

Over 500 antiques seized in Iran

Arts & Culture Desk

IRNA - Iranian border guards intercepted and confiscated a collection of more than 500 ancient artifacts from an Afghan woman at the Milak border crossing in the south-eastern province of Sistan and Baluchestan. The operation was conducted as she attempted to enter the country illegally.

The Director General of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts for the province, Alireza Jalalzai, disclosed that the Afghan woman was apprehended during a border security operation.

A total of 547 antique items were discovered in her possession. Subsequently, the seized artifacts were turned over to judicial authorities for further investigation.

Jalalzai indicated that the recovered antiquities hail from significant historical eras, including the Qajar and Ottoman Empire periods. The array of confiscated pieces encompass a diverse range of artifacts, with 208 ring-like items, two watch-like pieces, 82 jewelry-like articles, 12 bracelet-like items, 133 coins, and 110 pieces of unknown, distinct colors.

This remarkable interception underscores the ongoing efforts to preserve and protect Iran's rich cultural heritage. The intricate artifacts, tracing back to various chapters of history, carry immense historical and cultural value. Authorities remain steadfast in their commitment to combat illegal trafficking of antiquities and safeguard the country's historical legacy.

The collaboration between border guards and cultural heritage officials in this endeavor further highlights the significance of maintaining vigilance at border crossings to prevent the illicit trade of valuable artifacts. Investigations are underway to determine the origins and potential trafficking network associated with the seized antiquities.

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Armenian tourism delegation visits Iran, 10 fam tours organized

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As part of an ongoing effort to promote cross-cultural engagement and international tourism, a delegation of Armenian tourism professionals embarked on a journey to Iran. The visit is accompanied by the organization of 10 familiarization tours aimed at introducing foreign delegates to Iran's tourism attractions.

Leila Ajdari, Director General for Marketing and Development of Foreign Tourism at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts of Iran, highlighted the collaborative initiatives between the two countries. Since the beginning of the Iranian year, these endeavors have aimed to acquaint targeted nations with Iran's diverse tourism destinations and offerings, IRNA wrote.

Ajdari confirmed that eight representatives from Armenian tour operators and travel agency managers have undertaken the familiarization tour to Iran. She emphasized that these

tours, known as "familiarization tours", are currently in progress within Iran. In the current year, a total of 10 tours have been executed for diverse countries, including China, Qatar, Thailand, among others. These tours are orchestrated to provide foreign reference groups with an authentic and appealing depiction of Iran's attractions.

Recognizing the efficacy of familiarization tours in attracting foreign tourists and countering misperceptions about Iran, Ajdari emphasized their pivotal role in the agendas of the Foreign Tourism Marketing and Development Office. The tours, which span across several days, have proven to be a potent strategy for showcasing Iran's rich cultural, historical, sporting, and commercial potential to foreign delegates.

Ajdari noted that the presence of Armenian tourism representatives is especially significant, as Armenia has become a priority target market for Iranian tourism. This emphasis is under-



IRNA

scored by recent negotiations between Fly Arna, an Armenian airline, and Iranian authorities to establish direct flights between the two countries. With these developments in mind, the familiarization tours for Armenian tourism professionals were planned by the Tourism Planning Department and are currently underway. The five-day itinerary of the Armenian tourism

delegation includes visits to various sites in Tehran Province. These sites encompass historical and cultural landmarks such as the Golestan Palace, Niavaran Cultural-Historical Complex, and Sa'dabad Complex, as well as recreational and sports facilities like Tochal Complex. The familiarity gained from these tours is anticipated to facilitate enhanced interactions between Armenian tourism

professionals and their Iranian counterparts. Ajdari concluded by affirming that the continuation of familiarization tours remains a crucial and impactful strategy to attract foreign tourists. The efforts of the Tourism Ministry signal Iran's commitment to fostering mutual understanding and bolstering the tourism sector through constructive collaborations with neighboring nations.

Iran, Iraq collaborate to produce animation

Arts & Culture Desk

In a joint effort to promote cultural exchange and creative collaboration, Iran and Iraq are working together to produce an animation film. The project, spearheaded by Mehdi Ja'fari-Jozani, a seasoned producer and director in the fields of gaming and animation, marks a significant step towards

enhancing digital entertainment industries in the region.

Born in 1981, Ja'fari-Jozani is an alumnus of the communications and media discipline. He currently serves as the CEO of Monadian, a cultural, artistic, and media company. Established in 2020, Monadian has been dedicated to the serious development of digital en-

tertainment sectors, particularly game and animation production.

The overarching mission of Monadian revolves around revitalizing the animation economy, revitalizing the ecosystem of video games, and investing in animation and video game projects. The company has already achieved success with titles such as 'Ambassador

of Love,' 'Mokhtar: Uprising Season,' and 'Commander of Resistance: Amerli Battle.' Notably, they are currently working on two upcoming games, 'Sniper 2' and 'Epic of Nader,' which are poised to hit the market in the near future.

This collaborative venture between Iran and Iraq not only showcases the potential for creative partner-

ships between neighboring nations but also highlights the growing importance of the digital entertainment industry in the region. As the global animation and gaming market continues to expand, this joint effort aims to capitalize on the talents of both countries, fostering cultural exchange and economic growth. The animation film project

is anticipated to resonate with audiences across borders, embodying themes of unity, creativity, and shared cultural heritage. Through their collaboration, Iran and Iraq are not only producing an animation film but also weaving a tapestry of cooperation that underscores the power of art to transcend boundaries and bring people together.

30% bookstores in Afghanistan shut due to lack of good market: Report

The commission to assess the problems of booksellers has revealed that 30 percent of booksellers in Afghanistan have stopped their business due to a lack of a good market, Afghanistan-based Tolo News reported.

Speaking to Tolo News, Abdul Wodod Mukhtarzada, a member of the commission, said that the booksellers have also complained about high taxes which are difficult to pay as their business has witnessed a decline.

Mukhtarzada said, "We used to sell more than 500 books and we had 200 librarians here but I can say now that their number has dropped significantly." Sev-

eral booksellers expressed concern that book reading culture has faded in Afghanistan. Sharifullah, a bookseller said, "There are issues because of the lack of female students' presence in the universities. This issue also affects the book business."

Mansour Qazizada, a bookseller, stressed that the market is down and people lack the capacity to buy. He also spoke about various taxes that the booksellers need to pay. Qazizada said, "You know that the market is down and the people lack the capacity to purchase books. Also, there are many types of taxes and the Kabul mu-

nicipality sends their representatives." Meanwhile, the Taliban-led Ministry of Information and Culture said that efforts were being made to pardon the taxes of the libraries to support the book markets in Afghanistan, according to the report.

Mahajar Farahi, deputy minister of Taliban-led Information and Culture for publications, said, "We are trying to waive taxes on books and thus we can implement a tradition of book reading. We have held various exhibitions." Earlier this week, a group of young people in Kabul organized the "Smart Way" book display to strength-

en the reading culture in Afghanistan according to Tolo News report.

By implementing such initiatives, young people claimed they want to inspire residents, particularly other young people, to read literature, as the Taliban has already put strict restrictions on the education of young girls and women in Afghanistan.

"We held it to create a culture for the youth of our society to read books, books are entertainment for them," an organizer, Sharifa Hesar said, according to Tolo News.

"The purpose of holding this exhibition is to strengthen the culture



TASNIM

of reading among young people," said Farhad Malik Zada, an organizer. Speaking to Tolo News, several expo attendees said that the reasons why people don't study enough are related to the econo-

my, a lack of employment opportunities, and a high usage of social media. Visitors, however, claimed that organizing such displays was successful in promoting reading culture. The stagnation of the

book-selling business over the past two years has alarmed booksellers in Kabul and the surrounding regions of Afghanistan, who have regularly expressed their concern, according to Tolo News.