

# Iran unveils 400 archaeological discoveries in one year

## National Museum of Iran hosting conference on Iranian archaeology

### Arts & Culture Desk

The annual gathering of Iranian archaeologists kicked off with the exhibition of 400 findings, addressing concerns about the loss of historical artifacts.

The 21st Annual Symposium on the Iranian Archeology, is underway at the National Museum of Iran from March 4 to 6, showcasing the achievements of Iranian archaeologists over the last Persian year (ended on March 20, 2023), ISNA reported. Jebrael Nokandeh, Director General of the National Museum of Iran, hosting the conference and the exhibition of last year's archaeological discoveries, highlighted the event as "Nowruz of Iranian Archaeologists."

The exhibition, running until Eid al-Fitr at the museum, features over 400 artifacts from 12 regions and 12 provinces, spanning the Paleolithic to Islamic periods.

Expressing gratitude to all archaeologists for providing an opportunity for museum visitors, Nokandeh emphasized that archaeological discoveries not only contribute to cultural heritage but also facilitate research. Ali Beigi, the head of the Ar-



chaeological Research Institute, reflected on the history of the institute and the conference, stating that the publications from the early 1950s demonstrate the high attention given to archaeology.

He acknowledged the efforts of Iranian archaeologists to establish themselves as independent thinkers during that period. Beigi noted that the current resources are insufficient to meet even a small section of archaeological needs. Beigi mentioned that out of 119



field activities in the past year, around 30 reports from archaeological excavations were selected for presentation, comprising a 700-page collection.

Nowruz Rajabi, an advisor to the head of the Cultural Heritage and Tourism Research Institute, discussed the executive guidelines for cultural development projects, highlighting legal requirements for heritage protection.

He expressed concern about cultural heritage destruction during construction projects,

referencing incidents such as the dam construction at Dez where extensive damage occurred.

Rajabi urged the guidelines to be directed by the government to ensure attention to these issues before project implementation. Mostafa Deh-Pahlavan, the head of the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, paid tribute to the deceased heritage experts and discussed the shortcomings in Iranian archaeology. He questioned the availability of archives from past studies, the

whereabouts of biological findings from excavated tombs in the last century, and the lack of comprehensive databases accessible to the public and scientific community.

The exhibition displayed selected archaeological findings from various regions of Iran, including Qazvin, Sistan and Baluchestan, Alborz, Mazandaran, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, East Azarbaijan, West Azarbaijan, South Khorasan, Zanjan, Isfahan, Kerman, Fars, Ardebil, and Kurdistan.

**Minister:**  
60% growth  
in computer  
game  
production  
in 5 years



### Arts & Culture Desk

The Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance highlighted the importance of drafting a "Comprehensive Document of Computer Games" while emphasizing a 60% growth in game production in the seventh development plan.

Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaeili made the statement during the 147th session of the for the promotion of virtual content production held on Monday, ISNA wrote.

"We have assessed that the gaming industry is definitely a golden opportunity for us, although it also has threatening aspects," he added.

He expressed confidence in utilizing this opportunity due to the strong cultural influence by aligning with necessary requirements.

He further noted, "The situation is similar in cinema. Some do not accept the statistics regarding public interest in cinema, but the animation 'Smart Kid,' which is entirely religious and tells the story of Imam Reza (PBUH), had over \$1.2 million in sales."

Esmaeili emphasized the need to pay more attention to this field firmly, stating: "According to the latest surveys in the country, we have 34 million computer game players, with four million of them being professional players who spend over 21 hours a week playing computer games."

"It depends on us how much we can use this capacity. By using this capacity, we can turn it into an opportunity, and neglecting it could pose a threat," he added.

## Iran to make animation 'Smart Kid 2'



Honar Pooya Animation Studio is set to produce the animated film 'Smart Kid 2,' with the screenplay writing process underway.

The film, produced by Hamed Ja'fari, CEO of Honar Pooya Animation Studio, is based on successful global models and experiences, ILNA wrote.

Ja'fari emphasized that the positive feedback from audiences for the first 'Smart Kid,' indicates the film's potential

for continuation.

"We've received good feedback during this period, and the sales and audience numbers for 'Smart Kid' show that this animated film has the necessary potential for a sequel," Ja'fari said.

