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**Congratulations on birthday of Imam Mahdi (AS)**

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## Coronavirus urges people to change: cartoonist Einstein



A cartoon exclusively designed by Brazilian artist Cival Einstein for the Tehran Times.

## 122 nuclear achievements in one year: Salehi

**TEHRAN** — Ali Akbar Salehi, director of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, has said that Iran unveiled 122 nuclear achievements over the past Iranian calendar year.

The Iranian year, 1398, ended on March 19.

"I announce with honor that this organization's 122 new achievements in the past year have been the result of untiring efforts made by a large number of researchers of

the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran which herald a new chapter in expansion of the organization's activities," he said in a statement published on Tuesday on the occasion of National Day of Nuclear Technology, which falls on Wednesday, April 8. Salehi, a nuclear physicist, also said that production in nuclear medicine has increased, noting it is essential to meet the country's medical needs given the "cruel sanctions".

## 'Unilateralism virus' infects collective actions, Iran says

**TEHRAN** — Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said on Tuesday that the coronavirus crisis is an opportunity if the global fight on COVID-19 lead to global solidarity and collaboration. Mousavi made the comments on World Health Day.

"#WorldHealthDay is a timely day for rethinking abt post-corona world. #CoronaCrisis is an opportunity, if the global fighting on #COVID19 will lead to global solidarity & collaboration. @WHO

does its coordination task well, though 'unilateralism virus' infects collective actions," he tweeted.

Confirmed coronavirus cases across the globe now number at 1,347,803, and a total of 74,807 people have lost their lives as a result of complications caused by the virus, according to data collected by Johns Hopkins University. More than 277,400 people have recovered, Press TV reported on Tuesday.

## Ancient bas-relief discovered in western Iran

**TEHRAN** — An ancient bas-relief carving, which depicts human being figures, has recently been discovered in western Iran.

Estimated to date from the Parthian era (247 BC – 224 CE), the relief was found during an archaeological survey in Kuhdasht county, Lorestan province. A total of 112 historical relics were

found during the survey which took 45 days to complete, said senior archaeologist Hamzeh Qobadi, who led the survey, CHTN reported on Monday.

Traces of Paleolithic era (Old Stone Age) were also found during the survey, which is first in its kind in Kuhdasht, provincial tourism chief Seyyed Amin Qasemi said. → 8

**PERSPECTIVE**  
**Faranak Bakhtiari**  
Tehran Times journalist

## World Health Day: dedicated medics on frontline fighting the invisible enemy

This time, medical professionals have gone far to help patients afflicted by the coronavirus, so the least we can do is supporting them and paying tribute to those putting themselves at risk battling against a dangerous enemy which is not even visible.

Observed on April 7, World Health Day is the day to celebrate the work of nurses and midwives and remind world leaders of the critical role they play in keeping the world healthy. Nurses and other health workers are at the forefront of COVID-19 response - providing high quality, respectful treatment, and care, leading community dialogue to address fears and questions and, in some instances, collecting data for clinical studies. Quite simply, without nurses, there would be no response.

The COVID-19, an infectious disease first identified in Wuhan, China, has started spreading quickly and globally; since Tuesday, Iran reported more than 62,589 coronavirus cases and some 3,872 deaths from the disease, while affecting 1,356,369 people in 209 countries.

However, novel coronavirus has shown that human is still vulnerable to major disease outbreaks.

Here, health workers are those who make the most efforts but get the least attention among the nervous people and officials who are expected to make reasonable responses to the crisis.

The Iranian medical community has repeatedly succeeded in surviving the people in the floods and earthquakes, and so on, but this time the test is bigger and broader.

The reality of today's medical community shows that each member is working around the clock and does not back down.

Since March 25, it is reported that 43 medical staff in the country has lost their lives due to the coronavirus infection.

These days photos of health workers are being posted around social media, drawing attention and praise of nearly the whole people, while each one shows the physical and emotional toll the epidemic is taking. → 9

## Loading, unloading of goods at ports continue observing healthcare protocols

**TEHRAN** — Loading and unloading of commodities are being conducted continuously at the ports of Iran while the health requirements are completely met, the head of Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) announced on Tuesday.

Mohammad Rastad reiterated that all port operations are done observing healthcare protocols and the principles set by the Coronavirus Containment Headquarters, PMO portal published.

The official further elaborated on the organization's programs for developing Shahid Rajaei Port (Iran's major container port located at the southern province of Hormozgan) during the current Iranian calendar year (began on March



20) and said about 900 meters of docks at the phase three of container part will be completed

and inaugurated in this year.

By completing phase three, the capacity of this port will increase significantly, Rastad underscored.

According to the official, PMO will pay 36 trillion rials (about \$857 million) for supplying marine fleet during the current Iranian calendar year.

He said this fund will be paid to the marine industries of the country for supplying the required fleet in this year, which is named the year of "Surge in Production".

The official further underscored that all parts required in the maritime and port projects will be supplied by domestic producers.

**PERSPECTIVE**  
**Bimolendu B. Nath**  
Environmentalist

## COVID-19 and evolutionary selection pressure

According to the World Health Organization, a novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) has emerged from China and rapidly spread across the world, now with 1,362,850 confirmed cases and 76,367 deaths (as of 7 April 2020).

Movement of human population, in terms of exploration, pilgrimage, politics, business and pleasure impacted global dispersal of microbes.

During the entire span of 200,000 years of human history, movement of hominins across the continents finds antecedents in modern international tourism.

Recent headlines such as, Ebola, Zika, SARS and the last but not the least the COVID-19 repeat the human history buried in the classical antiquity when human ancestors began acquisition of microbial pathogens from the animals as hunters-gatherers.

Globalization has rewarded us to travel geographic distances far greater than what we could do in the past. Incidentally, the emergence of at least 40 new infectious diseases in the last 50 years has interplayed with the ever-increasing density of touring human population.

So far, the COVID-19 transmission tends to be horizontal and the viral fitness is trading off with the host fitness as a function of mobility and population density.

Here comes the persistence of COVID-19 life strategy which is critically dependent on temporal and spatial nature of the infected cluster of human population. On the other hand, the preventive measures through social, cultural, political and clinical management have been impacting a negative selection pressure on COVID-19.

Moreover, persistence or decline of widely dispersed viral population might exhibit 'Allee effect'. The possibility of either stabilization or decline of COVID-19 will depend on the size and density of the infected 'floating' population of humans who are yet to reach to their base from the site of infection. Alternatively, disease-driven mutual selective pressures and disease-modified fitness can lead to modular evolutionary consequences, such as, de novo gene acquisition, one of the frequent events in the past history of viral evolution. In this context, there is an urgency to call upon policy makers for formulating a sustainable strategy to tackle COVID-19 like future pandemic disasters.

## Amnesty, HRW urge Bahrain to release political inmates amid COVID-19 pandemic

Twenty international rights groups, including the Amnesty International and the Human Rights Watch, have called on the Bahraini regime to release opposition leaders, political activists and journalists amid the coronavirus outbreak.

In a joint statement on Monday, the rights groups said all prisoners of conscience remain detained in Bahrain solely for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression, assembly, and association, Press TV reported.

The statement said many of the prisoners of conscience currently jailed in Bahrain are old and/or suffer from underlying medical conditions. "Such prisoners are at high risk of serious illness if they contract COVID-19, and thus ought to be prioritized for release," it added.

Last month, Manama released 1,486 prisoners

in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak, but the releases excluded opposition leaders, activists, journalists and human rights defenders.

Opposition leaders imprisoned for their roles in the 2011 protest movement remain behind bars. These include Hassan Mushaima, the head of the opposition group Al-Haq; Abdulwahab Hussain, an opposition leader; Abdulhadi Al Khawaja, a prominent human rights defender; and Dr Abdel-Jalil al-Singace, the spokesman for Al-Haq.

Other prominent opposition figures, including Sheikh Ali Salman, the secretary general of the Al-Wefaq National Islamic Society (Al-Wefaq), also remain imprisoned.

A few days ago, Bahrain's most prominent Shia cleric Ayatollah Sheikh Isa Qassim demanded the immediate and unconditional release of

political dissidents currently being held in the Manama regime's prisons in the wake of the novel coronavirus pandemic, stressing that failure to take the measure will have dire consequences.

"Even if the release of political prisoners and prisoners of conscience in Bahrain, whose number stands in thousands, might not be recognized as a religious, constitutional, national and human right and would have no priority among the policies of ruling authorities, there is inevitable truth that COVID-19 virus could hit prisons and lead to consequences much more catastrophic than what the world has been witnessing," he said in a statement.

