

# Moscow, Tehran to enhance tourism ties through BRICS membership



By Leila Imeni  
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The first BRICS Tourism Forum was held in the Russian capital, Moscow, on June 20 -21. The forum was attended by delegations from all nine members states: Russia, Brazil, Egypt, India, Iran, China, the United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia and the Republic of South Africa.

The event program included expert sessions with the participation of the major market players and meetings of ministers for tourism of BRICS countries.

The first day of the forum included a meeting of the industry representatives' work group, negotiations of travel agents and the presentations of their products, travel services and other industry projects from various countries.

Addressing the journalists on the second day of the event, the First Deputy Head of the Office of Mayor and the Government of Moscow Evgeny Kozlov said tourism is one of the top strategies of Moscow's mayor. We share a lot of love and generosity with the tourists and there is much money and profit in tourism sector.

Last year in Moscow we had 24.5 million tourists across the country and all over the world and still it is not enough. We are making efforts to make it double and the figure is expected to hit 50 million after 2030. To do so, we should work really hard altogether.

Kozlov, who is also the chairman of the Moscow City Tourism Committee, said ten years before the outbreak of COVID-19 about 20% of all tourists visiting Russia came to Moscow and now it reached to 40% and still it is not enough. He called intra BRICS cooperation for development of Moscow Tourism vital, adding that, "We send business missions to member countries and held exhibitions and tourism fairs but unfortunately not South Africa and Brazil and we plan to do so within next year".

"We have more 400 museums in Moscow so the culture and heritage of Moscow is wide and deep," he said.

In response to a question from Iran Daily about the potential impact of BRICS membership on the growth of tourism cooperation between Tehran and Moscow, he stated "We can complete each other with closer ties. I know a special place here in Moscow, a hotel, which is somehow embassy of Iran. It is where many Iranian people come. Maybe they like the location or the restaurants nearby. I know about hundreds of people or more than 50 groups came to Moscow with vi-

sa-free group regime, now we have, which was launched last year. We have this special visa preferences for Iranian groups come here". "I believe you should introduce your country more for Russians to discover Iran's hidden gems of culture, nature and resorts to promote mutual tourism ties".

He said Moscow was a sister city with Tehran. And being a sister city is still not enough. Because tourism is the partnership between tourism operators and we should support at the federal level or the official level. So, it is really important to hold the sister-city partnership between local authorities.

He added: "But we should in addition have the partnership businesses between Moscow and for example Tehran. So that's why we had the business mission for Tehran last year and for the Russian side it was 19 commercial firms and tourist operators and 37 domestic commercial and tourism firms in Tehran. Then later on, we will have tours from different cities of Iran here in Moscow. And they will not stay only in Moscow. They will be transferred to Kazan city - one of the biggest cities in Russia - to discover Kazan and to have the complete tour "Moscow plus Kazan".

"And as I mentioned before, tourism is about teamwork. We work in a strong partnership with the biggest cities in Russia with to have Moscow+ tourism forum. You come to Moscow plus Saint Petersburg or you come to Moscow plus Kazan. You come to Moscow then to go to one of the biggest industrial cities here. We have the connection with Isfahan. I was really shocked seeing the nature of Isfahan. There were a lot of caravansaries that were really nice, and really impressive". He emphasized that it is a two-step strategy. Firstly, you should have the partnership in official level. Next, you should have the partnership with tourism firms. So, the two-step strategy is a winning strategy.

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## Minister: Honoring cultural luminaries, a sign of reverence for civilization, heritage

### Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts said that honoring the elites in the field of cultural heritage is a manifestation of respect towards civilization, culture, and origins. During the event celebrating prominent figures in cultural heritage at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Ezatollah Zarghami said the focus of the event was on enhancing society's heritage awareness, involving the youth, paying tribute to significant cultural figures, and ultimately safeguarding the traditions. During the cultural event on Thursday, eight pioneers in the field of cultural heritage were honored in recognition of their years of service in this field, IRNA reported.

Cultural heritage is a unifying field, Zarghami stated, emphasizing the importance of roots and origins. According to him, "new growth is always connect-



ed to the root, and without preserving the roots, there can be no new growth". Zarghami further appreciated the establishment of the House for the Lasting Figures in the cultural heritage, emphasizing the importance of gathering pioneers regardless of political affiliations to engage in dialogue. He concluded that unlike other fields that may have a political orientation, "archaeology is a sincere and impartial field". During the ceremony, notable figures such as Dr. Sadeq Malek Shahmirzadi (archaeologist), Dr.

Abdolmajid Arfaei (researcher and expert in ancient languages), Dr. Ahmad Jalali (former Iranian Ambassador to UNESCO and academic member at Allameh Tabatabaee University), Dr. Fakhri Daneshpur Parvar (archaeologist), Dr. Mehdi Rahbar (archaeologist and researcher), Dr. Mohammad Mansour Fallamaki (pioneer in restoration and architectural education), Ahmad Montazer (restorer of historical artifacts and objects), and Behrouz Vojdani (music researcher and pioneer in cultural heritage) were among those honored.

## Ambassador: Joint film production represents cultural values of Iran, Tajikistan

### Arts & Culture Desk

The Iranian ambassador to Tajikistan, during an unveiling ceremony of the film 'Fish in the Hook', called the production of a joint film between the two sides a representation of the values of Iran and Tajikistan.

During the unveiling ceremony of the joint production of Iran, Tajikistan, and Russia, directed by Moheboodin Mozaafari, at the Tajik Film Institution, Alireza Haqiqian described the linguistic, cultural, historical, and civilizational fields between the two countries as strong foundations for strengthening and expanding relations between Iran and Tajikistan, IRNA reported.

He said that the production of a joint film can provide a new platform for representing the values and traditions, as well as be an effective means of preserving the common cultural and historical heritage of two sides.



The Iranian ambassador to Tajikistan, expressing gratitude to the Iranian and Tajik officials and filmmakers, said that fortunately, with the growth and strengthening of interactions between the two countries in recent years, the arena of joint film and series production has flourished, and "we are witnessing an increase in mutual cooperation in this area". Iran's multilingual TV channel (IRIB)

and Tajikistan TV signed a memorandum of understanding to initiate a collaborative film project in last October.

The agreement established a partnership among Dov Film in Tajikistan, Amkart in Russia, Tajik Film Company, and iFilm, representing the IRIB. They collaborated to coproduce the cinematic film titled 'Fish on the Hook'.

## Five natural heritages of Kerman registered on national list

### Iranica Desk

An official from the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization in Kerman said that five natural sites in the southwestern province have been registered in the country's natural heritage list.

Nader Alidadi Soleimani, the head of the Registration Office of the organization of Kerman Province, announced that five natu-

ral sites in the province have been identified for inclusion in Iran's list of natural monuments during the initial session of the meeting for the registration of natural heritage in the current Iranian year, which commenced on March 20, 2024, IRNA reported.

The natural monuments include Goli Havak Valley, Oros Habitat in Rabor County, Mazar Shah in Ravar County, Fahraj's natural vases, and Torang cave, Soleimani said. He also said that in addition to its

diverse and valuable historical and cultural attractions, Kerman Province is also endowed with numerous unparalleled and unique natural attractions due to its climatic diversity.

Soleimani said that 28 natural works of the province had previously been listed in the country's natural heritage list.

Kerman has also the highest number of world registrations among the provinces in the country, with 10 world-registered works.