

# Dangerous new trend puts babies and mothers at risk



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## Social Desk EXCLUSIVE

Arguably, having a birthdate that reads with a rhythm, which is usually made up of the repetition of one or two numbers, should be at the bottom of the list of things that one may boast about. Yet, for more than a decade now, a trend has been observed among many Iranian parents to give birth to their infants on "rhythmic" dates such as the second day of the second month of the Persian calendar year 1402 (written 2/2/02). This craze not only endangers the health of the

infants who are born via medically unnecessary C-sections but also puts the health of their mothers in jeopardy since many things could go wrong during a forced C-section surgery. Forced C-section, also known as cesarean section, is a surgical procedure in which a baby is delivered through an incision in the mother's abdomen and uterus. While C-sections can be life-saving in certain situations such as when the mother or the baby is in distress during labor, they can also pose significant risks when performed unnecessarily. According to the World Health Organization, the

ideal rate of C-sections stands at between 10-15 percent of all births. However, in many countries, the rate of C-sections is much higher, with some hospitals reporting rates as high as 40 percent. Iran's Ministry of Health has, on numerous occasions, warned against the trend, calling it dangerous and taking measures to prevent hospitals from undertaking forced C-sections, especially on the "rhythmic" dates, which have become astronomically popular among parents. Another reason why the rate of C-sections is so high is that some doctors pressure or coerce women into

having "forced" C-sections even when it is not medically necessary. This can happen for a variety of reasons including convenience, financial incentives, and fear of malpractice lawsuits. Forced C-sections can have serious consequences for both the mother and the baby. The surgery itself carries risks such as infection, bleeding, and damage to organs. Mothers who undergo C-sections are also more likely to experience complications such as blood clots, respiratory problems, and longer hospital stays. Babies born via C-section are at higher risk of breathing problems and are more likely to be admitted to the

neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). They may also miss out on the benefits of natural birth, which include exposure to beneficial bacteria and hormones that help with bonding and breastfeeding. In addition to the physical risks, forced C-sections can also have psychological consequences for mothers. Many women report feeling violated and traumatized by the experience, and some develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a result. To avoid the dangers of forced C-sections, it is important for women to be informed about their options during childbirth and

to advocate for their rights. Mothers should not feel pressured or coerced into a procedure they do not want or need. It is also important for healthcare providers to prioritize the health and well-being of both the mother and the baby over convenience or financial gain. More importantly, the medical staff should be the frontrunners of scientific thinking and counter any implausible idea about the benefits of a "rhythmic" birthdate. That, however, doesn't seem to be the case in Iran, as many doctors push for such unnecessary operations just for a few dollars more.

## Without intervention, Hyrcanian forests of Iran will be no more

### Rise of luxury forest villas

One of the driving factors behind the deforestation is the exponential growth of the luxury forest villa market, with prices skyrocketing, sometimes reaching over 100 billion tomans (nearly \$2 million), an increase of threefold. Advertisements for these villas feature phrases that underscore the degree of encroachment on forested land, including "attached to the forest," "pristine area," "swimming pool and hot tub from a forest spring," "private road," "water and gas branching from the main pipe," and "free electricity for up to 5 years," incentivizing buyers and sellers alike.

### Impact of citrus plantations

Citrus plantations are another contributor to the loss of forested land. Farmers plant citrus seedlings

in the heart of the forest, which abuts their land. Over time, as the citrus plants grow, the farmers start to cut down the forest trees or burn the lower trunks and cover them with soil, effectively annexing the forested area and reducing the extent of the woodland. Environmental activists fear that within the next three to four years, the only thing that will remain will be gardens in the downstream areas. Not even small patches of woodland will remain.

### Ranchers turned developers

The situation is so dire that ranchers and forest herders have entered into annual contracts with the forest organization as tenants of the forest, with the contract permitting them to use a livestock pen for a temporary stay of two months and a forest area of several hectares. However, in practice, the

ranchers have flagrantly disregarded these terms, cleared the land, felled trees, and erected structures. On occasion, they have even built as many as 13 or 14 houses and bequeathed them to their progeny as an inheritance, effectively appropriating the land for themselves that had once belonged to the public.

### Complaints and lack of response

The Forestry Organization has filed approximately 2,000 complaints about these violations, but they have yielded no results. In other words, the herders have taken over the forest, cleared the land, cut trees, and erected structures. The herders, in essence, have razed the entire forested regions of Bandpey and erected buildings for their private use, a circumstance that merits grave concern. The situation has escalated to such an extent



that the local wildlife population is in danger, as their habitats have been destroyed, leading to a significant decline in their numbers. Furthermore, the water sources in the area have been contaminated by the herders' livestock, which not only affects the wildlife but also the local population who rely on these water sources for their daily needs. The damage caused by these illegal activities has also had a significant

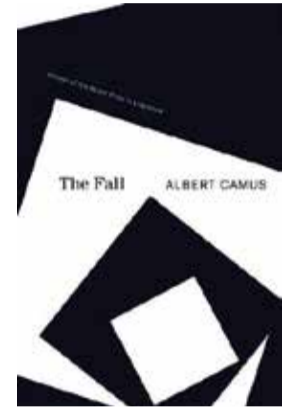
impact on the local economy, as the region's potential for ecotourism has been severely compromised. The Forestry Organization must take immediate action to halt these activities and protect the forest, wildlife, and local communities from further harm. Failure to do so could result in irreparable damage to this delicate ecosystem and the loss of a valuable natural resource for generations to come.

## IRAN READS

### 'The Fall' by Albert Camus

#### EXCLUSIVE

*I used to advertise my loyalty and I don't believe there is a single person I loved that I didn't eventually betray.*



Iran's book market witnessed another surprising bestseller last week: Albert Camus' 'The Fall'. 'The Fall' is a gripping and thought-provoking novel that explores the human condition through the eyes of its main character, Jean-Baptiste Clamence. Set in post-World War II Paris, the novel follows Clamence's descent from a successful lawyer to a self-proclaimed "judge-penitent" who spends his days drinking and philosophizing in a seedy Amsterdam bar. 'The Fall' is a masterful exploration of guilt, shame, and the search for meaning in a world that can often seem absurd and meaningless. Camus' writing is both poetic and precise, with each sentence carrying a weighty philosophical insight. The novel is structured as a series of monologues, with Clamence speaking directly to an unnamed listener who serves as a stand-in for the reader. Through Clamence's monologues, Camus delves into the nature of morality and the human psyche. Clamence's fall from grace is not caused by any single event but rather by a gradual realization that his actions have been motivated by selfishness and cowardice. He becomes obsessed with the idea of being judged by others and seeks redemption through confession and self-flagellation. 'The Fall' is not an easy read, but it is a rewarding one. Camus' exploration of the human condition is both profound and unsettling, forcing readers to confront their own flaws and weaknesses. The novel's themes are timeless and universal, making it just as relevant today as it was when it was first published in 1956. The novel is a must-read for anyone interested in philosophy, existentialism, or just good literature. Camus' writing is both beautiful and haunting, leaving a lasting impression on readers long after they've finished the book.