Manama has been engaged in a heavy-handed crackdown since a popular uprising began in the Kingdom back in 2011. It has detained thousands of activists since then. → 10



© Mehr/Mohammadreza Abbasi

## Charities provide basic goods for the underprivileged

Charity societies in Tehran are providing basic goods for the low-income and underprivileged families as the coronavirus outbreak has crippled their livelihoods.

The government has allocated 1,000 trillion rials (about \$24 billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials) to help lessen the impact of the coronavirus outbreak on the national economy.









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**Oil min. holds phone talk with Russia's energy min. on reducing oil output**

TEHRAN, Feb. 20 (MNA) – Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh held a phone conversation with the Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak on Thu. with regards to the cooperation of the two countries within the framework of OPEC Plus.

**Iranian manufacturers indigenize strategic petchem equipment**

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- Senior Iranian officials cast vote in ballot box
- All countries except 3 terrorist regimes in favor of...
- Islamic Revolution Leader casts his vote in ballot...
- Polls open across Iran
- CAO rejects rumors on continuation of Iran-China flights
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Oil min. holds phone talk with Russia's energy min. on reducing oil output

TEHRAN, Feb. 20 (MNA) – Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh held a phone

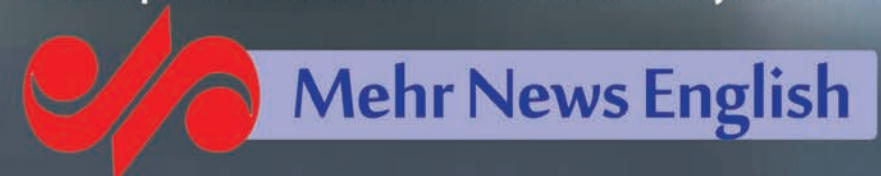
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## Rural handicrafts workshop readjusted to produce face masks

**HERITAGE** TEHRAN – A handicrafts workshop in a rural area, northeast Iran, which used to produce silk textiles, has been repurposed to make protective face masks as the country is fighting the coronavirus pandemic.



Located in Torbat-e Heydarieh in Khorasan Razavi province, the workshop has employed 22 female workers, producing some 4,000 masks per day, CHTN reported on Monday.

The masks are produced under the supervision of a medical university, the report added.

So far, the total number of people diagnosed with the coronavirus in Iran has added up to 62,589, of whom 3,872 died and 27,039 being recovered.

## Tehran to mark Intl. Day for Monuments and Sites online

**HERITAGE** TEHRAN – A number of experts in the fields of cultural heritage, architecture, and restoration will convene a video conference on April 17 to mark the International Day for Monuments and Sites.

The event will be held at the Glassware and Ceramic Museum of Iran (Abgineh Museum), a day prior to original date, which is April 18, CHTN reported.

The participants, along with their global counterparts, will be exploring the idea of sharing—and its counterpoints, contestation and resistance—in relation to cultures, heritage and responsibility.

Given the current global outbreak of Covid-19 and the containment measures in different countries around the world, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) encourages people to celebrate the International Day for Monuments and Sites in compliance with instructions from local and national authorities so as to ensure the safety of participants.



## ROUND THE GLOBE

### Takht-e Soleyman

The archaeological ensemble called Takht-e Soleyman ("Throne of Solomon") is situated on a remote plain surrounded by mountains in northwestern Iran's West Azerbaijan province. The site has a strong symbolic and spiritual significance related to fire and water – the principal reason for its occupation from ancient times – and stands as an exceptional testimony of the continuation of a cult related to fire and water for some 2,500 years.



Located here, in a harmonious composition inspired by its natural setting, are the remains of an exceptional ensemble of royal architecture of Persia's Sasanian dynasty (3rd to 7th centuries). Integrated with the palatial architecture is an outstanding example of Zoroastrian sanctuary; this composition at Takht-e Soleyman can be considered an important prototype, according to the UNESCO.

An artesian lake and a volcano are essential elements of Takht-e Soleyman. At the site's heart is a fortified oval platform rising about 60 meters above the surrounding plain and measuring about 350 m by 550 m. On this platform are an artesian lake, a Zoroastrian fire temple, a temple dedicated to Anahita (the divinity of the waters), and a Sasanian royal sanctuary. This site was destroyed at the end of the Sasanian era, but was revived and partly rebuilt in the 13th century. About three kilometers west is an ancient volcano, Zendan-e Soleyman, which rises about 100 m above its surroundings. At its summit are the remains of shrines and temples dating from the first millennium BC.

Takht-e Soleyman was the principal sanctuary and foremost site of Zoroastrianism, the Sasanian state religion. This early monotheistic faith has had an important influence on Islam and Christianity; likewise, the designs of the fire temple and the royal palace, and the site's general layout, had a strong influence on the development of religious architecture in the Islamic period, and became a major architectural reference for other cultures in both the East and the West. The site also has many important symbolic relationships, being associated with beliefs much older than Zoroastrianism as well as with significant biblical figures and legends.

The 10-ha property also includes Tepe Majid, an archaeological mound culturally related to Zendan-e Soleyman; the mountain to the east of Takht-e Soleyman that served as quarry for the site; and Belqeis Mountain 7.5 km to the northeast, on which are the remains of a Sasanian-era citadel. The archaeological heritage of the Takht-e Soleyman ensemble is further enriched by the Sasanian town (which has not yet been excavated) located in the 7,438-ha landscape buffer zones.

# European expertise to help restore ancient mosque in Iran

**HERITAGE** TEHRAN – Several European professionals have announced readiness to share expertise and offer advice for partially restoring Jameh Mosque of Qazvin, which is one of the oldest congregational mosques in Iran.

"The European experts are affiliated with an experienced scientific group in the field of restoration and rehabilitation of historical monuments, which [their competence] is endorsed by [Iran's] Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts," provincial tourism chief Alireza Khaza'eli announced on Monday, CHTN reported.

The official, however, did not provide any further details on the experts, but said the project will be launched after the coronavirus pandemic is contained.

Locally known as the Masjid-e-Jameh Atiq, the mosque is originally built on the site of a Sassanid fire temple, it was subsequently developed and expanded over several different periods. Its construction was first ordered in 807 CE (192 AH) by the Abbasid Caliph Harun Al-Rashid. Under the Seljuk leaders (1038-1194), two iwans were added to its north. After a renovation in the eleventh century, the twelfth century saw the construction of the main prayer hall, a dome, a courtyard, and a religious school. Under the Safavids (1501-1732), the southern and western iwans and arcades were added, and the Qajar period (1779-1924) witnessed a major renovation and expansion.

The mosque follows the four-iwan typology; each iwan is centered on a large courtyard with a central fountain. This courtyard is one of the largest mosque courts in Iran, measuring nearly four thousand square meters. Its two main prayer halls are located along the north and south sides of the court. Two narrow arcaded halls, five meters wide, run along the east and west.



A portico of the Jameh Mosque of Qazvin is seen behind scaffolding in an undated photo.

The mosque is constructed of brick, which is clad with tiles and inscriptions in some areas. The main prayer hall is the most ornamented part of the mosque. Both its mihrab and minbar are made of stone, and the upper part of the walls is ornamented in different floral patterns and small polychrome tiles.

A half-dome roofing the south iwan also has a double-shell structure. The two northern minarets are clad with colorful tiles in floral patterns. The interior of the iwans are decorated with muqarnas; in the north iwan, these muqarnas are stuccoed, while those in the southern iwan are of exposed brick.

## Ancient bas-relief discovered in western Iran

→ 1 "Other relics related to historical periods up to Qajar era [1789-1925] were also discovered in the survey," he added.

Last May, a team of Iranian archaeologists announced evidence of Paleolithic residents found in Lorestan's Kaldar cave, a key archaeological site that provides evidence of the Middle to Upper Paleolithic transition in Iran. The team excavated stone tools and a fragment of a fossilized skull, which are attributed to Homo sapiens. The cave also yielded weapon fragments crafted by Neanderthals.

In taxonomy, Homo sapiens is the only extant human species. The name is Latin for "wise man" and was introduced in 1758 by Carl Linnaeus (who



is himself also the type specimen). Neanderthals are an extinct species or subspecies of archaic humans in the genus Homo, who lived within Eurasia from circa 400,000 until 40,000 years ago.

Lorestan was inhabited by Iranian Indo-European peoples, including the Medes, c. 1000 BC. Cimmerians and Scythians intermittently ruled the region from about 700 to 625 BC. The Luristan Bronzes, noted for their eclectic array of Assyrian, Babylonian, and Iranian artistic motifs, date from this turbulent period. Lorestan was incorporated into the growing Achaemenid Empire in about 540 BC and successively was part of the Seleucid, Parthian, and Sasanid dynasties.

