

Iranian museums welcome cooperation with other SCO members

TEHRAN - Iran encourages cooperation between museums of member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)...



Currently, some 800 cultural heritage museums are active across Iran and some three million historical objects are being kept at museums affiliated with the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Ministry.

Iran welcomes any kind of museum cooperation with the SCO, and so far, has cooperated with several member states of this organization...

It would be of great interest to us to work closely with the organization, and we suggest that joint exhibitions be organized in the national museums and/or major museums of each country, he noted.

In each of these countries, museums, which are the most important institutions of culture, are expected to play an essential role in trade and politics...

Cultural officials and museum directors from Russia, China, Kirgistan, Uzbekistan, India, Mongolia, Pakistan, and Belarus also attended the meeting.

As part of the meeting, participants discussed creating future-oriented relationships between museums, implementing joint projects, and exchanging opinions on the creation of museum brands.

Back in September, Iran, which was an observer member of the SCO, was officially admitted as a full member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Restoration begins on historical cistern in Semnan

TEHRAN - A restoration project has been commenced on a Qajar-era (1789-1925) Ab-Anbar (cistern) in the centuries-old village of Biabanak, Sorkhbeh county, north-central province of Semnan.

A budget of 250 million rials (almost \$6,000 at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been allocated to the project, Sorkhbeh's tourism chief has said.

The project involves strengthening the historical structure as well as repairing its access road, Bahman Akhlagi said on Thursday.

The cistern is planned to turn into a center for handicrafts after being fully restored, the official added.

The historical texture of Biabanak village, which dates back to the Safavid era (1501-1735), has been inscribed on the national heritage list.

The term Ab-Anbar is common throughout Iran as a designation for roofed underground water cisterns. It associates with water management systems in arid areas that are reliant on permanent springs or seasonal rainwater.

Such underground reservoirs or are parts of the iconic qanat systems, which rely on snowed streams flowing down from surrounding mountains.

250 Iranian inmates trained as crafters

TEHRAN - A total of 250 inmates have recently been trained as crafters in prisons across eastern South Khrosan province during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year 1400 (started March 21), the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

The courses aimed to empower the prisoners and provide job opportunities for them after their release, Hossein Abbaszadeh announced on Friday.

Woodcarving, traditional costumes, marquetry, and traditional embroidery were some of the fields covered in the courses, the official added.

Last year, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts signed a memorandum of understanding with the Prisons, Security, and Corrective Measures Organization to create jobs

Qanats, according to UNESCO, provide exceptional testimony to cultural traditions and civilizations in desert areas within an arid climate.

The main population centers of Semnan province lie along the ancient Silk Road (and modern-day Imam Reza Expressway), linking Rey (Tehran) with Khorasan (Mashhad). While few visitors spend much time in the area, driving through you can easily seek out several well-preserved caravanserais (notably Dehnamak and Ahwan), cisterns (the Cafe Abenbar in Garmzar is a special treat), and ruined mud citadels (Padeh is lumpy but fascinating). The large, bustling cities of Semnan, Damghan, and Shahrud (Bastam) all have a small selection of historic buildings and Semnan has a fine old covered bazaar.

The history of Semnan dates back to ancient Iran when the city was part of the Median Empire. At the time of the Achaemenid Empire of Persia, Semnan was a magnificent city. After the attack of Alexander, Semnan became famous as Koomeh. The great era of the prosperity of this city began after the advent of the Parthian Empire.

Due to its location, which was on the traffic center of the north, south, east, and west, Semnan had always been the subject of a struggle for power in the Sassanid period. In the Sassanid and post-Islamic periods, the city was the basis of central governments in the area.

and make income for prisoners. The MOU is aimed at implementing special educational and promotional programs, identifying talented prisoners, and improving their social status.

According to deputy tourism minister Pouya Mahmoudian, handicraft products made by prisoners are displayed in various exhibitions to benefit both prisoners and their families from the sales.

South Khrosan is home to many historical and natural attractions such as Birjand Castle, Dragon Cave, Furg Citadel, and Polond Desert. It is also known for its famous rugs as well as its saffron and barberry which are produced in almost all parts of the province.

Invitation to participate in the tender "first announcement"

BiStoon Tamin paper manufacturing company to perform reviewing and completion of basic design engineering, detail design and purchasing engineering, site supervision, pre-commissioning, test and commissioning of the project of construction of BiStoon Tamin packaging paper factory located in Iran, Kermanshah province, Harsin city intends to purchase consulting services through tender among the consulting engineering companies with qualified and free capacity with the sufficient expertise and experience in the field of designing the paper industries. Eligible companies can apply to the RONIN CO. (address: No.9, Aftab street, Khoddami avenue, Vanak square Tehran, Iran (Tel.:+9821 88052006) from the second announcement October 19, 2021 to Wednesday October 27, 2021 to receive the bidding documents. The employer is free to reject or accept the bids of the bidders.

