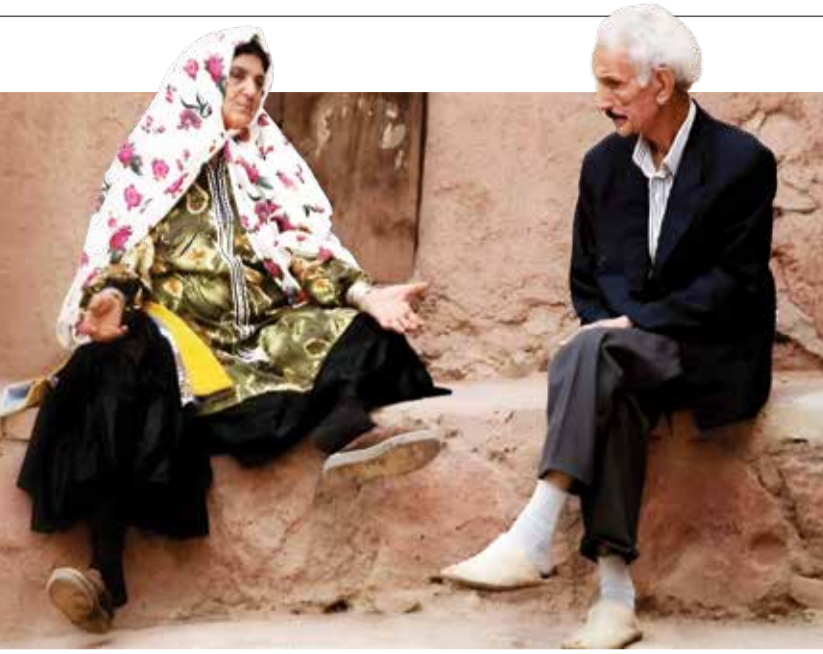


Iranian SWO to unveil nationwide program promoting mental health among the elderly



● DIDAR NEWS

Social Desk

The deputy of counseling and psychological affairs at the Center for Development and Prevention of Iranian State Welfare Organization (SWO) has announced the implementation of a plan called 'Psychological Well-Being of Pre-Old Age and Old Age'. Masoumeh Tavakoli highlighted that ageing is a global phenomenon affecting all countries, with projections indicating that there will be approximately 1.5 billion elderly individuals worldwide by

2050. She further stated that this significant number brings its own set of challenges, ISNA reported. "In Iran, it is expected that the elderly population will reach 18 million by 2050 based on current population growth trends," she said. Tavakoli emphasized the importance of valuing old age as a precious period in people's lives. "One way to care for the elderly is by prioritizing their physical health along with other aspects of their well-being. Health should not be limited to physical

health alone; mental health plays a crucial role as well," she said. The World Health Organization defines health as having diverse capabilities to fulfill various roles rather than solely focusing on physical well-being. According to Tavakoli, common psychological symptoms observed among older adults, especially in Iran, include depression, anxiety, psychosomatic symptoms, and feelings of futility. In old age, these issues become more prominent as individuals also face increased

physical weaknesses and challenges which may lead them to withdraw from society. She emphasized that any actions taken regarding old age should prioritize preventive measures aimed at reducing constant care needs while avoiding expensive and continuous medical services. Taking this approach into consideration, a plan focused on psychological well-being during pre-old age and old age has been developed. This experimental plan aims to implement preventive measures

through components such as awareness campaigns, training programs, screening procedures, and capacity building efforts. The project was initially piloted in two provinces: Khorasan Razavi and Fars. Results from these pilots have been analyzed successfully leading towards plans for a wider implementation across the country. Additionally, six educational packages have been designed for different groups within this plan. Tavakoli highlighted the importance of considering the elderly as part of

a family or welfare center complex. The educational plan encompasses all individuals involved in the care and support of the elderly. In total, 6,000 elderly individuals were examined and screened as part of this project. Families received training, and supplementary courses were conducted for specialists due to the relatively new focus on psychological services for older adults in Iran. A total of 236 professionals received the necessary training to contribute effectively to this process.

