

# If you really love nature, just let it be



**Social Desk**  
**EXCLUSIVE**

The Plain of Overturned Tulips in Koohrang, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province in western Iran is a breathtaking natural wonder that has captivated visitors for generations. Nestled in the heart of the Zagros Mountains, this vast plain is covered in a sea of vibrant red and yellow tulips that stretch as far as the eye can see. The tulips bloom in the spring, transforming the landscape into a kaleidoscope of color that is truly awe-inspiring. Visitors can wander through the fields, taking in the sights and smells of this natural wonder, or simply sit back and admire the beauty of the plain from a distance. It is a truly magical experience that is not to be missed. Despite its popularity among tourists, the Plain of Overturned Tulips used to be largely untouched by human activity. The local community has worked hard to preserve the natural beauty of the area, ensuring that visitors can enjoy the tu-

lips in their natural habitat without causing harm to the ecosystem. As a result, the plain, fortunately, still remains a pristine and unspoiled natural wonder that is a testament to the power and beauty of nature. However, this seems to be changing. Three days ago, the verified Twitter account, Iranian Plateau, posted a picture that shows a vendor sitting near a bundle of uprooted overturned tulips, offering them to unknowing tourists. The text of the tweet reads: "If you ever visit the Plain of Overturned Tulips in Zagros, do not uproot the flowers, nor buy them from vendors. These flowers will wither hours after being uprooted. Just enjoy watching them." The account posted a breathtaking image of the plain, advising against uprooting these lovely flowers. In another tweet, Iranian Plateau informed its followers that a big part of this wonderful plain has fallen into ruin due to uprooting the flowers and livestock grazing. Sadly, it is not the first time that we hear of our price-

less natural wonders and their ecosystems being destroyed due to unmitigated nature tourism. Badab Soort in Mazandaran Province, in northern Iran, is another natural beauty which has come to taste the effects of reckless tourism. In recent years, nature tourism has become increasingly popular in Iran, with more and more people seeking to explore the natural world and experience the abundant beauty of the country. However, it is important to remember that tourism can have a significant impact on ecosystems and cultures, and that we must take steps to ensure that our travels do not harm the very things we seek to enjoy. One of the most important aspects of nature tourism is the need for cleanliness. This means not only keeping our own waste and litter to a minimum, but also respecting the natural environment and avoiding actions that could harm it. For example, visitors should avoid disturbing wildlife, or damaging plants, and should be careful not to introduce non-native spe-

cies that could upset the delicate balance of the ecosystem. Another danger of nature tourism is the potential for changing ecosystems. As more people visit natural areas, they may inadvertently introduce pollutants or invasive species that can disrupt the local environment. This can have serious consequences for both wildlife and humans, as ecosystems provide essential services such as clean water, air, and food. In addition to environmental concerns, there is also a need to respect local cultures when engaging in nature tourism. This means being mindful of local customs and traditions, and avoiding actions that could be seen as disrespectful or offensive. It is also important to support local economies by patronizing local businesses and buying locally-made products. Ultimately, the importance of clean nature tourism lies in its ability to connect people with the natural world in a way that is both enjoyable and sustainable. By taking steps to minimize our impact on ecosystems

and cultures, we can help ensure that future generations will be able to enjoy these same experiences for years to come. Now, whether you are an avid nature lover or simply looking for a unique travel experience, a visit



to the Plain of Overturned Tulips is sure to leave you with memories that will last a lifetime – just keep in mind that uprooting those flowers is an act against the very nature that you claim to revere.

**NEWS IN BRIEF**

**Italian tourism video mocked for using footage of Slovenia**



Florence cathedral is one of Italy's main tourist attractions. **SORIN COLAC/ALAMY**

Italy's tourism ministry has faced ridicule after an official video to attract tourists to Italy used footage of people in Slovenia. The video, part of a €9m campaign produced by the Armando Testa communications group, was widely mocked by critics and on social media even before it emerged that part of it had been shot abroad. Titled "Open to Meraviglia" (Open to Wonder), the video features a computerized "influencer" version of Venus, a symbol of Italian art, as depicted by Sandro Botticelli in his renaissance masterpiece The Birth of Venus. The very modern "Venus" is shown eating pizza and presenting some of Italy's main tourist attractions such as the Coliseum in Rome or Florence's cathedral. The art historian Tomaso Montanari called the advertising campaign "grotesque", and an "obscene" waste of money, while the video was lampooned by users of Italian social media platforms. The most controversial footage shows a group of young people smiling on a sunlit patio in what is presented as a typical Italian scene. However, eagle-eyed viewers spotted that the patio in question is actually in the Cotar region of Slovenia, close to the Italian border. The Armando Testa communications group was not immediately available to comment. The Italian tourism minister, Daniela Santanche, a member of Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's far-right Brothers of Italy party, called critics of the video "snobs" and said the depiction of Venus as an influencer was aimed at attracting young people.

## Will road fencing help Asiatic cheetah live on?

**Social Desk**  
The Asiatic cheetah, an endangered species native to Iran, is facing a grave threat due to the absence of proper fencing along the Abbasabad-Miami road inside the Turan National Park in north-eastern Iran, which is home to one of the largest populations of the Asiatic cheetah. The erection of 36 kilometers of barricades is critical for the survival of the big cat, but the project has been postponed multiple times, causing concerns among environmentalists and activists. The head of the Environmental Protection Organization

had earlier announced that the fencing work would start soon thereafter. However, it has now been revealed that the fencing and demarcation of the road are part of a long-term blueprint, which is postponed to an unknown date. The Deputy Director of Natural Environment and Biodiversity of the Environmental Protection Organization has confirmed that they have engaged in several, often one-sided correspondences with the Ministry of Roads about the fencing of the road where cheetahs cross. A deputy roads minister announced that the agreements have been reached and are to

be implemented. Hassan Akbari, the deputy of Natural Environment and Biodiversity at the Environmental Protection Organization, has cited funding as the most significant hindrance to the project's implementation. He says that such needs were not reflected in the Ministry of Roads' budget. Currently, the project is being carried out with whatever funding is available. According to Akbari, there have been extensive deliberations regarding the effectiveness of fencing. Even among environmentalists and activists, there is a slight disagreement on this matter, but it is

part of the plan and needs to be implemented. A fence can act as a good and effective barrier, but its durability, maintenance, and ability to guide cheetahs toward crossings need to be considered. Experts have concluded that it is better to implement fencing in emergency situations. When it comes to the safety of the habitats of the Asiatic cheetah, Akbari believes that it is impossible to reduce casualties to zero. However, every effort should be made to use all the available methods to minimize casualties. By managing the situation of livestock and prey in the South, West, and East of Tur-

an National Park, cheetahs can be stopped from scattering to the North, which would naturally help reduce casualties. The natural dwelling of this alluring creature encompasses the zone where motor vehicles traverse. Hence, the significance of public awareness and education is emphasized when venturing through such terrains. Akbari emphasizes that drivers must demonstrate the willingness to diminish fatalities by traveling at less than 90 kilometers per hour on an 80-kilometers-long road, which may seem tedious, yet there exists no other efficacious approach

to rescuing this species and forestalling road incidents. The loss of genetic diversity due to the small population size could further threaten the survival of the Asiatic cheetah. By implementing

the fencing project, we can provide a safer environment for these big cats, thereby increasing their chances of survival and ensuring their continued existence for future generations to come.

