merciful with his comrades.

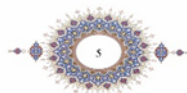




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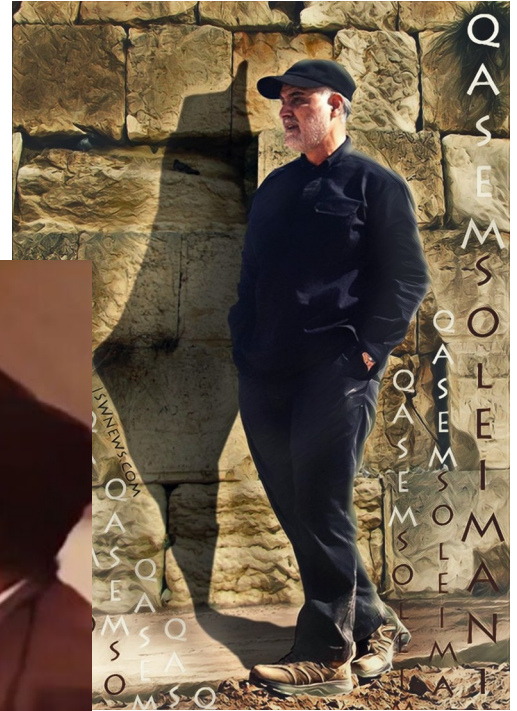


He maintained the same attitude in his relationships with his family members. His numerous activities did not cause him to be indifferent to the needs of his family or to not show them kindness. His brother said the following about him, “My brother loved his children and raised them to love the Household of the Prophet (pbut). He was very sensitive to the issues and developments of the day. Even during their studies from the time they were in elementary school to the end of their university studies, he tried to go to his children's schools at least twice a year and to be informed about his children's educational status. Furthermore, he always tried to please his parents because he knew that God would be satisfied with him if his parents were satisfied with him. He even advised his children and relatives to respect their parents.”

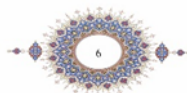




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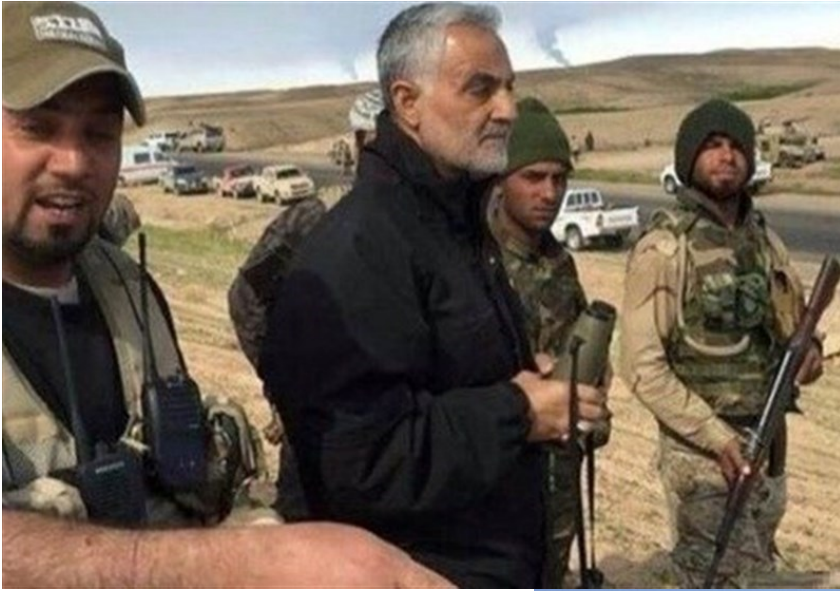


The end of the Imposed War and the exit of the Zionist forces from Lebanon in the year 2000 had given a fresh impetus to the forces of Resistance in the region. Hezbollah of Lebanon had been formed under the leadership of Sayyid Hassan Nasrullah and under the command of Emad Mughniyeh, and it was being increasingly reinforced. This is what caused Israel to think of destroying Hezbollah for good. As a result, the Zionist Regime carried out widespread attacks against different regions in Lebanon in July 2006. It was at this time that Gen. Qasem Soleimani travelled to Lebanon despite the siege and the risks involved in travelling there. While he was there in the field, he shared the necessary information with the commanders and the forces. Regarding the 33-Day War, Sayyid Hassan Nasrullah said, “The presence of Gen. Qasem in Lebanon during the first days of the war was very important and vital. He could have decided to not come to Lebanon, to stay in Tehran and to follow the news from there. Or he could have gone to Damascus and follow the news from a closer place (than Tehran). In those days, Damascus was not being attacked by the Zionist forces, but Haj Qasem insisted on coming to Lebanon.” He also described his efforts for the freedom of Palestine as follows, “Gen. Soleimani pursued the necessary support for the Resistance groups so that they could stand up to the occupiers and the Zionists. He and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps did not recognize any red lines in assisting the Palestinians and the Resistance groups.”





