

Former FBI agent Bob Levinson has died in Iranian custody: family

Thu, 2020-03-26 00:49

WASHINGTON: The former FBI agent Robert Levinson, who disappeared under mysterious circumstances in 2007, has died in Iranian custody, his family said Wednesday.

"We recently received information from US officials that has led both them and us to conclude that our wonderful husband and father died while in Iranian custody," said a statement from Levinson's family.



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[Robert Levinson](#)

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Iran: Case ongoing over missing former FBI agent on unsanctioned CIA job
Pompeo has no comment on possibility of US-Iran prisoner swap

Lebanese MP unveils Lebanese-made ventilator to aid coronavirus battle

Thu, 2020-03-26 00:38

BEIRUT: Lebanese MP Neemat Frem revealed a ventilator prototype on Wednesday, two weeks after launching an initiative to build one with a group of specialized engineers and doctors.

Frem said: "The machine, which will benefit the country's intensive care units, was built according to high specifications and accurate, advanced and versatile technologies."

He was accompanied at the unveiling by Dr. Fadlo Sayegh, the head of the Anesthesiology and Reanimation Department at Notre Dame University Hospital in Jounieh.



The ventilator was created by the engineering and technical team of Phoenix Co., which is affiliated with INDEVCO Industrial Group, headed by Frem.

"This Lebanese invention will be tested very soon. We will then work of making larger quantities of the ventilators if needed," Frem said, noting that "initiatives like these highlight the strength of our society and our

people's high level of social responsibility. we will be preparing for the worse in coordination with the Ministry of Industry, which is bringing together all the initiatives and relevant ministries."



"We are also working on manufacturing pre-fabricated isolation rooms, field hospitals and large quantities of medical face masks.

"What facilitated the manufacturing of the ventilator is the guidelines that were set by the UK in order to deal with the novel coronavirus. We adhered to these guidelines and even went beyond them," Frem added.





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Coronavirus, work freezes and lockdown violators fuel Lebanon crisis UAE to disinfect public transport in battle against coronavirus

[UAE to disinfect public transport in battle against coronavirus](#)

Author:

Thu, 2020-03-26 00:11

DUBAI: The UAE will carry out an extensive program to disinfect public facilities and transport including the Dubai Metro to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

The “national disinfection program” will take place over the weekend and will begin at 8:00 p.m. on Thursday and end at 6:00 a.m. on Sunday.

The movement of people and traffic will be restricted during this period, and public transport, including Dubai Metro, will close.

Citizens and residents are urged to stay at home for the duration of the program, except to buy food and medicine, receive healthcare or to work in vital sectors.

Vital sectors include energy, banking, communications, postal services, shipping, water and food, civil aviation and construction.



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UAE says medical masks are only necessary for people with chronic illness, flu symptoms

[France to withdraw all troops from Iraq due to coronavirus outbreak](#)

Wed, 2020-03-25 23:52

PARIS: France will withdraw its contingent of troops from Iraq, mostly trainers to local armed forces, because of the coronavirus pandemic, the chief of staff said on Wednesday.

France has around 200 military personnel working in Iraq either as trainers or in the headquarters of coalition forces in Baghdad.

“In coordination with the Iraqi government, the coalition has decided to adjust its deployments in Iraq and provisionally suspend training activities,” it said in a statement.

The UK defence ministry had already announced some of its troops would come home, citing a “reduced requirement for training” Iraqi security forces.

Iraq’s military had halted all training in early March to minimise the risk of the illness spreading among its forces, including from the US-led coalition helping fight remnants of the Islamic State group.



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Iran, France agree on release of prisoners, Iranian judiciary website

[Iran turns away Medecins Sans Frontieres coronavirus hospital](#)

Author:

ARAB NEWS

ID:

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Tue, 2020-03-24 22:05

LONDON: Iran has turned away a major international aid operation to help the country treat coronavirus cases.

Iran is being crippled by one of the worst Covid-19 outbreaks in the world, with the regime's figures claiming 1,934 people had died as of Tuesday.

Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), a global medical charity, had sent a mobile 50-bed hospital and team of medics to Isfahan to help hospital workers there handle the huge volume of cases.

On Tuesday, MSF said it was incomprehensible that Iranian health ministry officials had removed approval for the organization to help manage severe cases after the team and equipment had already arrived in Tehran.

"We are deeply surprised to learn that the approval for the deployment of our treatment unit has been revoked," said Michel Olivier Lacharite, manager of the MSF Emergency programmes in Paris. "The need for this intervention, and the authorisations needed to start it, were discussed and agreed with relevant Iranian authorities during the past weeks. Our teams were ready to start medical activities at the end of this week."

The announcement came after an Iranian health ministry adviser said on Monday that the country did not need MSF's help.

"We currently do not have a need for hospital beds set up by foreign forces," Alireza Vahabzadeh tweeted.

Earlier, MSF said the operation involved an inflatable hospital and a nine-person team of emergency and intensive care doctors and logistics personnel to treat patients critically ill with the virus.

The hospital had been flown from France and was to be set up inside the compound of Amin hospital in Isfahan.

"Iran is by far the hardest hit country in the region, and Isfahan the second worst-affected province in Iran," says Julie Reverse, MSF's representative in Iran. "We hope our assistance will relieve at least some of the pressure on the local health system."

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, on Sunday turned down a US offer of humanitarian assistance, saying "they could be giving medicines to Iran that spread the virus or cause it to remain permanently in Iran."

The outbreak has swept through Iran where the government has been criticized for its slow response and covering up the true extent of those infected.

Last week officials conceded that someone was dying from Covid-19 every 10 minutes in the country.



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About half of Iran's state workers are staying homeIran reports 127 more virus deaths; death toll now 1,812