## Drilling wells near Naqsh-e Rostam banned over probable damage



**HERITAGE** TEHRAN – Drilling deep wells near Naqsh-e Rostam, a royal rock-hewn necropolis in Fars province, southern Iran, has been banned over probable subsidence of land and damage to the ancient site.

Drilling new wells are subject to gain official permission from the cultural heritage, tourism and handicrafts department general, CHTN reported.

Naqsh-e Rostam, meaning "Picture of Rostam", incorporates memorials of the Elamites, the Achaemenids and the Sassanians. It is where four Persian Achaemenid kings are laid to rest,

those of Darius II, Artaxerxes I, Darius I and Xerxes I (from left to right facing the cliff), although some historians are still debating this.

There are gorgeous bas-relief carvings above the tomb chambers that are similar to those in Persepolis, with the kings standing on thrones supported by figures representing the subject nations below.

Beneath the funerary chambers are dotted with seven Sassanian era (224-651) bas-reliefs cut into the cliff depict vivid scenes of imperial conquests and royal ceremonies; signboards below each relief give a detailed description in English.

## Tehran to hold virtual workshop on geotourism



**TOURISM** TEHRAN – Tehran province's department of cultural heritage, tourism, and handicrafts is scheduled to hold a virtual workshop on geotourism today. The workshop is aimed to turn the spotlight on Tehran province's geographical characters, environment, heritage, aesthetics, and culture, provincial tourism chief Parham Janfeshan announced on Monday, CHTN reported.

"Thanks to its distinct geographical conditions, Tehran enjoys a variety of

geological marvels which can attract many tourists each year," the official said.

Underlining the importance of education in tourism, he noted "If we want to realize sustainable development in the province's tourism, we must strengthen the foundations of education," he said.

Many experts believe that geotourism is not a niche market as the global population of travelers increases and destinations become more globalized and homogenous, principles of geotourism are resonating with travelers across the globe.

## Coronavirus: No visitors to tulip park

**TOURISM** TEHRAN – Photos depict tulips in full bloom at Chamran park and flowers garden in the city of Karaj, April 6, 2020. Typically at this time of the year, the botanical garden hosts thousands of people and nature lovers each day, but the place is now closed over the coronavirus fears.

Late in March, entry to museums, cultural sites, and parks across the country was banned because of the virus pandemic. Chamran park annually showcases some 300,000 pieces of tulip bulbs in over 30 different colors from late March through mid-April.

Being a vast land with very varied climatic conditions, Iran is one of the largest producers of ornamental flowers in the region. The country's soil is home to almost any type of flower and plant in various regions of the country.

Flowers are a big part of Iranian culture. The rose for example, is used to make rosewater, which in the past, was sprinkled on guests while the flowers themselves constituted an ingredient for flavoring desserts.





# Asiatic cheetahs' return to birthplace: semi-captive living or reaching end of life?

By Farnak Bakhtiari

**TEHRAN** – The Department of Environment (DOE) is transferring three Asiatic cheetahs kept in Tehran's Pardisan Park to Semnan province where they have been born to live the rest of their life in semi-captive conditions because they are no longer able to reproduce.

The world's fastest mammal, capable of reaching speeds of 120 kilometers per hour, once stalked habitats from the eastern reaches of India to the Atlantic coast of Senegal, once their numbers have stabilized in parts of southern Africa, but they have practically disappeared from northern Africa and Asia.

The subspecies "Acinonyx jubatus venaticus", commonly known as the Asiatic cheetah, is critically endangered, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, with fewer than 50 believed to remain in Iran.

On Monday, the DOE made a big shock to the country's environmental community by deciding to hastily transfer three Asiatic cheetahs to their new detention center without informing experts, environmental activists and the media.

It seems that these activities are being carried out to implement the semi-captive keeping of the cheetahs, which have been criticized by experts many times before.

The project team is said to have put a lot of stress on the cheetahs after several unsuccessful firing of anesthesia darts due to lack of previous experience.

According to Iman Memarian, a wildlife veterinarian, a drug called medetomidine is used to anesthetize cheetahs, which at a dose of 5cc, the female cheetah may fall into a coma, cardiac and respiratory arrest, or may eventually die.

The project, which began in the last days of March, is being carried out in violation of protocols related to captive cheetahs.

The release of images of non-standard boxes has aroused the concern of environmentalists, who say the boxes, which were intended to transport cheetahs through a pickup truck to Semnan province, will kill the animals.

Efforts by journalists to communicate with experts and officials of the DOE and to question the objectives and motivations for the project have not been successful, and they have decided to publish an open letter warning of the irreparable consequences, according to Mehr news agency.

The 24-hour challenge of the DOE sending the cheetahs to their birthplace has only ended with the transfer of the youngest cheetah, Iran, which has been released in its habitat, Turan National Park in complete health.

■ **Delbar, Kushki and Iran reach the bitter end**  
Two female Asiatic cheetahs, Delbar and Iran, and the male one, Kushki, have lived in the capital for the past few years.

In 2015, Delbar once became pregnant naturally but sadly lost her cub.

Last year (March 2018-March 2019), she was physically prepared for mating with Kushki, however, possibly due to Kushki's old age, the two didn't breed.

Delbar underwent artificial insemination earlier this year (starting on March 21), which turned out unsuccessful.

The younger female cheetah named "Iran" which is three years old and her pregnancy possibility is high, is also transferred to a fenced area in the central part of the country.

Natural mating and artificial insemination have been



already tried for Asiatic cheetahs kept in captivity, which sadly failed. Now, fertilizing the female Asiatic cheetah is nearly impossible due to their old age.

■ **Keeping cheetahs in captivity not helpful**

Memarian, who was an opponent of the plan, said that it was a big mistake to focus on the implementation of the semi-captive reproduction scheme, adding that the number of Persian cheetahs was not high enough to raise hope for reproduction in captivity.

He said it was wrong to compare the natural conditions of Iran and South Africa in prescribing reproduction in semi-captive conditions for Persian cheetahs, adding that in South Africa, almost all natural areas and parks have been fenced, and several thousand cheetahs live in the wild.

In South Africa's transfer of cheetahs, only one out of every four cheetahs survives, and in addition to the dangers of moving, keeping them in semi-captive conditions, health management is much more difficult, he highlighted.

■ **Cheetahs born in captivity cannot adopt to nature**

"Whether reproduction in captivity or semi-captive conditions does not save the Asian Cheetah from extinction, because even this type of reproduction has not been successful in South Africa," he said, referring to the exorbitant costs of implementing the project in nature.

He went on to note that more importantly, cheetahs born in these conditions can not return to nature.

Roads, stray dogs, habitat fragmentation, and hunting are among the reasons behind cheetahs being endangered, and the DOE's focus should be on protecting habitats. However, cheetah habitats, especially the corridors, are generally empty, and only cheetahs are reported to live in the Turan National Park habitat, he explained.

This is while, Alireza Jourabchian, Conservation of the Asiatic Cheetah Project founder, told Tasnim in October 2019 that unfortunately, mismanagement severely affected

conservation projects.

Asiatic cheetah born in captivity will never learn the skills to survive in nature and will not be able to reproduce in nature, thus a captive breeding plan cannot be considered as a measure to prevent the extinction of the cheetahs, he lamented.

■ **Protecting cheetahs in natural habitats more useful**

Mohammad Ali Yektanik, an environmental expert who opposes the project, told Mehr about the reasons for his opposition to the project "Previous phases of the captive cheetah breeding project have failed, despite the heavy costs."

"According to Shahaboddin Montazemi, the director of the wildlife office of the DOE, the chances of success are very small at two percent, so given the current management environment in the country, insisting on continuing to implement such a plan with existing priorities to save the remains of Asian cheetahs in Iran is not logical," he added.

The shortage and, in some cases, the lack of workforce and the minimum necessary facilities for wildlife protection, what is the need for a budget that only benefits the implementers of the cheetah reproduction plan and does not have a protective function for nature to be repeated with different kinds of justifications?

Environmentalists have repeatedly stated that protecting cheetahs in natural habitats is the top priority, but as the population of cheetahs has not reached the desired level, the organization is considering resolving the crisis and other methods.

The use of artificial insemination, reproduction in captivity at the Cheetah reproduction and breeding center in Pardisan Park has been one of the activities that, with its unsuccessful implementation, eventually led environmental officials to take a chance on the project.



## World Health Day: dedicated medics on frontline fighting the invisible enemy

1 → To help them get through such an extremely demanding time, the effort and commitment of every one of us are needed, despite the responsible bodies' protection and support.

Doctors, nurses and other staff are making efforts in overwhelming and frightening conditions, not only because the virus is new or invisible, but because mostly they are overworked and vulnerable to the infection.