Sudanese children 'wasting away' due to hunger



● AFP

The past four months of fighting in Sudan has pushed millions into food insecurity – with an additional 1.5 million children expected to fall into crisis levels of hunger by September – as aid agencies say they are struggling to reach people. Up to 17,000 children a day have been falling into crisis levels of hunger, Save the Children warned on Tuesday, according to The Guardian. With 4 million people displaced so far, the charity said more people were facing hunger in Sudan than at any point since records there began in 2012. "It's impossible to overemphasize the seriousness of the situation in Sudan. This is a desperate, dire crisis for children," said Arif Noor, Save the Children's director in Sudan. "In conflict areas, if you go to a market, you risk being robbed, shelled, murdered or caught in the crossfire," he said. "If you get to that market, the shelves are empty." According to the most recent report by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, areas with the worst fighting are predictably seeing the highest rates of hunger. Across the country, 20.3 million people – or 42 percent of Sudan's population – were gripped by high levels of acute food insecurity, the IPC said. More than half of the population needs urgent help in Darfur, where the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces have been accused of large-scale massacres of minority ethnic groups. The Sudanese independent broadcaster Radio Dabanga reported that 132 children had died of malnutrition-related conditions in the eastern state of El Gedaref. Prices of staple foods such as sorghum, millet and wheat are already high but shortages are likely to worsen as farmers are forced from their land by fighting. An open letter from humanitarian leaders released this week called for an immediate cessation of hostilities and warned the international community that there was "no excuse for waiting" to act in stopping the conflict "as Sudan's children are wasting away". Frustrated aid workers have bemoaned the lack of funding and support for humanitarian operations in Sudan, compared with the response to the war in Ukraine, condemning the disinterest as "unapologetically racist".

What is celebrity culture and why it matters?

Social Desk

The word 'celebrity' literally means someone who is a professional in their own field of activity. A celebrity is highly known in public and has an influence over people of a society. In the modern world, celebrities have attracted both people and social media's interest. The main feature of celebrities is that they come to the center of attention of the people

via social media, in a way that other non-celebrity people can't. In this context, Instagram, where celebrities can be directly in connection with their fans, in addition to sharing their photos and more, plays an important role. The importance of celebrities lies not only in their popularity among people, but also, for the most part, in the emotional effect their acts have on people.

Reasons for the rise of celebrity culture: Digitalization of the youths' lifestyle: The youth population's lifestyle is getting more digital and internet-based, in which mobile phones appear as the main source of everything. Although these current entertainment items help unlimited access to an abundance of information, Smartphones cause people to spend too much of their time on social media apps rather

than in real life. Consumerism of the society: Some consider the consumerism of society, which is both the reason and result of celebrity social activities, the original reason for fans' interest. Overrating of celebrities: Nowadays, celebrities are not only attractive concepts but also they have prestige in their own right. Getting validation through becoming the symbols of modern culture gives them the

capability of forming the cultural values of people. This process results in young people trying to prove themselves more than before and leads them to believe in fame as a valuable human quality. Decrease in institutional trust: It stem from the population's lack of trust in institutions and authorities' actions and decisions, and the poor job media entities are doing. Censorship and hiding reality, as well as the lack of

responsibility of officials, lead to people trying to find alternatives means of communicating their values and opinions. Inequality in society: The more unequal and unjust a society is – economically and politically – the harder, more limited it becomes for younger people to achieve their goals. All the while, the celebrity culture instills in the young generation the illusion of fast realization of their dreams.

Tehran's Pooya Shahr centers offer free skill courses to labor children

Social Desk

The CEO of the Services and Social Partnerships Organization of Tehran Municipality has announced that free training in 14 skill courses is being provided to working children at Pooya Shahr centers. Highlighting the range of services available across the capital's 34 Pooya Shahr centers, Ahmad Ahmadi Sadr emphasized the commitment of the organization to empowering

working and street children, according to IRNA. As part of this initiative, free training classes are being conducted in 14 different fields, with the aim of equipping these children with valuable skills. The CEO stressed that all services offered at Pooya Shahr are completely free. "The primary goal is to empower both the working children, who may be vulnerable to social harm, and their families. The focus is on providing skill-based and professional

training," he said. Ahmadi Sadr added that these workshops and classes cover handicrafts, painting, embroidery, hairdressing, sewing, leatherworking, knitting, carpet weaving, computer skills, advanced mechanics, theater, writing, and acting. He further noted that since implementing this project, a significant number of working children or their family members have acquired new skills and experienced empowerment. Lastly, the CEO highlighted additional activities taking place at these centers that go beyond educational programs. These include providing health items and livelihood packages along with financial support for medical treatment costs. Furthermore, they offer assistance with school registration and literacy initiatives.



● IRNA

PIC OF THE DAY



The Iranian fallow deer, a subspecies of deer, holds the distinction of being one of the world's rarest species. Over the past few decades, concerted efforts have been undertaken to address its declining population and prevent the risk of extinction for this globally significant creature. Among these initiatives is the establishment of a breeding and rearing center for Iranian fallow deer in Urmia Lake National Park within Urmia's Rashakan Complex. Constructed in 2022, this center spans six hectares within the Rashakan complex. Its purpose is to facilitate successful reproduction and nurturing of Iranian fallow deer. The recent birth of three new individuals in spring 2023 serves as an encouraging sign regarding the favorable biological condition experienced by this rare species within Urmia Lake National Park. Currently, there are 11 Iranian fallow deer residing at this breeding and reproduction center. Additionally, Ashk Island is home to 24 individuals while Spir Island houses five more members of this unique species. ● SOHEIL FARAJI/ISNA