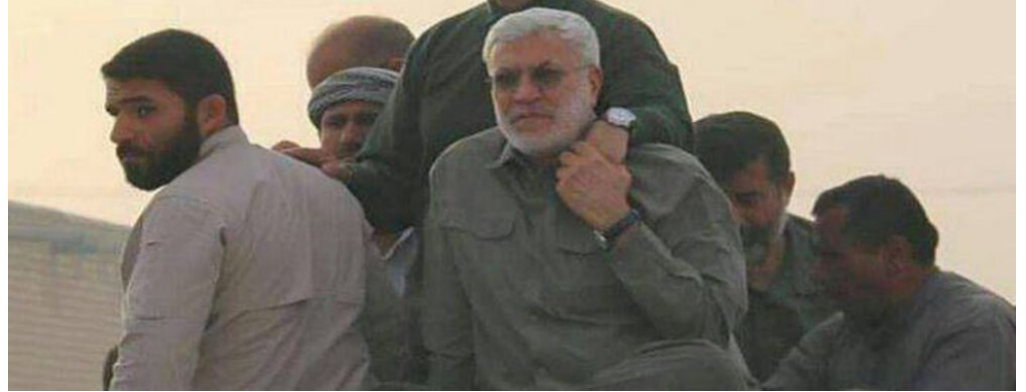
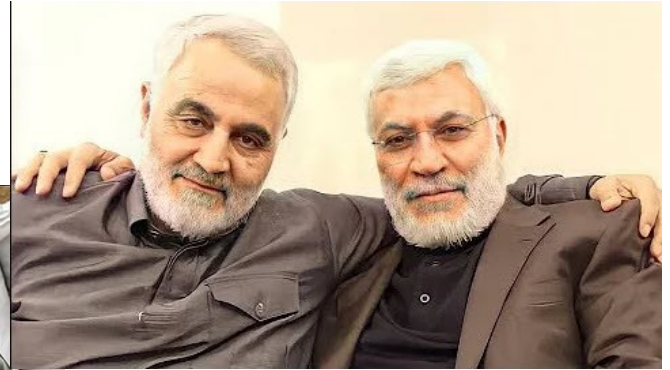
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Five years later too, when the sinister phenomenon of ISIS appeared in Syria, he—who had been appointed the Commander of Iran’s Quds Force—prevented the advance of ISIS with his military acumen and intelligence. During a mourning ceremony for the 40th day after the demise of one commander, he announced the end of ISIS in three months’ time. At that time, no one thought that 59 days later he and the forces under his command would conquer the last terrorist base with their victory in Abu Kamal and announce the end of ISIS rule in Iraq and Syria once and for all. The ISIS rule had been established with the financial support of countries such as the US. But despite their persistent efforts to help ISIS survive, that terrorist group was destroyed by God’s grace and due to the steadfastness of the Resistance forces.



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Finally, during the early hours of Friday, January 3, 2020, when he entered Iraq accompanied by Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis (Deputy Commander of Hashd al-Sha'bi) and other friends on an advisory mission, that great and glorious General of Islam was martyred near the Baghdad Airport at the order of the United States President himself. After many years of sincere, brave struggle in fields of battle against the devils and villains of the world and after many years of wishing for martyrdom, he finally achieved that lofty status. His pure blood was shed at the hands of the most vicious people on earth. He was a person who used to just think about carrying out his duty at every moment and wherever he was, whether he was in the heat of battle, in a place to help the flood-stricken people where a natural disaster had just occurred or when he was wandering in a mountain or in a field grazing sheep



BORN IN A VILLAGE, A HERO FOR BOTH THE IRANIAN AND THE ISLAMIC NATION

Martyr Soleimani became a hero for both the Iranian and the Islamic nation. This is a fundamental point. Iranians should be proud of themselves that a man from among themselves arose from a distant village and became a brilliant personality and champion of the Islamic nation as a result of his endeavors and self-edification.

Imam Khamenei

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Martyrdom: God's light in hearts

The reason you see and hear about how some of our martyrs fondly wished for martyrdom was that God had cast a light in their hearts. This light helped them see the truth. That is why they eagerly sought martyrdom. Martyr Soleimani used to say, "I am seeking martyrdom in the deserts. I am looking for it." They threatened to kill him, to which he replied, "I am looking for it in the deserts, and you're threatening me?"

Imam Khamenei | Oct. 30, 2022



Highlights of brilliant life of Lieutenant General Qasem Soleimani

Fighting terrorism

Ceaseless combat against terrorist ISIS which led to its annihilation

Fortifying Islamic resistance front

Extending strategic depth of Iran's borders




received prestigious Order of Zolfaqar as Iranian military's highest medal of honor





Soleimani, the hero

The US was the dominant power in the world, but not today. The US has been defeated in the region. The US, the Great Satan, hasn't been able to do this despite all its efforts. With all its temptations and claims, it has not been able to achieve its goals in the region. The hero who did this was Soleimani.

Imam Khamenei | Dec. 16, 2020 | June 15, 2018 | Nov. 2, 2022 |  KHAMENEI.IR



Imam Khamenei

General Soleimani used the experience that he had attained during the period of the Holy Defense as well as the advice of his comrades to strengthen the Resistance by relying on the internal capacities of these same countries.

The Resistance Movement considers itself to be the strategic depth and influence of the Islamic Republic and the wings of Islam, and this Movement will continue moving in this direction.



Now we know why Haj Zassem Solimani's name is admired so much by the Iranian nation, and at the same time, why his name angers Iran's enemies so much.

They become angry when his name is mentioned, it infuriates them. Haj Zassem Soleimani was the epitome of the Islamic Republic's policy in confronting the enemy's plans.

He foiled the enemy's comprehensive plan, may God be pleased with him!

Imam Khamenei

عردم چو افتخار
در سینه ایران
جان من هو ایران
فدای لا

نایب مدینه



فكرنا