The producer of 'Smart Kid' provided insight into the production process of the sequel, stating that the screenplay writing for 'Smart Kid 2' has begun. This phase is expected to take approximately 6 to 8 months, with the production team preparing to begin the animation's creation process in the next Iranian year.

'Smart Kid 2,' produced by Hamed Ja'fari, is a product of Honar Pooya Animation Studio and the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults.

## Iran-India exhibition opens in Golestan Palace

### Arts & Culture Desk

The Iran-India Exhibition, showcasing a collection of 127 precious Indian jades along with their documents, opened at the Golestan World Heritage Site on Monday.

The opening ceremony was held with the presence of Deputy Tourism Minister Ali Darabi, the of Iran, and the Indian Ambassador to Tehran Rudra Gaurav Shresth, ILNA wrote.

At the beginning of the event, Afarin Emami, the director of the Golestan World Heritage Site, welcomed the attendees and provided insights into the significance of the jade collection of the Golestan Palace.

She noted that jade is one of the most traded commodities through the Silk Road, with most of the precious objects in the Gole-

stan Palace treasury attributed to Indian artists, indicating the cultural and political ties between Iran and India during the Qajar era.

Masoud Bonakdar, a researcher of this precious collection, discussed the research conducted on these valuable jades.

He mentioned that jade holds significant historical importance in Iran, referenced in various texts including the Tarikh-i Bayhaqi, (Bayhaqi's History).

The researcher continued, explaining that initially, these hundred jade pieces were collected from various storages in the Golestan Palace, and then their historical background and use were identified through the documents available in the Golestan collection.

Following a musical performance by an Indian group, Indian envoy

addressed the audience.

He described the exhibition as a significant symbol of the bond between Iran and India, showcasing their traditional and civilizational connections throughout the centuries.

He added that this collection is just one example of the historical ties between Iran and India.

The Indian envoy also highlighted the presence of many Persian manuscripts in India and mentioned that the first Persian newspaper was published in Bengal.

He emphasized the Indian government's strong emphasis on teaching and preserving the Persian language, which is one of the nine languages taught in Indian schools.

The exhibition featuring Safavid jade frames and goblets, and jeweled pen holders will welcome visitors for two months.

## Iran's DOE teams up with organizations to preserve rare turtle

### Social Desk

Iranian officials have joined forces to protect the endangered Euphrates softshell turtle, the only Trionychidae species in Iran. The Department of Environment and the Petroleum Engineering and Development Company (PEDEC) have signed an MoU for the preservation of this rare turtle.

The Euphrates softshell turtle, also known as the Mesopotamian softshell turtle, is found in the Euphrates-Tigris river basin across countries like Iraq, Syria,

Turkey, and Iran's Khuzestan Province. Its survival is threatened primarily by habitat loss from dam construction, along with pollution and fishing.

Nourollah Moradi, from Iran's Department of Environment, stressed that efforts in education and public participation should be substantive, not merely symbolic, IRNA reported.

He emphasized the need for a working group of environmental experts in Khuzestan province to create a specific action plan for conservation efforts. Moradi also highlighted the sig-

nificance of raising awareness and providing educational materials to local communities, especially youth, for the protection of such species.

He stated that the participation should align with the region's climate and that environmental discussions should involve provincial experts to yield favorable outcomes.

Abouzar Sharifi, CEO of PEDEC, mentioned the company's commitment to environmental responsibilities, such as reducing pollutants in their oil field projects.

Sharifi highlighted the importance of preserving the Euphrates softshell turtle as a pivotal part of their social and environmental obligations.

Sharifi announced future plans to revive the Hoor Al-Azim wetland, emphasizing the necessary studies for its restoration. Meanwhile, during the session, Barbod Safaei, a researcher and herpetologist, deemed research projects for protecting valuable species like the Euphrates softshell turtle crucial.

He noted the identified threats in the Hoor Al-Azim region and



the need for immediate attention to mitigate habitat destruction and attacks by stray dogs. Safaei mentioned multiple meetings held to empower and

inform local communities, expressing hope for increased budget allocations toward conservation efforts in the near future.