

Outrage in Iran as Azerbaijan steals Iranian heritage

↓ Zoorkhana sports and wrestling in Iran

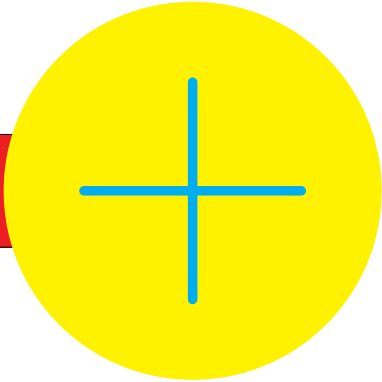


In a controversial move that has sparked anger among many Iranians, the traditional zoorkhana sports and wrestling has been inscribed on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List of Humanity as a traditional sport of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

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FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022:
Netherlands overcome
tricky tests to set up quarters date

A place in the World Cup semifinals will be on the line when the Netherlands and Argentina square off at the Lusail Stadium on Friday. On the first day of the knockout phase in Qatar, the Netherlands beat USA 3-1 in Doha's Khalifa International Stadium, before Argentina held off a late surge by Australia to edge the Socceroos 2-1.

Dutch delight
Wingbacks Denzel Dumfries and Daley Blind made massive contributions to Oranje's

triumph, who will now play in a seventh World Cup quarter-finals, having missed out on a place in the tournament in Russia four years ago. Dumfries capped off a brilliant sequence of one-touch passing with a cut-back low cross that found an unmarked Memphis Depay in the box, whose side-footed strike got the Netherlands off the mark in the 11th minute, making him the second all-time top scorer in the orange colors with 43 goals – with Robin van Persie on top with 50.

Inter fullback then set up Blind in similar fashion to double the Dutch lead right before the break. Haji Wright cut the deficit to one with 14 minutes from normal time, when his backheel effort looped over Dutch keeper Andries Noppert, but Dumfries restored the two-goal cushion five minutes later, side-footing a volley on the far post on a Blind's inch-perfect cross. For the European heavyweight, who has enjoyed loads of talent throughout

the years – from Johan Cruyff to Milan trinity, Dennis Bergkamp, and Arjen Robben – this Dutch squad looks like a relatively average group of players but the veteran manager Louis van Gaal did not write off the prospect of his men going all the way in Qatar. "I think we have big chances here," said the 71-year-old, who is in charge of the national team for a third spell after leading the country to a third-spot finish in Brazil in 2014. "We still have three match-

es to go. I've been talking about this for a year. We can become world champions – not that we will – but we can. I am talking about team-bonding, how we can build the strongest possible team and I derive pleasure from the group of players and, of course, performances and results." Meanwhile, a decent run in Qatar is what Gregg Berhalter's young USMNT will be looking to build on before cohosting the event in four years' time.

Curious case of Iran's
new cheetah cubs

Ali Amiri
Staff writer

As of January 2022, only 12 Asiatic cheetahs remain in existence, which makes their conservation status critically endangered. Asiatic or Persian cheetahs live in various reserves in Iran, and are occasionally sighted in Pakistan. Considering the drastic stats, one can't help but understand the surge of happiness in response to the shocking news that broke out on Saturday: Two barely one-month-old cheetah cubs are recently found in Khar Turan National Park. Yet, the official news raises more questions than it answers.

pave the way for their return to their natural habitat. Yet, due to the cold, cubs' age, and other conditions, they were taken to a station to keep them alive. Later, it was revealed that both cubs are female, which made the tragedy even graver. According to official stats, there are only three female cheetahs left living in the wild. Even if the shepherd's story checks out and there is no monkey business going on, still removing the endangered species from their natural habitat is an unjustified act. It also shows the failure of DoE in thoroughly educating the local communities on the issues relating to the

