

AZERTAC lauds IRNA for launching Azeri website

IRNA – Vugar Aliyev, the Chairman of Azerbaijan State News Agency (AZERTAC), lauded the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) for its recent decision to launch an Azeri language website.

The move is seen as a positive step that could further strengthen bilateral relations between the two news agencies, as mentioned during a meeting between Aliyev and his Iranian counterpart, Ali Naderi.

In his statement, Aliyev expressed optimism about the potential for the news agencies to expand their mutual relations, indicating a desire for the bilateral ties to return to their previous levels.

IRNA, which boasts a rich history spanning almost 90 years, currently disseminates its news and productions in Persian as well as nine other languages, including English, Arabic, Urdu, French, German, Russian, Chinese, Spanish, and Turkish.

The launch of the Azeri website is expected to further diversify its reach and engage with the Azerbaijani-speaking audience more effectively.

The positive response from AZERTAC and the potential for enhanced cooperation between the two news agencies mark a significant development in media relations between Azerbaijan and Iran, fostering a spirit of collaboration and shared communication goals.

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Russia to issue electronic visas for Iranians, others

Arts & Culture Desk

The Press Service of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation announced that tourists from certain countries, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, will be able to obtain electronic visas for Russia in less than a week.

According to Russian news sources, the ministry stated that, as per the government's directive, citizens of European countries, Iran, Japan, Turkey, China, North Korea, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Bahrain, Kuwait, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, and Singapore will be eligible to apply for electronic visas, IRNA reported.

As reported, the issuance time for Russian visas within this framework will be less than six days



from the date of application.

The ministry clarified that electronic visas can be obtained through the internet for tourists, guests, or business trips, as well as participation in scientific, cultural, sports, and other events. According to the announcement, these electronic visas will be issued by a diplomatic mission or consular

office of the Russian Federation, and foreign nationals will need to submit their applications through a special website of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Based on this information, electronic visas will allow tourists to enter Russia once and will be valid for a maximum stay of 60 days from the registration date.

'Fifty Thousand' to compete in Tunisia, Panama

Arts & Culture Desk

The Iranian short film 'Fifty Thousand,' directed by Hamed Karivand, will compete in two prestigious international film festivals, in Tunisia and Panama.

In Tunisia, 'Fifty Thousand' will be vying for recognition at the 5th edition of the Cinétoile International Short Film Festival, taking place from July 20 to July 25.

This annual event, launched in 2018, is renowned for presenting a diverse selection of films, providing inclusive opportunities for participants of all backgrounds, with a particular focus on engaging young talents.

Furthermore, the film will also feature in the esteemed Panama Series Festival, a short film festival held for the past two years in the picturesque landscapes of Central



America's Panama. This festival serves as a portal to the realm of innovative filmmakers from across the globe, offering emerging directors a fresh platform to showcase their creative prowess. The festival kicked off its activities on July 21, creating a vibrant atmosphere for filmmakers and enthusiasts alike.

'Fifty Thousand' narrates the poignant story of a

young boy residing with his father in a humble abode within the bustling city, as he confronts an array of challenges in his journey through life.

The remarkable cast of this short film includes Farzin Rahmanpour, Mohamad Kianian, Elaheh Jaami, Mehdi Parhizkar, and Amirhossein Qalandari, whose compelling performances have added depth to the narrative.

Iran's ancient 'wind catchers' beat the heat naturally

Tall, chimney-like towers rise from centuries-old adobe houses in Iran's desert city of Yazd, drawing in a pleasant breeze for residents of one of the hottest cities on earth.

The wind catchers, called *badgirs* in Persian, are just one of the engineering marvels inhabitants have developed in this ancient city in central Iran – where temperatures reach well over 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) in the summer, Barrons wrote.

And, unlike energy-guzzling air-conditioners, they're cost and carbon-free.

"For centuries, before we had electricity, they made it possible to cool dwellings," said Abdolmajid Shakeri, the provincial deputy of Iran's cultural heritage and tourism ministry.

The oldest of the city's 700 wind catchers dates back to the 14th century, but the architectural feature is believed to date back as far as 2,500 years when the Persian Empire ruled over much of the Middle East.

"The *badgirs* played a key role in the city's prosperity," said Shakeri about the desert city that was a caravan stop on the ancient Silk Road.

"Thanks to them, people lived at ease," he added, describing how the wind catchers pull fresh air into buildings and allow hot air to ventilate out through large vertical slots.

Majid Oloumi, the head of Dowlatabad garden, home to a towering 33-metre (100 foot) wind catcher – one of the tallest in the world – described the

cooling method as "totally clean because it uses neither electricity nor polluting materials".

UNESCO listed Yazd as a World Heritage Site in 2017, describing the city as a "living testimony to intelligent use of limited available resources in the desert for survival".

The bioclimatic architecture which provides thermal comfort for the people of Yazd has attracted interest elsewhere on a heating planet.

"*Badgirs* demonstrate that simplicity can be an essential attribute to sustainability," said Paris-based architect Roland Dehghan Kamaraji, who has studied Iran's wind catchers.

"It goes against the common misconception that sustainable solutions need to be complex or high-tech."

At a sustainable urban community called Masdar city in the United Arab Emirates, buildings have been "designed to make use of the natural ventilation for cooling, like *badgirs*," he said.

Similarly, ventilation inspired by "termite mounds, an approach similar to that of *badgirs*" were built atop Eastgate Centre, a shopping mall and office complex in Harare, Zimbabwe.

However, Yazd's unique architectural traditions have largely been abandoned at their birthplace.

"Unfortunately, our ancestral heritage has been forgotten," especially since the emergence of air conditioners, said Oloumi. Yazd's old town is a labyrinth of narrow streets and roofed alleyways. Its centuries-old edifices made of clay, mud-brick and adobe all provide insulation against the torrid heat.

But the old houses stand in sharp contrast to modern cement buildings and multi-lane roads.

"Today, house architecture imitates that in other countries, and cement-based construction does not correspond to the climate of Yazd," he added.

Kamaraji says bioclimatic architecture has waned due to economic constraints and modern construction methods that

"largely favor the use of energy and fossil fuel intensive materials".

Another sustainable architectural feature of Yazd is its system of underground aqueducts called qanats, which transport water from underground wells, aquifers or the mountains. "These underground aqueducts have great utility," said Zohreh Montazer, an expert on the water system. "They constitute a source of water supply and make it possible to cool the dwellings and to preserve food at an ideal temperature."

Iran is estimated to have around 33,000 operational qanats today, a significant drop from the 50,000 in use in the mid-20th century.

UNESCO says the decline in qanats is driven in part by the drying up of underground water sources due to overconsumption.

Iranian authorities have in recent years sought to rehabilitate the qanat of Zarch – considered the longest and oldest, dating to some 3,000 years ago.

The water network – which stretches over 70 kilometers across Yazd, and runs at a depth of around 30 meters – stands as a reminder for Yazd's residents of the challenges ahead.

"The day when fossil fuels run out," said Montazer, "we will have to return to these methods."

Pic of the Day



Mothers across the country gathered on Friday (July 21) at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Mosalla, holding their infants to mark the 'Husseini infants' ceremony in commemoration of Ali Asghar, the six-month-old baby boy of Imam Hussein (PBUH), who was the youngest person martyred in the Battle of Karbala.

● IRNA