They may also bear considerable mental stress as well as those in the front line of war events, in addition to the fear they feel about disease transmission when in contact with their family and loved ones.

We can help them by resisting the spread of inaccurate

information, as fake news can raise public concern, panic, and unrest; which can easily disrupt the availability of food and vital supplies such as face masks, gloves or others, running out for health workers and other frontline workers who are highly in need of which.

Moreover, choosing to stay at home and not to be a chain in disease transmission will also be much helpful.

However, the government and decision-makers must also try best to set the most efficient policies in the fight against the disease and give the medical staff what they need to survive this crisis as long as we will need them in case the next pandemic arrives.

### ENGLISH IN USE

#### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## Iran breaks U.S. monopoly on aviation navigation charts

Iranian researchers have succeeded to produce aviation navigation charts, known as Inflight AIP (Aeronautical Information Publication), which was monopolized by the United States, IRNA news agency reported on Sunday.

Prepared by Iran's Army, the Inflight AIP was unveiled in Tehran with Air Force Commander Brigadier General Aziz Nasirzadeh and Vice President for Science and Technology Sourena Sattari in attendance.

Digital aeronautical charts, including instrument flight rules (IFR) and visual flight rules (VFR), is a high-quality knowledge-based product which was solely produced by Jeppesen Company and was not available for Iranian airlines due to U.S. sanctions.

## ایران انحصار آمریکا در نقشه‌های هوانوردی را شکست

ایران با تولید نقشه‌های هوانوردی (INFLIGHT AIP) که پیش از این در انحصار آمریکا بوده به موفقیت چشمگیری در زمینه صنعت هوانوردی دست یافت.

به گزارش ایرنا، روز یکشنبه با حضور امیر سرتیپ خلبان عزیز نصیرزاده فرمانده نیروی هوایی ارتش و سورنا ستاری معاون علمی و فناوری ریاست جمهوری از نقشه‌های هوانوردی (INFLIGHT AIP) تولید داخل رونمایی شد. چارتهای هوایی دیجیتال شامل نقشه‌های پرواز **IFR** و **VFR** یک محصول دانش بنیان با فناوری بسیار بالا است که پیش از این انحصار آن در اختیار آمریکا و شرکت جیسپن (Jeppesen) قرار داشت که به دلیل اعمال تحریم‌های ظالمانه شرکت‌های هواپیمایی ایرانی از دسترسی به این نقشه‌ها محروم شده بودند.

### PREFIX/SUFFIX

#### "-dom"

- **Meaning:** state, condition, quality
- **For example:** we do have some **freedom** of choice.

### PHRASAL VERB

#### Pull in

- **Meaning:** to move to a designated place at the side of the road
- **For example:** A police car signaled to me to pull in.

### IDIOM

#### Do a double take

- **Explanation:** to look at someone or something again because you are very surprised by what you saw or heard
- **For example:** Colleagues often walked past me in the hallway, then stopped and did a double take.

## South Korea to send \$2m anti-corona shipment to Iran

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** – South Korea intends to send a shipment worth \$2 million to Iran to help the country combat the coronavirus.

To date, South Korea has provided Iran with items worth \$200,000, including a PCR and a disinfectant pump, South Korea's embassy in Iran wrote on its Twitter account on Tuesday.



Last week, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries Fund for International Development (OFID), provided Iran with \$500,000 to combat COVID-19, according to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance.

Besides, Russia has sent 50,000 coronavirus diagnostic kits to the Iranian Embassy in Moscow, Iran's Ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali announced in March.

Moreover, the World Health Organization sent an aircraft carrying tons of medical supplies and test kits along with a medical team to Iran in early March.

Also, the World Health Organization delivered a shipment of emergency medical supplies and medicine to Iran as part of COVID-19 response measures on March 24.

The total number of people diagnosed with the coronavirus in Iran reached 62,589 on Tuesday, of whom 3,872 have died and 27,039 recovered, Health Ministry spokesman Kianoush Jahanpour said.

## Iran starts smart screening program to contain coronavirus

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** – The second phase of the social distancing plan in Iran started on Tuesday within the framework of a screening program to curb the spread of coronavirus.



"Under the program, we will conduct tests on the asymptomatic people who are transmitting the virus to the community without awareness," Health Minister Saeed Namaki said explained, IRNA reported.

"With the help of knowledge-based companies, we are moving to centers that have no symptoms, and for this we need an extensive diagnosis," he added.

Iran implemented the social distancing measures from March 27 for two weeks in a bid to minimize the spread of coronavirus.

According to the plan, intercity travels were restricted and only residents were allowed to enter their cities.

Moreover, holding any kind of meeting or congregation was banned and all parks and gyms, as well as universities and schools, remained closed.

Meanwhile, rail, road, and air transport were limited.

### WORDS IN THE NEWS

#### Road to peace?

(June 02, 2003)  
For decades Ariel Sharon has insisted that the occupation of large parts of the West Bank and Gaza is essential for Israel's security. Now, he's formally agreed to the road map - a peace plan that would establish a Palestinian state in that territory. Is this a real change in position or is it a tactical manoeuvre? This report from Barbara Plett.

Ariel Sharon presented his acceptance of the road map **in terms of pragmatic** self-interest rather than as a step towards peace. He told his cabinet that approving the US-backed plan would safeguard Israel's strategic relationship with Washington and it would help the country's struggling economy because, he said, diplomatic progress would lead to economic benefits. This largely negative **endorsement** faced strong opposition from the far right. But Mr Sharon is really **swimming with the tide** as polls show that a solid Israeli majority supports the road map.

There is debate in Israel though about what the old warrior is really up to. Some analysts believe his new moves are only tactical, **concealing** old policies of **expanding** Jewish settlements in the occupied territories. Others believe he does want to achieve a settlement of the conflict in this his final term as prime minister. Ariel Sharon's view of the road map is **ambiguous** enough to allow for both readings.

- **Words**
- in terms of:** the way something is described
- pragmatic:** practical
- endorsement:** support
- swimming with the tide:** agreeing with what most people think
- polls:** surveys of public opinion
- concealing:** hiding
- expanding:** increasing the size of
- ambiguous:** unclear

(Source: BBC)

### China reports no Covid-19 deaths for first time

China reported no coronavirus deaths on Tuesday, the first time since it started publishing daily figures in January. The National Health Commission said it had 32 confirmed cases, down from 39 on Monday. It comes as the government is under scrutiny as to whether it is underreporting its figures, BBC reported. The government says more than 3,331 people have died and 81,740 have been confirmed as infected. China is concerned a second wave of infections could be brought in by foreign arrivals. It has already shut its border to foreigners including those with visas or residence permits. International flights have been reduced with both Chinese and foreign airlines only allowed to operate one international flight a week. Flights must not be more than 75% full. On Wednesday, Wuhan is set to allow people to leave the city for the first time since the lockdown began in January. Officials say anyone who has a "green" code on a widely used smartphone health app will be allowed to leave the city. Some people in "epidemic-free" residential compounds have already been allowed to leave their homes for two hours.

### UK PM fights worsening coronavirus symptoms in intensive care

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who is battling worsening coronavirus symptoms, was stable during his first night in an intensive care unit at a London hospital, the PM's spokesman said on Tuesday. "The prime minister has been stable overnight and remains in good spirits. He is receiving standard oxygen treatment and breathing without any other assistance. He has not required mechanical ventilation, or non-invasive respiratory support," the spokesman said, adding that Johnson did not have pneumonia. Johnson, 55, first announced he had tested positive for the virus on March 27 and went into self-isolation. After failing to shake off a high fever for more than a week, he was admitted to Guy's and St Thomas' hospital in central London on Sunday from where he continued to lead the government until he was moved into intensive care on Monday evening, when his condition deteriorated. "Over the course of [Monday] afternoon, the condition of the prime minister has worsened and, on the advice of his medical team, he has been moved to the intensive care unit at the hospital," Number 10 said in a statement.

(Source: al Jazeera)

### Pakistan arrests doctors protesting for coronavirus medical gear

Police in the southwestern Pakistani city of Quetta have arrested at least 50 doctors who were protesting against the lack of personal protective equipment (PPE) kits for health workers on the front lines of the country's battle against the coronavirus, officials and doctors' union representatives said. Representatives of the Young Doctors Association (YDA), who organized the protest, said at least 67 members had been arrested on Monday. Release orders had been issued for those detained, said Dr Rahim Khan Babar, a YDA spokesman, but they were refusing to leave the police stations where they were being held until their demands for additional PPE kits were met. "I was arrested yesterday, I am still in the police station," Babar told Al Jazeera on Tuesday. "They have given orders for our release, but we have refused to leave, because no steps have been taken. Doctors came out for equipment, and you beat them and then locked them up. What kind of law is that?" Video footage from Monday's protest showed dozens of doctors raising slogans and criticizing the provincial government. Shortly afterwards, police stepped in to end the protest, clashing with several of the protesters and detaining dozens.

(Source: al Jazeera)

### Biden nabs endorsement of prominent black lawmaker John Lewis

U.S. Representative John Lewis of Georgia endorsed Joe Biden's presidential campaign on Tuesday, giving the Democrat's bid further support among the party's black leadership. "Joe Biden has no delusion about this nation's past, but he knows who we can be at our best," Lewis said in a campaign video announcing his support, Reuters reported. Lewis is known for his activism in the 1960s in support of civil rights for black Americans. Biden is seeking his party's nomination to face President Donald Trump in the Nov. 3 election. The former vice president currently has a lead in that race for nomination over his lone remaining rival, Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, after victories powered by support from black voters and legislators from southern states like Georgia. Georgia delayed its own presidential primary set for March 24 until May 19 because of the coronavirus.

### Amnesty, HRW urge Bahrain to release political inmates amid COVID-19 pandemic

Thousands of anti-regime protesters have held demonstrations in Bahrain on an almost daily basis ever since a popular uprising began in the country in mid-February 2011. They are demanding that the Al Khalifah regime relinquish power and allow a just system representing all Bahrainis to be established. Manama has gone to great lengths to clamp down on any sign of dissent. On March 14, 2011, troops from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates were deployed to assist Bahrain in its crackdown. On March 5, 2017, Bahrain's parliament approved the trial of civilians at military tribunals in a measure blasted by human rights campaigners as being tantamount to imposition of an undeclared martial law countrywide.

# Syrian troops, residents block another U.S. convoy in Hasakah

## U.S. military dispatches 35 trucks to oil-rich northeastern Syria

Another U.S. military convoy has been forced to retreat from an area in Syria's northeastern province of Hasakah after local residents, in coordination with government forces, prevented the foreign forces from passing through the community.

Local sources, requesting not to be named, reported that a U.S. convoy of five armored vehicles was forced to turn around and head back in the direction it came from on Tuesday afternoon after locals of the village of Hamu and Syrian troops blocked the road and prevented its movement. No injuries were reported.

According to Press TV, on March 27, Syrian army soldiers and angry local residents had forced a U.S. military convoy to retreat from the same village.

Two days earlier, a U.S. military convoy was forced to retreat from an area in the same Syrian province after government forces blocked its way and groups of local residents, upset with their presence in the region, threw stones at the American troops.

SANA reported at the time that Syrian army soldiers stopped the American convoy, consisting of 11 armored vehicles, as it tried to make its way through the village of Hamu in the al-Qamishli countryside of Hasakah province.

Locals then threw stones at the American convoy and forced them to retreat.

Meanwhile, Syrian media say the United States has dispatched truckloads of military and logistical equipment to the country's northeastern province of Hasakah as Washington and some of its regional allies keep vying with one another to seize oil reserves and plunder natural resources in the war-battered country.

Local sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Syria's official news agency SANA that a convoy of 35 trucks crossed the Waleed border crossing on Monday and headed toward U.S. positions in the Jazira region of the province.

The sources added that the majority of the equipment was sent to a base that American troops have set up at Kharab al-Jeer Airport in al-Malikiyah district.

The report comes one day after the Arabic-language Enab Baladi weekly newspaper, citing a video published by the local North Press news agency, reported that the so-called U.S.-led military coalition purportedly



formed to fight the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group had airdropped military and logistical equipment to an area close to al-Omar oil field in Syria's eastern countryside of Dayr al-Zawr.

The report noted that the operation took place late on Saturday.

In late October 2019, Washington reversed an earlier decision to pull out all of its troops from northeastern Syria, announcing the deployment of about 500 soldiers to the oil fields controlled by Kurdish forces in the Arab country.

The Pentagon claimed that the move was aimed at protecting the fields and facilities from possible attacks by Daesh. That claim came although U.S. President Donald

Trump had earlier suggested that Washington sought economic interests in controlling the oil fields.

U.S. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper also threatened that the U.S. troops deployed to the fields would use "military force" against any party that might seek to challenge control of the sites, even if it were Syrian government forces or their Russian allies.

Syria, which has not authorized American military presence in its territory, has said the U.S. is "plundering" the country's oil.

On December 18, 2019, China's special envoy for Syria said the United States' pretext for extending its military presence in the Arab country, namely to protect Syrian oil fields, was untenable.

## U.S. braces for 'peak death week' from coronavirus

### U.S. lawmakers call for probe on disruptions to pandemic supplies

The U.S. has the third-highest number of reported deaths from the disease in the world, only exceeded by Italy with 15,887 and Spain with 13,055.

White House medical experts have forecast that between 100,000 to 240,000 Americans could die as a result of COVID-19, the respiratory disease caused by the new coronavirus, even if sweeping orders to stay home are followed.

The US had entered what an official called the "peak death week" of the coronavirus on Monday, while a watchdog report said hospitals were struggling to maintain and expand capacity to care for infected patients.

"It's going to be the peak hospitalisation, peak ICU [intensive care unit] week and unfortunately, peak death week," Admiral Brett Giroir, a physician and member of the White House coronavirus task force, told ABC's Good Morning America programme on Monday. He raised particular alarm for the



states of New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and the city of Detroit, Michigan. Separately, on NBC's Today pro-

gramme, Giroir said: "Whether you live in small-town America or you live in the Big Apple, everyone is susceptible

to this and everyone needs to follow the precautions we've laid out."

Meanwhile, citing concerns over severe supply disruptions, senior US legislators have called for an expedited investigation into specific imported products needed to combat the coronavirus pandemic.

Some critics have argued US tariffs on Chinese goods could be impeding the response to the contagion. A huge surge in demand worldwide has interrupted flows of medical supplies and protective gear and led to shortages of many products.

US House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Richard Neal, a Democrat, and Senate Finance Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, a Republican, asked the US International Trade Commission (ITC) to provide details about the source countries for such products, as well as tariff classifications and duty rates, by April 30.

(Source: agencies)

## Britain set for 66,000 COVID-19 deaths, most in Europe



Britain could see as many as 66,000 COVID-19 deaths during the first wave of the current pandemic, new research showed Tuesday, making the outbreak there by far the deadliest in Europe.

Modeling conducted by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the University of Washington's School of Medicine showed that approximately 151,680 people were likely to die from the virus across the continent.

While the novel coronavirus emerged

in China and was initially focused in east Asia, the World Health Organization now says the pandemic is centered in western Europe, with Spain, Italy and France experiencing devastating death tolls.

Most European nations have introduced strict social distancing measures to try to stem the virus spread. More than 5,000 people have died from COVID-19 in Britain, fewer than in Spain, Italy and France. But Britain's epidemic lags behind

the rest of the continent by several days, and its death toll trajectory is already steeper than other nations.

Using local and international data on case numbers, as well as age mortality breakdowns from Italy, China and the US, the team at IHME modeled the expected death toll on a country-by-country basis.

A key consideration was an individual nation's intensive care bed capacity.

It found that Britain could experience 66,000 COVID-19 deaths by July, far more than Italy, the next most severely impacted, with around 20,000.

Spain and France were next, with 19,000 and 15,000 predicted deaths, respectively.

"We are expecting a foreboding few weeks for people in many parts of Europe," said IHME Director Christopher Murray.

"It seems likely the number of deaths will exceed our projections for the United States."

On Sunday the institute predicted just over 80,000 US COVID-19 deaths during the pandemic's first wave.

The modeling suggests that outbreaks in Italy and Spain, where hundreds of deaths have been reported daily for weeks, may be past their peak. Daily deaths in both countries have declined for several days. But Britain is likely weeks away from

getting a handle on its death toll as intensive care capacity is overwhelmed.

Peak demand was forecast to see more than 100,000 hospital beds needed versus the 17,765 currently available.

- Could still get worse - Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who is currently in intensive care with COVID-19, came in for criticism for his government's slow response to the pandemic.

Britain now has strict social distancing measures in place, but it had held off implementing them even as the outbreak surged in Europe.

The IHME models include the predicted effect of social distancing, and Murray said it was vital that measures aren't relaxed too suddenly once countries pass their morality peak.

"It is unequivocally evident that social distancing can, when well implemented and maintained, control the epidemic, leading to declining death rates," Murray said.

"Those nations hit hard early on implemented social distancing orders and may have the worst behind them as they are seeing important progress in reducing their death rates."

