

June 30



Who is Neda Agha-Soltan?

ALSO IN VIDEO

- [The Life of Ed McMahon](#)
- [Watch the latest video on nytimes.com](#)

nytimes.com





Orientalism? The race goes on.



Y tú, Farrah – your death twice overshadowed? First by the passing of a veil'd man with glov'd right hand – *if I forget thee O Jerusalem!* – and then by another angel, her tresses hidden, on the Eastern side of the world.

Sorry Charlie. We want angels that...

Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain
shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment
Seat;
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor
Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face,
tho' they come from the ends of the earth!

Pace, Rudyard.

Farah, a still-popular Persian girls' name signifying *Joy, Happiness...*
And Neda, meaning *Voice* or *Call...*

Are the organs of media, augmented and even overwhelmed by a gazillion
twitterers, committing a grand collective Persiary?

You got to fight for your right – to extinction!



OK, Mams, you win.

July 1

Click to open an article in the online Guardian, but before you can read a word, a pop-up warns: **PREPARE TO BE BLOWN AWAY BY VERIZON WIRELESS SERVICE.**

Having dodged those ballistics you read:

It was just the sort of good news the British military in Helmand needed. Soldiers engaged in Operation Panther's Claw, the huge assault against insurgent strongholds last week, had discovered a record-breaking haul of more than 1.3 tonnes of poppy seeds, destined to become part of the opium crop that generates \$400m (£243m) a year for the Taliban.

Ministry of Defence officials more used to dealing with negative stories about the British operation in southern Afghanistan swung into action to extract the maximum benefit from this unexpected PR coup.

A press release hailed the success of the offensive, and armoured vehicles were hastily laid on to allow the media, including the Guardian, to visit the site where the seizure was made, an abandoned market and petrol station that was still coming under sustained enemy fire when the reporters arrived.

Major Rupert Whitelegge, the commander of the company in charge of the area, tugged at one of the enormously heavy white sacks. "They are definitely poppy seeds," he said emphatically.

Except they weren't. Analysis of a sample carried out by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation in Kabul for the Guardian has revealed that the soldiers had captured nothing more than a giant pile of mung beans, a staple pulse eaten in curries across Afghanistan.

Embarrassed British officials have now admitted that their triumph has turned sour and have promised to return the legal crop to its rightful owner.

Dr Samuel Kugbei, the chief FAO technical adviser in the Afghan capital, said: "We have been waiting all day to see these dangerous materials brought from Helmand and now we see that they are just mung beans!"

The pulses also fooled Colonel General Khodaidad, Afghanistan's minister of counter-narcotics, even though the spherical black beans, about the size of small ball bearings, looked nothing like poppy seeds. When shown the mung beans by the Guardian, he said they were a strain of "super poppy".

The beans were introduced into Afghanistan about 10 years ago and have been embraced by farmers as a way of growing a second crop during the year. They are also delicious with rice, Kugbei noted.

If indeed the sacks did contain 1.3 tonnes of mung beans, then they would have a street value of \$1,300 – not much, but a major blow to any farmer if the British had followed procedures and destroyed the beans.

The mung bean, properly called the Mungo bean, was discovered by the eponymous eighteenth-century Scottish explorer who penetrated to the heart of the Niger and there founded the first theme Park.

It is little, and ought to be better, known that his great great great etc. grandson, Mungo Jerry, authored the timeless expeditioners invocation that begins thusly:

In the summertime when the weather is hot
You can stretch right up and touch the sky
When the weather's fine
You got women, you got women on your mind
Have a drink, have a drive
Go out and see what you can find...

Pace Ray Dorsey.

Chh chh-chh, uh chh chh-chh, uh
Chh chh-chh, uh chh chh-chh...

Let the hips fall where they may.

¡Sigue bailando!

¡Sube, sube!

¡Sigamos cultivando el Super Poppy!

I – I'm waiting for my mung...

Pace, Velvets.

Semi-official summer hits the fan. Fam.

And 0 to get hung about...

But how to describe it... uh, it's a coming of rage novel – no, it's a summer isicumen of rage novel – a beach novel. Lotsa sand n' crabs. Or it's an anti-beach novel, for *playa*-haters. But whatever u du:

KEEP OFF THE DUNES

Everybody loves Beaumarchais.

Y tu mama también.

Y ante-ayer Madoff recibió un 150-year run-on sentence.

FIAT IVSTITIA

RVAT CAELVM,

as S. would say. *Let there be justice though heaven fall.*

What would life be like if you didn't want it to be different?

But first, this just in from



talkingshopping.com

Coach Debuts Fun, Fresh Poppy Collection!



You cannot tell a lie. The news about Coach Poppy really came out on June 23, and the truth is that you were a little sluggish realizing the import...

For sure though you've got the scoop on the next collection in queue:

Coach Mung(o)

But that'll premiere after the fall. (Again.) Of Kabul.

Y mientras tanto, drugs are the new drugs.

¡Sube, sube!

July 2

Torture? Yes, but with sympathy. And violins.

GuantánaMoe, Larry, y Curley.

Y Shemp [lo más feo] también.

A world run by sadisticians and their stooges.

[The 4 Stooges of the Apocalypse]

Say dis, say dat, say d'udda ting...

What would the world be like if it didn't want you different?

A Sherman's march of the mind. With violins. And lattes.

And at Garden of Eden on 23rd Street, escarole of wonders.

¡Hola, Capitalismo! This is your brain on dregs. Lo siento, yo quiero decir:
thugs.

¿Y tú, Tamiflu®?

Tamigotcha.

The election wuz rigged.
See, Ayatollya so!

After a storm there must be a column...



And 0 to get mung about...