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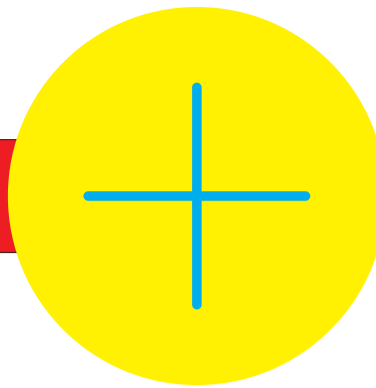
Gordon Pinsent, award-winning Canadian actor, dies at 92



AP – Gordon Pinsent, an award-winning Canadian actor acclaimed for his performance as a heartbroken husband in the film “Away from Her,” has died at 92. His family said in a statement that Pinsent died in his sleep.

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Globally known gemstone: Neyshabur's turquoise

Identifying, evaluating, and exploiting underground reserves, in general, and mineral reserves, in particular, is the most important and valuable way to benefit from the resources of one's homeland.

In today's world, mineral reserves are considered to be one of the important resources for maintaining the economic independence of countries, and Iran has a very high rank in the world in terms of having mineral

reserves, such as turquoise mines, surfiran.com wrote.

Turquoise, known in Persian as firuzeh, is an opaque, blue-to-green mineral that is a hydrated phosphate of copper and aluminum. It is rare and valuable in finer grades and has been prized as a gemstone and ornamental stone for thousands of years owing to its unique hue.

Only a few countries benefit from having turquoise mine sites, leading it to becoming a rare and infrequent stone. The extraction of this stone is very difficult.

Turquoise mine is intertwined with the history of Iran. Turquoise is Iran's national stone. For thousands of years, the best type of turquoise has been found in Neyshabur, Khorasan

Razavi Province, the hue of which is the best in the world.

According to experts, the price of turquoise increases significantly when cut, a precise and sensitive step in the procedure. Moreover, in Neyshabur, the amount of turquoise extracted from 1,500 kilograms of raw rock is around three kilograms.

Among Iran's turquoise mines, the one located in Neyshabur is one of the most important in the country and even the world. It is due to its excellent quality, especially the Ajami and Shajri varieties, which have a special reputation.

The Neyshabur turquoise mine is located in Madan-e Olia village in the Firuzeh rural district, with a reserve of 9,000 tons and an annual production capacity of 19 tons.

The Neyshabur turquoise mine is one of the oldest in the world, where the stone has been extracted for 2,000 years.

When Persian turquoise was imported to Europe in the 17th century, it was supplied through Turkey. The French named the stones simply “turquois” – French for



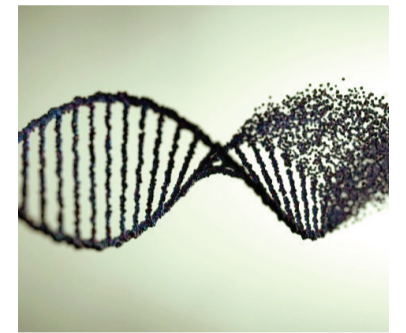
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Turkish. Thus the Europeans (and Americans and many others) now call the stone by the name of a country which has little to do with turquoise. Presently, the market is flooded with rather low

quality turquoise, with many imitations as well. Most people have never seen a high-quality turquoise, which is rare. The highest quality is still mined near Neyshabur.



Our genomes are full of 'junk DNA'



Of the roughly three billion base pairs making up the human genome, only around two percent encodes proteins, leaving the remaining 98 percent with less obvious functions. Dismissed by some as useless 'junk DNA', its origins, effects, and potential purpose in the evolution of life has attracted the attention of biologists ever since it was first noticed cluttering up our chromosomes in the 1960s, Science Alert reported.

Now researchers from Tel Aviv University in Israel have added some vital insights into the reasons why non-coding DNA persists, which could help us better understand the rich variety of genome sizes across the living world.

In 1977, two scientists named Richard Roberts and Phil Sharp independently noticed a good portion of this DNA clutter wasn't just scattered between our genes, but often interrupted them mid-sequence, a discovery that later earned them a Nobel Prize.

Known as introns, they seemed to burden complex cells like ours, while leaving simpler ones – such as those of bacteria – untouched. They also added a lot of labor to the process of translating DNA into something material.

20 countries want Iran's medicine and medical equipment



Currently there are 20 countries that have asked Iran to provide them with medicine and medical equipment, announced Iran's minister of health.

“Also, Syria and Iraq have accepted our Pharmacopoeia (a book containing directions for the identification of compound medicines),” said Bahram Einollahi, according to IRNA.

On the sidelines of the first fair of knowledge-based products in the field of food, medicine, and medical equipment, held in Tehran's Imam Khomeini Mosalla, the minister added, “The health care field of our country is one of our major achievements and it has brought us many hon-

ors in the world.” Einollahi noted that before the Islamic Revolution, Iran was completely dependent on the West, adding, “Unqualified doctors were practicing in Iran and many patients were sent abroad for treatment.”

According to the minister of health, the total number of Iran's medical students was 180,000, and the country was completely dependent on the West in terms of pharmaceuticals, whereas after the revolution many changes were made and immense progress achieved, so much so that today Iran is one of the leading countries in the field of health.

“Today, we have 67 departments of medical sciences, 850 research centers, and 25 departments of pharmacology. Our greatest resource is our human resources; we need to use their potential.”

He went on to add that since immediately after the revolution, the enemies waged an all-out war against our country, adding, “As we witness that through war, inciting protest, and imposing sanctions, they are after damaging our revolution.” Einollahi proclaimed sanctions a source of inspiration for independence and self-reliance, adding, “Today, many countries want to have friendly relations

with us.” The minister of health mentioned Iran's plans to form a health league, and added, “We had a fruitful session with Zimbabwe officials, and had mutual negotiations with 10 countries in Geneva. Also, 20 countries now want our pharmaceutical products and medical equipment.” Iranians are ready to hold scientific seminars at a regional level, he further noted, adding that the Islamic Republic plans to export medicines and medical equipment. Iran is producing 99 percent of medicines and 40 percent of medical equipment domestically, Einollahi said.



Sheyhan Lake, in southwestern Iran, is one of the most beautiful lakes in the country that offers many fun aquatic adventures.

● MOHAMMAD MEHDI AMELI/ISNA