"Each nation's trajectory will change -- and dramatically for the worse -- if people ease up on social distancing or relax other precautions."

(Source: AFP)

# Olympics postponement an opportunity not a threat: Salehi Amiri

**S P O R T S** TEHRAN — The President of the National Olympic Committee (NOC) of the Islamic Republic of Iran Reza Salehi Amiri believes that the Tokyo 2020 Olympics postponement will not harm the country's sportspersons and he sees it as an opportunity not a threat.

Due to the outbreak of the pandemic coronavirus, the press conference of Reza Salehi Amiri was held online with the media representatives on Monday.

"We call it an opportunity because the postponement of the Olympics gives us one more year to provide better conditions for our athletes," the head of the Iranian NOC said.

"On the other hand, some of our athletes like Hassan Yazdani (wrestler), Hamideh Abbasali (karateka) and Sohrab Moradi (weightlifter) did not have good conditions due to injuries and the extra time will give them the opportunity to return to full fitness at a steadier pace.

"We don't look at the Olympics in terms of

profits and losses. Health is more important than any other cancelled sporting events. The Olympics postponement was a global demand, and of course, we were among the first ones who called for the postponement," he continued.

Speaking about the number of berths of Iran at the Olympics, Salehi Amiri said: "Our athletes have secured 51 berths so far and we predict at least 10 and a maximum of 20 more quota places. Things are going according to plan. Our target budget was \$10m. Now that the budget has been increased, we are more prepared to support the related federations."

The head of the Iranian National Olympic Committee also talked about the time of starting training for the athletes due to the outbreak of novel coronavirus.

"We will reschedule and adjust our programs according to an announcement from the Coronavirus Combat and Prevention Headquarters. Whenever the headquarters give permission, the federations start to plan for their athletes," he added.



The Tokyo Olympics postponed until 2021 after talks between Japan's prime minister, Shinzo Abe, and the International Olympic Committee president, Thomas Bach, led to the confirmation of a decision made inevitable by the coronavirus pandemic.

## AFC to use VAR in Champions League QF: report



**S P O R T S** TEHRAN — Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has reportedly decided to use Video Assistant Referees (VAR) in the AFC Champions League current season.

In a letter sent to the national associations and clubs participating in the AFC Champions League, AFC has informed them the VAR technology will be used from the quarter-finals.

Iranian stadiums have not been equipped with the system despite the Iranian officials had already said they would use it in the current season. Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE use

VAR in their leagues. Arriyadiyah has reported. This is the first time that the AFC is going to implement VAR in the continental championship.

The AFC has decided to use VAR after the successful implementation of the system in the knockout stage of the AFC Asian Cup 2019 in the UAE, and 2020 AFC U23 Championship in Thailand.

For the participating clubs, who do not use the VAR technology in their local leagues, the AFC will assess the feasibility of implementing VAR in their stadiums.

## Karimi may undergo surgery as Olympics postponed



**MNA** — Iranian freestyle wrestler Alireza Karimi may undergo surgery as he now has enough time to recover due to postponement of the Tokyo Olympics.

He suffered a knee injury in late December 2019 at the World Wrestling Clubs Cup held in Bojnurd, northeast Iran.

Doctors have used a non-aggressive PRP therapy combined with special training to treat his injury so that he could reach the 2020 Olympics. In early March, he announced his return to the mat and continuation of his training

in his hometown Karaj. Now, as the 2020 Tokyo Olympics has been postponed for a year, the medical team of the wrestling federation is going to inspect the extent of Karimi's injury and perform surgery if it is required. Karimi needs to win the required points in qualifying events to secure his ticket to Tokyo.

Iranian freestyle team has so far gained three out of six quotas for the Olympics. The qualifying events have been postponed for 2021.

## Legendary coach Radomir Antic passes away

Madrid: Legendary coach Radomir Antic, who guided China PR clubs Shandong Luneng and Hebei China Fortune, passed away in Madrid, Spain on Monday.

Antic, who passed away after a battle with cancer, was 71-year-old.

The news was confirmed by Atletico Madrid, a club where he spent three separate spells from 1995 to 2000, most notably winning the league and Copa del Rey double during the 1995/96 season.

Antic is the only person to have managed Atletico, Real

Madrid (1991/92) and Barcelona (2003).

He had a distinguished playing career as well, with stints at Partizan Belgrade, Fenerbahce, Real Zaragoza and Luton Town.

Antic was instrumental in leading Serbia to the 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa, where they were eliminated after the group stage. He finished his coaching career in China PR, managing Shandong Luneng and Hebei China Fortune.

(Source: the-afc)



## Stars of the mat encourage wrestling community to "Stay at Home"

The stars of United World Wrestling took to social media in massive numbers this week to encourage fellow wrestlers and their fans to "Stay Strong and Stay at Home!"

More than 70 of the world's most successful wrestlers, including Olympic champions Jordan BURROUGHS (USA), Hassan

YAZDANI (IRI), Saori YOSHIDA (JPN), and Artur ALEKSANYAN (ARM) sent in their messages to United World Wrestling, who has shared their video via Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube.

Lalovic also shared a short video message of his own asking the community to under-

stand that "courage today means wisdom and responsibility" and that we will all get through this soon.

Offline, the wrestling community has also included several athletes who've been on the front lines fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. In Iran, Olympic champions

Rasoul KHADEM and Komeil GHASEMI helped deliver medical equipment to highly affected areas of their home nation, while several doctors associated with the sport have been supporting their city's responses.

(Source: United World Wrestling)

## Charl du Toit shares his lockdown experience on Instagram Live

World Para Athletics is catching up with athletes on Instagram Live to hear what they have done to stay active and healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic.

South Africa's two-time Paralympic champion Charl du Toit was the first to join us on Instagram Live sharing his experience with athletes and fans.

"It was a great experience. I really enjoyed the opportunity to be on the [World Para Athletics] Instagram account specially in these challenging times," said Du Toit after going live.

The COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak has caused the postponement of the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games to 2021 and put more than half of the world's population on lockdown.

Du Toit spoke from home in South Africa's administrative capital Pretoria where he has also been practicing.



"My favorite part of the chat was to help encouraging my fellow athletes, as it has been challenging for all ones," he added. "I know the decision to postpone the Games in Tokyo was not an easy one, but I think the IOC and the IPC for taking that decision."

## Spurs' Son set for chemical warfare training in South Korea

**SEOUL (Reuters)** — Tottenham Hotspur striker Son Heung-min will be exposed to tear gas, undertake live-fire drills and go on a 30km loaded march during three weeks of intense military training in South Korea this month, a Marine Corps official told Reuters on Tuesday.

All able-bodied men are required to serve in the military for around two years in South Korea, which is technically still at war with the North,

but Son received an exemption for leading the country to gold at the 2018 Asian Games.

Son, 27, will complete his mandatory military service while the Premier League remains suspended due to the coronavirus outbreak, the London club said on Monday.

Son, currently in self-quarantine in line with tightened entry rules due to the COVID-19 pandemic, would begin the stint on

April 20 at a Marine Corps unit in the southernmost island of Jeju, local media said.

The Military Manpower Administration (MMA), which handles conscription issues, declined to confirm the date and location citing privacy rules.

But an official at the Marine Corps said Son would receive a shortened version of a boot camp required for all new regular

enlistees, including discipline education, combat drills and a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) exercise.

A video of military training posted by the MMA on YouTube showed a group of soldiers undergoing CBRN training in a gas chamber. After a few minutes they are let out, tears streaming down their faces and pouring water over their heads.

## Ex-Iran forward Esmaili passes away

**S P O R T S** TEHRAN — Former Esteghlal and Iran national football team forward Fariborz Esmaili passed away on Tuesday.



He died at the age of 80.

Esmaili represented Iran national football team at the 1964 Summer Olympics, where Team Melli lost to Germany (4-0) and Romania (1-0) and drew 1-1 with Mexico.

He made 14 appearances for Iran national football team from 1964 to 1968 and scored four goals.

Esmaili also was a member of Iran national football team at the 1966 Asian Games and helped the Persians to win a silver medal.

Esmaili started his playing career at Taj (known as Esteghlal) and also played in Tehran based football clubs Oghab and Shoa.

Tehran Times offers its heartfelt condolence to his bereaved family.

## Ehsan Hadadi recovers from coronavirus

**Tasnim** — Iranian discus thrower Ehsan Hadadi has fully recovered from the coronavirus.

The Olympic silver medalist had tested positive for the virus in late March.

"Ehsan has self-quarantined after he was diagnosed with the coronavirus and his recovery is going well," Iran Athletic Federation's doctor Ashkan Ordibehesht had said.

Iran's Health Ministry on Tuesday announced 133 new deaths from the novel coronavirus, raising the death toll to 3,872 across the country.