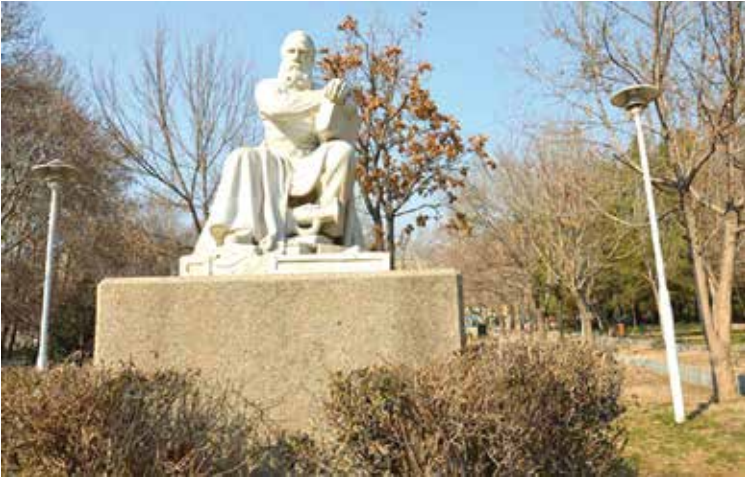


"We have never had reports of cheetah birth in Khar Turan in autumn," said Hassan Akbari, an official with Iran's Department of the Environment (DoE), also pointing out that the cubs have been found in the remote southeastern part of the park. Semnan Province Directorate of DoE reported the finding of the two cubs for the first time. Reportedly, a shepherd has found them and, fearing for their survival, taken them to his own corral. Akbari asserts that the shepherd's narrative lacks plausibility. According to a story printed yesterday in Iran newspaper, the shepherd seemingly found the cubs in a grove near a creek. Failing to find the mother cheetah, he took them away for protection against sheepdogs. Eventually, other shepherds of the region convinced him to contact DoE. "Akbari emphasizes that he cannot confirm the narrative," writes Zahra Keshvari in her story. On Friday, the cubs were taken back to the place where they were taken with the knowledge of DoE, and efforts were made to find the mother and

conservation of the precious species. "We hear such stories despite claims of educating local communities. We have been witnessing enthusiasm in some news outlets whereas the news should induce nothing but sorrow," Twitter user Falat-e Iran (Iran Plateau) told Iran Daily. "The best reaction to finding the cheetah cubs was to leave the place, not to take them in," reads the Tweet the user posted in response to the news. Recent advancements in the curious case of Iran's latest sweethearts indicate that the cubs are currently safe and sound, under the care of specialized veterans, including Alireza Shahrdiri, who has been in charge of Pirouz, another – male – cheetah cub who, sadly, was rejected by her mother due to human contact with the animal's skin upon his birth via C-section. Akbari acknowledges the situation as an unwanted opportunity which should be maximally used, according to Iran story. "If there was a chance to return them to nature, they would have been undoubtedly returned. But it seems there's no chance for that happening."

Khayyam's tomb in Neyshabur attractive for tourists

Omar Khayyam (1048-1131 CE) was a celebrated Persian figure who earned fame at home and abroad as a mathematician, astronomer and philosopher. But in the West, his chief claim to fame has been his poetry, thanks to the English translation of his rubaiyat (a collection of quatrains). The tomb and museum of the outstanding scientist is in southeastern Neyshabur, in a massive garden compound. It is among the main tourist attractions of the region, hosting a large number of travelers and sightseers from various parts of Iran and the world every year. However, due to the lack of financial resources, Khayyam Museum was closed five years ago, and its objects were moved to a storehouse. The good news is that during his recent visit to Neyshabur, Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Ezatollah Zarghami ordered the reopening of the museum and returning its artifacts. Various astronomical tools and equipment were among the objects exhibited at Khayyam Museum. It



Statue of Khayyam
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was one of several historical and spectacular museums of Khorasan Razavi Province. The museum, extending in an area of nearly 120 sq m, was inaugurated during the International Congress in Commemoration of Hakim Omar Khayyam, held in Neyshabur, from May 17 to 19, 2000.

Compasses, astrolabes and metal vessels dating back to the 11th century CE were among the most valuable items showcased at the museum. The statue of Khayyam is also in the museum. The importance of astronomy, well-known pottery dishes made in Neyshabur, as well as the absence of

such a museum in the province led the province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization to establish Khayyam Museum in Neyshabur. The museum had four sections. Astronomical instruments, astrolabes and various types of compasses were on display in the first section of the museum, while the second showcased ancient bronze and metal dishes. Moreover, old pottery dishes and paintings drawn by Khayyam were exhibited in the third and fourth sections of the museum, respectively. The building of Khayyam's tomb was constructed in such a way that it has fulfilled Khayyam's wish mentioned in one of his poems. Blossoms of apricot trees fall on his grave in the spring. Twenty quatrains, composed by Khayyam, are inscribed on the building of his tomb. The garden mausoleum, which represents the fusion of modern and traditional art, comes alive on special occasions, including the Iranian New Year, or Norouz, as well as Khayyam's birthday and the anniversary of his passing.