World Post Day: a brief history of postal service in ancient Iran

At its peak under the reign of Darius the Great, the Persian Empire stretched from Greece to India. Briant notes in his book how tablets from Persepolis, the ceremonial capital of the empire, show that messages were sent to and from India and Egypt. Also pointing out that the historian Ctesias mentioned the Greek city of Ephesus, too, in his writings.

"The entire imperial territory," Briant writes, "was covered."

"Never before had messages been delivered on such a massive scale. The ancient Persian postal system was a relay system, making journeys speedy and efficient. But the Persians would not have been able to cover the daunting distances they did in so little time had they not been expert horsemen. The ancient Iranians (of whom the Persians were just one of the numerous peoples) were redoubtable when it came to horsemanship. The postal system aside, the Iranians inspired the use of cavalry amongst the Athenian Greeks, for example, and also devised the game of polo," according to Bekhrad, who has enriched his article by including several treasured quotes, some of which given below.

"Historically, the Persian Royal Road was the first, major land structure conceived to thoroughly exploit horse transportation and relay," writes Prof. Dr. Luc-Normand Teller in his book "Urban World History: An Economic and Geographical Perspective."

According to Dr. Lindsey Allen, a lecturer in ancient history at King's College London, the Persian postal system was also impressive for its use of a standardized language across such a vast empire, as well as its consistency in terms of message delivery and format. Although Old Persian was the Persians' native tongue, the linguistically unrelated Aramaic was the administrative

language of the empire and thus used in composing messages throughout the Persian empire. Cyrus the Younger as a mercenary and hero to flee back to Greece from Iran with his army when the farmer's coup d'état went awry - considered the Persian postal system to undeniably be the "fastest overland traveling on Earth"

Herodotus also mentions the relay system in the Histories. "The first rider delivers his charge to the second, the second to the third, and thence it passes on from hand to hand," he explained, and his description of the Persian couriers gave added credibility to that of Xenophon, who wasn't always the most historically accurate. "There is nothing mortal that accomplishes a course more swiftly than do these messengers, by the Persians' skillful contrivance... [They] are stopped neither by snow nor rain nor heat nor darkness from accomplishing their appointed course with no rest."

In her 1890s travelogue titled "Persian Pictures," English writer and traveler Gertrude Bell wrote about how she and her companions found themselves "lying in a little alcove under the archway of a tiny tumble-down post-house, vainly demanding fresh horses."

Nevertheless, the myriad Chapakhanes (post offices) that dotted Iran at the time, no matter how decrepit they could often be, were invaluable. They could often be seen serving a little more than their intended purpose. Chapakhanes are no longer used in Iran today, but they can still be seen throughout the country.

Bekhrad concludes his article that the Royal Road and the Persian postal system may very well be things of the past, but the ingenuity of the Achaemenid Persians and the perseverance of their couriers continue to influence and inspire well beyond the borders of ancient Iran, and even the mighty Persian Empire.

According to Xenophon of Athens, Cyrus first found out how hard a horse could travel "when ridden far" before breaking down, and then used this distance to set up stations at intervals



Messages were sent across the expansive Persian Empire (c. 550 - 330 BC) on the Royal Road, such as this section in Sardis, Turkey (Credit: Design Pics Inc./Alamy)

While the Royal Road was an incredibly efficient and effective way of delivering messages, it was only used for administrative purposes and not by private individuals. The Persian emperors used the Royal Road and other such routes for issuing decrees and for their armies, tribute-takers, and troops of government workers, according to Briant.

It was also used by the emperor to keep abreast of all the goings-on in the empire in the Cyropaedia, a book in praise of Cyrus the Great that is still read as a classic guide to effective leadership. Xenophon attributes the establishment of the Persian postal system to Cyrus and describes his use of it in gathering intelligence. "The king will listen to any man who asserts that he has heard or seen anything that needs attention," he writes. "Hence the saying that the king has 1000 eyes and 1000 ears, and hence the fear of uttering anything against his interest since he is sure to hear, or doing anything that might injure him, since he may be there to see."

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shared between the provinces of Kordestan and Kermanshah, the rural area of Urmantam embraces dense and step-like rows of houses in a way that the roof of each house forms the yard of the upper one, a feature that adds to its charm and attractiveness.

As the cultural landscape covers 300 villages and in terms of architecture and landscape, it is one of the most beautiful and presentable heritages in the world.

The art of miniature The miniature is a type of two-dimensional artwork that involves the design and creation of small paintings on books, paper-mache, rugs, textiles, walls, ceramics and other items using raw materials such as gold, silver and various organic substances.

Historically, the miniature was exemplified by book painting in which the text was supported visually, but the element had evolved and can also be observed in architecture and as an adornment in public spaces.