The total number of cases climbed to 62,589, with 2,089 new infections, while 3,987 infected people were in a critical condition, he said.

## Iran One of the Best Teams in the World: Helio Sousa

Bahrain national football team coach Helio Sousa regarded Iran as one of the best teams in the world.

The tiny Persian Gulf country is vying with Iran and Iraq in



Group C to book a place at the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

"Since the draw, we knew we were in one of the strongest groups of the Qualifiers. This idea is supported by the qualities, capacities and recent trajectory of the other teams in the group, as well as due to their ranking place," Sousa told the-afc.com.

"Iran is one of the best teams in the world. They have a lot of players playing high-level championships in many different continents. Iraq also is a fantastic team with an incredible potential. It has plenty of highly-skilled young players and with a very interesting number of players playing in top level leagues. Theoretically we were the third strongest team in the group and, in the opinion of almost everyone, we, together with Hong Kong and Cambodia, would have no chance of fighting for the first place in the group, not even to be one of the best second places," the 50-year-old Portuguese stated.

"We didn't think that way. We believed, since the beginning, that we could create conditions to be in right away in the fight for the first place or for one of the best seconds. And, until this moment, in a very short period of time, we did that. We showed that we built a team to fight for the first place," Sousa added.

"We are in the fight with Iraq and Iran to get the first place or one of the best four second places in order to continue playing in the next round of the qualifiers and try to reach the FIFA World Cup. The beginning proposal was to try to achieve that goal only in 2026, but we are already there trying to achieve it now," he said.

(Source: the-afc)

## Fukushima Olympic Flame display cancelled over virus concerns

**TOKYO (Reuters)** — The exhibition of the Olympic Flame, due to remain on display in Fukushima until the end of the month, will be cancelled over coronavirus concerns, the Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee announced on Tuesday.

In what was intended as a symbol of resilience, the flame went on display a week ago at the J-Village, Japan's national soccer training centre, used as a rescue headquarters during the disaster at the Fukushima nuclear plant in 2011.

But following the Japanese government's decision to declare a state of emergency on Tuesday, Olympic organisers have cancelled the exhibition.

The opening stages of the Tokyo 2020 torch relay were supposed to be underway by now, but the International Olympic Committee and Japanese government, under pressure from athletes and sporting bodies, pushed the Games to next year.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced the state of emergency on Tuesday, giving authorities more power to press people to stay at home and businesses to close.

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of everyone depends on what he knows.

Imam Ali (AS)

## Cartoonist Ali Derakhshi making animation series on coronavirus

**A R T TEHRAN** — Iranian cartoonist and animator d e s k Ali Derakhshi is making a series to teach people how to follow health protocols during the home quarantine.

Entitled "COVID 19 Seconds", the series is composed of fifteen 19-second episodes, Iran's Documentary and Experimental Film Center (DEFC), which is the producer of the animated series, announced on Tuesday.



Iranian cartoonist and director Ali Derakhshi in an undated photo

The main character of the series is a lion that has to stay home due to the coronavirus epidemic.

Several other Iranian artists have also produced animations on coronavirus — COVID-19 to raise people's awareness of the disease and to entertain children who have been quarantined in their homes over the past month.

Iran's Saba Animation Center is producing an animation series titled "Coronavirus" reminding people of tips to prevent spreading coronavirus.

Pejman Malmir, Hesam Javaheri, Behnam Berenji and Azadeh Nikbar are the directors of the 26-episode series.

Iranian cartoonist Jamal Rahmati also announced that he has used characters from Persian poet Ferdowsi's magnum opus, the Shahnameh, to make an animation series named "The Seven Adventures of Coronavirus" on coronavirus.

## Shorts from Iran line up for Lakeshorts film festival

**A R T TEHRAN** — A lineup of six Iranian films d e s k will go on screen at the 10th edition of the Lakeshorts International Short Film Festival in Toronto, Canada.

"Howling" by Parsa Bozorgani, "The Incomplete" by Erfan Parsapur and "Braceball" by Rayhaneh Mortezaia are among the films.

The lineup also includes "Magralen", a co-production between Iran and Canada by Maryam Zarei, and "Extra Sauce" and "Better than Neil Armstrong", both by Alireza Qasemi.

The Lakeshorts International Short Film Festival, which was scheduled to be held in April, has been postponed until September due to the coronavirus outbreak in the world.

## "Harry Potter" author J.K. Rowling says fully recovered from likely coronavirus

**New York (Reuters)** — "Harry Potter" author J.K. Rowling said on Monday she had recovered from a suspected case of COVID-19 after two weeks of illness.

"For last 2 weeks I've had all symptoms of C19 (tho haven't been tested)," Rowling said on her Twitter account. She also shared a video of a breathing technique that she said had helped her manage her worst symptoms and had been recommended by her husband, who is a doctor in the U.K.

"I really am completely recovered and wanted to share a technique that's recommended by doctors, costs nothing, has no nasty side effects but could help you/your loved ones a lot, as it did me," she added.

Rowling, 54, whose "Harry Potter" book series and subsequent films have millions of fans worldwide, was the latest celebrity to announce they had recovered from the disease caused by a new coronavirus that has taken the lives of more than 70,000 people worldwide.

The growing list includes actors Tom Hanks and Idris Elba, U.S. pop singer Pink and heir to the British throne Prince Charles.

Rowling last week announced that "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone," the first book in the series about the boy wizard, will be available for free worldwide as an ebook and audiobook throughout April, as part of an initiative to help parents, carers and teachers entertain housebound children.

## Iranian writer's "Hannah" teaching world's children about coronavirus

**CULTURE TEHRAN** — Iranian writer Ali d e s k Asghar Seidabadi (Seyyedabadi) has recently authored a book named "Hannah, Our Hero" to teach children around the world how to take care of themselves during the coronavirus pandemic.

Illustrated by his daughter Ghazaleh, the book has been translated into English, Italian, French and German, he has announced on his official website.

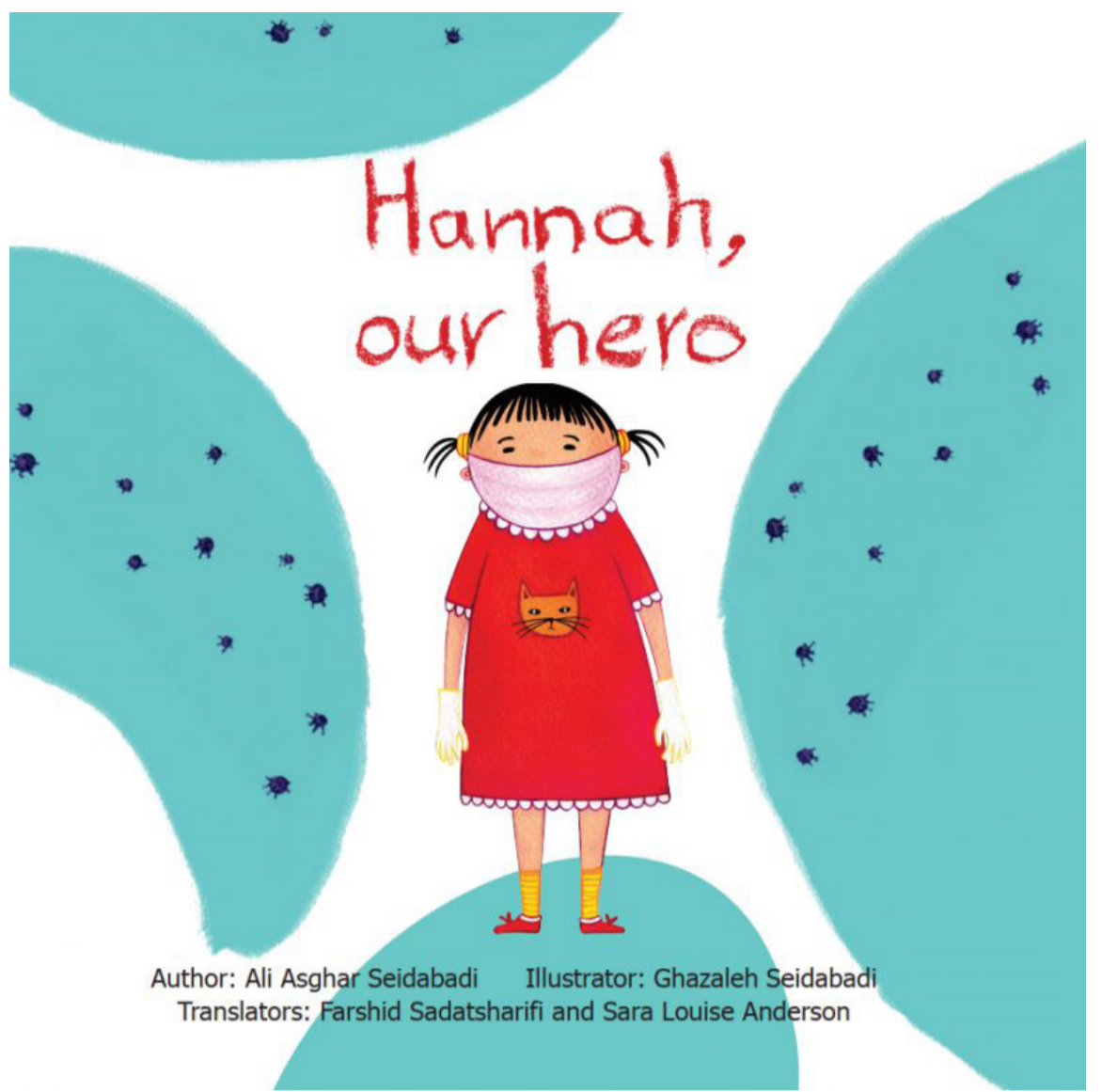
The book was authored when the home quarantine began in Iran with the Iranian New Year holiday on March 20.

In a preface to the book, Seidabadi refers to some books written on coronavirus — COVID-19 by Chinese and American authors during the coronavirus pandemic and added, "They were useful books but for me, the social aspects of the event and its effect on our lives and tolerating the situation was more important than how to tackle and get rid of the virus."

"Hannah, Our Hero" is about several children including Hannah that go to visit their uncle, Bahman, who doesn't know that he is infected with COVID-19. All children are infected, but Hannah escapes uninfected due to her care about the tips for dealing with coronavirus.

All versions of the book are available for download on Seidabadi's official website <http://aliseidabadi.ir>.

The book was translated into Italian by Shabnam



Author: Ali Asghar Seidabadi    Illustrator: Ghazaleh Seidabadi  
Translators: Farshid Sadatsharifi and Sara Louise Anderson

Front cover of the English version Iranian children's writer Ali Asghar Seidabadi's latest book "Hannah, Our Hero".

Kasrai. Farshid Sadatsharifi and Sara Louise Anderson are the translators of the English and French versions. The German and French versions have been rendered by Zahra Nurbakhsh.

## Six Iranian shorts to compete in Spanish fest

**A R T TEHRAN** — A lineup of six Iranian films d e s k will be competing in the second edition of the Cachinus de Cine International Short Film Festival for Children and Youth taking place at the beginning of May in Cilleros, Spain.

The short films "Confused" and "Miracle" by Saman Kafi will be competing in the Junior Category.

Also included in the Junior Category is the short film "Half Past Four".

In the Animation Category, there are two Iranian animations "Green & Blue" and "I Am Tree".

"The Small World" is an entry to the Documentary Category.

More than 500 short films from 50 different countries will be competing at the festival this year.



A logo for FICIJ Cachinus De Cilleros Cinema.

## Iranian director Tufan to make new film with producer Brett Granstaff

**A R T TEHRAN** — Iranian d e s k filmmaker Rahim Tufan announced on Tuesday that he will make his new project named "Barat Matrix" with American producer Brett Granstaff in the U.S. after the end of the coronavirus crisis.

"I've reached an agreement with Brett Granstaff to produce my new film this year," he told the Persian service of Honaronline.

"I've been working on the plot for years and negotiated with some of Iranian producers, but finally, I decided to make it as an international production due to its subject," he added.

"Barat Matrix", which is Tufan's second film after his 2016 drama "One Kilo and 21 Grams", has a philosophical subject and is about metaphysics, psychology and human instincts.



Iranian filmmaker Rahim Tufan in an undated photo.

## Coronavirus urges people to change: cartoonist Einstein

By Manijeh Rezapoor

**TEHRAN** — Brazilian cartoonist and illustrator Cival Einstein regards the COVID-19 pandemic as the fight of David and Goliath, calling it a war that has forced people to change.

"Nature deserves respect, the American imperialists and the Chinese have explored and hurt nature a lot, and she couldn't take it and it is reacting this way. We are paying a high price for it," he told the Tehran Times in an email interview on Monday.

Einstein is taking part in Iran's We Defeat Coronavirus International Cartoon Contest with his submission based on Gulliver's adventures portraying Gulliver as huge, but even the huge one cannot escape the coronavirus and has to stay at home.

Asked how he really sees the situation, and whether he considers it a good or a bad opportunity for art especially caricature, he said, "I believe art is a therapy, while it is educative and playful, it is like a school."

He noted that caricature helps take off the masks of those who always used masks to deceive people.

"When the truth comes, it hurts some people. I think we will not know the world without creative expressions and art makes us reflect the reality," he described.

Einstein also said that he believes his other artist friends are busy producing artworks on the theme of coronavirus, which is an accessible theme and refers to many interpretations.

"In this theme, we have a salad of subjects, such as politics, social life, history and facts, of course, I see it with a positive side," he said.

Einstein added that he is filled with new ideas and is busy producing more works every day, while he is in home quarantine.

"I can see the pain of others and put it in the cartoon, this is very important for me, I pour all my feelings into the cartoons which are joy, sadness, creativity and hoping for better days to come," he added.

Last updated April 7, 2020, a total number of people diagnosed with the coronavirus in Brazil has reached 12,232, of whom 566 have died and 127 recovered.

Einstein said that his country is also taking quarantine measurement as it is known worldwide, however, some accept



Brazilian cartoonist Cival Einstein

and follow the rules and some don't.

"In my country, some people have their beliefs and think this is a lie, they are the most diverse interpretations, some groups accuse other groups, saying that quarantine is the electoral stage, others believe in science, others in faith, and the governments of some states are doing what

they can, but the virus is an invisible and fast enemy," he explained.

Asked if he is satisfied with the policies of his country taken towards the combat against COVID-19, he answered that the cases of coronavirus infection and the death rates at the moment are low in his country compared with the United States, Italy, China, and other countries.

"No, I'm not happy with the policies. It could be better, they don't give up their salaries to help people, it doesn't make me happy, it could be better, maybe a few are working hard to fight this pandemic, but they are not many," he said.

Einstein has participated in many festivals and cartoon contests in Iran and the world, winning a special prize in 2014 at the Macedonia cartoon competition, where he selected as a member of the jury in 2019.

He also received first prize at the Fourth International Graphic Humor Festival in Armenia in 2018.

"I will continue making cartoons. I believe art saves and irony softens the pain and laughter relaxes the soul," he concluded.

## Venice Film Festival rules out digital option

**NEW YORK (Variety)** -- The Venice Film Festival is forging ahead with preparations for the September 2-12 event despite coronavirus concerns, and ruling out the possibility that the fest could go digital — at least not in its entirety.

"The Venice Film Festival cannot be replaced by an online event," a Venice spokesman told Variety on Monday. He added that "there is obviously the possibility that we use technology for some initiatives," but noted that at present "it's too early for this to be decided."

The Venice spokesman was commenting on a brief interview given by Venice artistic director Alberto Barbera to Italian news agency ANSA over the weekend, in which Barbera said he is currently not weighing digital options.

Barbera was reacting in the interview to last week's announcement by Toronto Film Festival co-heads Joana Vicente and Cameron Bailey that they were "looking

at both on-site and digital innovations" for that event, which is scheduled to run Sept. 10-20, due to "uncertainty about what 'people coming together again' will look like come September."

"Toronto is a different type of festival, not comparable to Cannes or Venice," Barbera told ANSA, adding that while he and his team "are working just the same as in past years," at present, "we cannot provide specifics about the future," besides the fact that Venice does not see scrapping the physical aspect of the event as a possibility.

Meanwhile, in a further indication that Venice is moving forward seemingly undeterred, at least until a clearer September scenario emerges, organizers on Monday announced the call for projects for its Final Cut in Venice co-production workshop dedicated to supporting works from the Middle East and Africa,

currently scheduled to be held during the fest.

While Italy is currently in strict lockdown — with a coronavirus death toll of more than 15,000 that currently makes it the world's hardest hit country by the pandemic — new infections are believed to have plateaued and, somewhat similarly to China, the hope is that the crisis will subside in Italy sooner than some other nations.

Last month, the fest's parent organization, multi-disciplinary arts org. the Venice Biennale, headed by film producer and former Cinecittà studios chief Robert Ciccuto, moved the opening date of its Architecture Biennale, which was originally set to open May 23, to August 29, due to coronavirus concerns.

Venice, which is considered the world's oldest film festival, in January announced that Cate Blanchett would preside over its 77th edition.