

Rest in peace, son of Iran

Social Desk

EXCLUSIVE

Since his troubled birth on May 1, 2022 in Khar Turan National Park in Semnan Province, Pirouz, the Asiatic cheetah cub had become for many of us a source of national pride and inspiration.

Bred in captivity, the son of Iran and Firuz, two of Iran's few remaining Asiatic cheetahs, was named Pirouz, which means victor in Farsi. The fact that he was the only survivor out of three cubs born to the couple, made the naming all the more symbolic and befitting.

Yet, life was not kind to the little creature from early on. Due to his mode of birth, i.e. caesarean, his mother refused to accept and feed her cubs. This was going to be an immense problem, since no other kind of milk is appropriate for feeding them.

Despite all these conditions, the 300-gram cub began to grow and turned into a healthy sweetheart that many of us followed closely, hoping that he would become a symbol of regeneration of Iranian cheetah.

We hearted every single post on social media that informed us about the cub's healthy conditions, and were sick with worries whenever he was facing difficult conditions.

Pirouz, however, prevailed.

Until last week, when the news of his troubled health made headlines once again, and this time it seemed very serious.

On Thursday, Gholamreza Ebdali, an official with Iran's Department of the Environment, told the media that Pirouz had

a problem with his digestive system and was unable to defecate.

As his health declined, he was transferred to the hospital to be treated for his kidney failure, which he was dealing with since his birth.

"He put up with it, however," said Ebdali, adding, "Now, his situation is a bit difficult, we have to wait and see what the results will be."

On Monday night, doctors at the Central Veterinary Hospital in Tehran had begun dialysis procedures for Pirouz, but could not save the almost 10-month old cub.

Amir Moradi, the head of the hospital apologized to the people in a video message, saying, "I apologize to the people on behalf of myself and all my colleagues because we couldn't keep Pirouz alive."

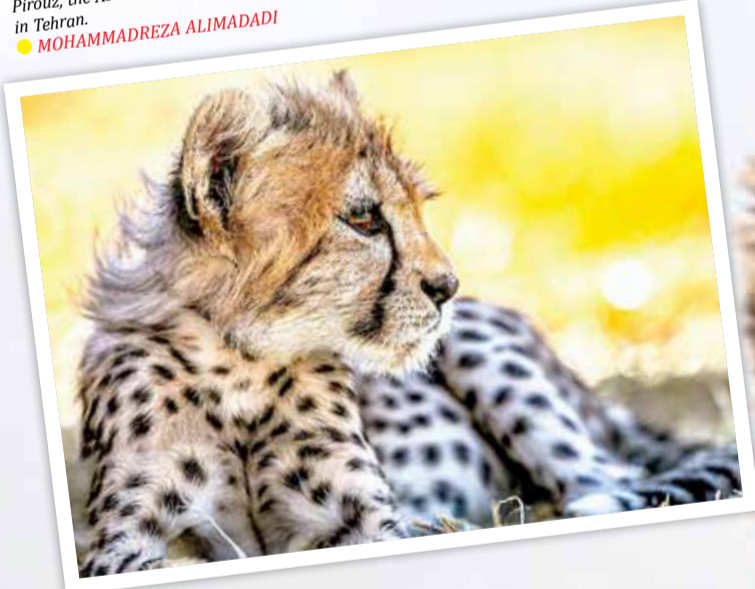
The news of his death was heartbreaking. Almost every Iranian had a soft spot for the spotted creature and, naturally, his passing feels like a personal loss for many. Many Iranians took to social media to express their grief.

Alireza Qorbani, the celebrated Iranian traditional singer, tweeted a quote off Hossein Monzavi, one of Iran's most famous modernist poets with a picture of Pirouz.

"When I look all that I have saved, the only thing I see is the sad sorrow of memories," his tweet reads.

Perhaps the only thing that might reduce the weight of this loss and lessen our grief is the news of the pregnancy of Iran, Pirouz's mother. Let's all hope that as our beloved Pirouz rests in peace, Iran brings to the world another source of hope for us all.

Pirouz, the Asiatic cheetah cub after moving to Pardisan Park in Tehran.
● MOHAMMADREZA ALIMADADI



Alireza Shahrhiri, the vet who became the caretaker of Pirouz spent many nights and days by his side.
● ALIREZA MASOUMI

