

Brazil's Paulo Coelho Says Iran Doctor Who Tried to Save Neda's Life Is Safe in London

Contributed by Newsroom
Wednesday, 24 June 2009

Arash Hejazi is the name of the doctor who tried to help Neda Agha Soltan, the Iranian woman who was shot during street protest and whose video shown on YouTube has made her into a heroine of the Iranian people's cause. In the video, the doctor is the man in white shirt who tries to revive the young woman.

It was Brazilian writer Paulo Coelho who made the revelation, this Wednesday, after he got news that Hejazi, a friend of his, had arrived safe in London after fleeing Tehran.

In his blog - <http://paulocoelhoblog.com/> - the Brazilian author made public the exchange of email he had with Hejazi the last few days. In one of these messages the doctor says that he fears for his life and asks Coelho to take care of his wife and son in case anything happens to him.

The blog entries

The Doctor

Published by Paulo Coelho on June 24, 2009

(Late Sunday I watch Neda's video. I suspect that I recognize Arash Hejazi, but I prefer not to believe in what I am seeing. I send him an email)

Sunday 21 23:011

Dear Arash

I need to know where you stand, if things that I am seeing/reading are true. Then I can myself take a position - depending on your advice, of course.

love

Paulo

Date: Mon, 22 Jun 2009 02:05:05 -04:00

Subject: your country

Dearest Paulo,

I am now in Tehran. The video of Neda's murder was taken by my friend, and you can recognize me in the video. I was the doctor who tried to save her and failed. She died in my arms. I am writing with tears in my eyes. Please don't mention my name. I'll contact you with more details soon.

Love

Arash

The doctor

(At this point, I decide to put the video in my blog)

(For the rest of the day, I try to contact him. At one point, someone answers his phone as a "CNN journalist". I start to become worried)

Monday 22 17:46

Dear Arash

so far, no news from you. After I published the video in my blog, it seems that it spread worldwide, including posts in NY Times, Guardian, National Review, etc.

Therefore, my main concern now is about you. You NEED to answer this email, saying that you are all right and the name of the person where we spend the New Year's Eve in 2001 together, just to be sure that it is you really who is answering this email.

I don't buy this CNN person answering your mobile.

If you don't do that, I may leak your name to the press, in order to protect you - visibility is the only protection at this point. I know this because I am a former prisoner of conscience.

If you do that, unless instructed otherwise by you, I will stop the pressure for the moment. My main concern now is you and your family.

love

Paulo

P. S. - there are several trusted friends in blind copy here.

Tuesday, June 23, 2009 1:35 AM

Dearest Paulo

I am alright for now. I am not staying at home. I don't know about CNN. The friend's name was Frederick.

Love

Arash

Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2009 1:37 AM

Dearest Paulo,

Trying to leave the country tomorrow morning. If I don't arrive in London at 2 pm., something has happened to me. Till then, wait.

My wife and my son are in (edited). Their phone (edited) Her email (edited). Please wait till tomorrow. If something happens to me, please take care of (name of wife) and (name of son), they are there, alone, and have no one else in the world.

Much love, it was an honor having you as a friend.

Arash

(At this point, a Brazilian journalist, Luis Antonio Ryff, who traveled to Iran to cover my visit, recognizes Arash in the video, and writes me to double-check. I confirm, but I ask him to keep his name secret until today. Ryff agrees - even knowing that this would be a major scoop for him. I would like to thank him here, for his dignity)

Wednesday 24 1:55 PM

Arash landed in London.

Coelho's Twits

1.

Iran My friend, the doc who tries to revive Neda, just landed in UK. You can see him, our emails at <http://bit.ly/TNrPz> about 6 hours ago from web

2.

#Iran I had news from my friend, the doctor trying to help Neda: <http://bit.ly/vRj51> . I hope I will let you know his name by 2morrow 2about 23 hours ago from web

3.

#Iran 2 WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: if we don't hear in 48hs from ur friend helping Neda <http://bit.ly/m4r8K> we will make his name public2:52 PM Jun 22nd from web

4.

#Neda #Iran my best friend in Iran, a doctor, can be seen here trying to resuscitate Neda: <http://bit.ly/PmTfa> .Tears in my eyes7:51 AM Jun 22nd from web

5.

Neda dies 2min after being hit <http://bit.ly/PmTfa> . My friend, the doctor who tries to help in the video, could do nothing7:48 AM Jun 22nd from web

6.

Iran: my best friend in the country, a doctor, can be seeing here trying to resuscitate Neda: <http://bit.ly/PmTfa> . Tears in my eyes7:31 AM Jun 22nd from web