The miniature displays a specific type of perspective in which the size of the figures changes according to their importance - a key difference between realistic and naturalistic styles. Though it has existed for centuries, it continues to develop and thus strengthen the bonds between past and present. Traditional painting principles and techniques are preserved, but artists also bring individual creativity into the process.

Pilgrimage to the St. Thaddeus The annual three-day pilgrimage to St. Thaddeus Apostle Monastery in northwestern Iran is held each July. The pilgrimage venerates two prominent saints: St. Thaddeus, one of the first apostles preach Christianity, and St. Santukhd, the first female Christian.

The bearers of the element are the Armenian population in Iran, Iranian-Armenians residing in Armenia, and followers of the Armenian Apostolic Church. Pilgrims gather in Tabriz before departing for the monastery. They cover 700 kilometers from Yerevan to the monastery annually.

Tourism ministry receives registration certificates of four UNESCO sites

TEHRAN - Certificates of registration of four Iranian UNESCO World Heritage sites have been handed over to the tourism ministry, the deputy tourism minister has announced.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts has received registration certificates of four cultural heritage, which have been listed by UNESCO over the last two years, IRNA quoted Ali Darabi as saying on Friday.

The ministry has received certificates for Trans-Iranian Railway, Cultural Landscape of Urmantam as tangible cultural heritages as well as the art of miniature, jointly with Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Uzbekistan and pilgrimage to St. Thaddeus jointly with Armenia, as UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, the official added.

Having a global register of tangible and intangible heritage is vital because these works, regardless of race, nationality, and religion, belong to all human society and all governments and nations have a duty to preserve and protect them, even during times of war, he noted.

Increased recognition of a country's cultural heritage on the World Heritage list certainly contributes to the development of the tourism industry and businesses related to it, and most importantly, introduces the culture and civilization of a nation to the world, he explained.

With 26 World Heritage Sites, Iran ranks 10th in the world in terms of the number of historical monuments and sites registered on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Before the Islamic Revolution, Persepolis, Naghsh-e Jahan Square, and Chogha Zanbil were the only three UNESCO-listed monuments, but today the number has been increased this number to 26 historical sites.

Trans-Iranian Railway The railway can be regarded as a turning point for comprehensive developments in Iran. These



Developments include a wide spectrum of various economic, commercial, social, cultural, and even political aspects in a sensitive and important period of contemporary world history.

Consequently, the 1394 kilometers long Trans-Iranian Railway was built with a width of 1435mm and 90 working stations along its route. It starts at a point north of Torkanport port located southeast of the Caspian Sea. After going through Sari and Qaem-Shahr cities, the railway enters the mountainous region of Alborz through the high Firooz-Khosh Pass which is linked with Tehran and Varamin Plain by numerous bridges and tunnels.

Further on after crossing the flatlands of Qom and Arak, the Trans-Iranian Railway penetrates Zagros highlands in Lorestan Province and passes through a large number of tunnels and bridges reaches Andimeshk situated in the low Kuzestan Plain. Finally extending to the vicinity of Dezful, Ahvaz, and its grand bridge on Karoon, the Trans-Iranian Railway is divided into two branches ending separately at Khoram-Shahr and Inam-Khomeni ports on the Persian Gulf.

Cultural Landscape of Urmantam Stretched on the slopes of Sarvabad county, and

Centuries-old caravanserai to host crafts exhibit in southwest Iran

TEHRAN - Tens of artisans and exhibitors will put on show handicrafts in a month-long exhibition, which is scheduled to commence on October 12 in a centuries-old caravanserai southwest Iran.

"The exhibition will be held in the historical Moshir al-Molk Caravanserai in Dashtestan county of Bushehr province from the 20th of [the Iranian month of] Mehr to the 20th of Aban, provincial tourism chief Mohammad-Hossein

Arastouzadeh said on Wednesday. The purpose of holding the event, which will be held in compliance with health regulations, is to boost handicraft sales and to promote such a historical monument to visitors; the official explained.

The coastal province borders with the Persian Gulf on the west and is bounded by the regions of Hormozgan and Fars on the southeast and east and Khuzestan on the northwest.

With 16 entries, Iran ranks first globally for the number of cities and villages registered by the World Crafts Council, as China with seven entries, Chile with four, and India with three ones come next.

The value of Iran's handicrafts exports stood at \$120 million during the first eleven months of the past Iranian calendar year 1399 (March 20, 2020 - February 18, 2021), MOIS reported. The country's handicrafts exports slumped during the month-long months in

comparison to the same period last year, owing, due to the damage the coronavirus pandemic has inflicted on global trade.

The Islamic Republic exported \$4 million worth of handicrafts during its first eleven months of the calendar year 1399. Of the figure, some \$282 million was earned via software made (glass) for customs free and tax-free transit through 20 provinces, according to a compiled by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts.