

# Pot of gold coins bearing marks of Persian Empire unearthed in Turkey



A trove of ancient gold coins, bearing the distinctive design of a kneeling archer associated with the Persian daric, has been discovered by archaeologists in Notion, an ancient Greek city in western Turkey. The currency is believed to have been minted in Sardis, a city located 60 miles (97 kilometers) northeast of Notion, providing a fascinating glimpse into the economic influence of the Persian Empire. Researchers think the mercenaries used the hoard as payment, but it's unclear why they buried it. "The discovery of such a valuable find in a controlled archaeological excavation is very rare," Christopher Ratté, a professor of ancient Mediterranean art and archaeology at the University of Michigan and director of the Notion Archaeological Survey, the project that led to the discovery of the coins, said in the statement. "No one ever buries a hoard of coins, especially precious metal coins, without intending to retrieve it. So only the gravest misfortune can explain the preservation of such a treasure." A few stylistic clues indicate that the coins were struck sometime during the fifth century B.C. — a time stamp archaeologists are using to help uncover the se-

quence of events that led to the treasure's burial. "This hoard will provide a firm date that can serve as an anchor to help fix the chronology of the (entire sequence of coins)," Ratté said. "According to the Greek historian Xenophon, a single daric was equivalent to a soldier's pay for one month." In the past few years, the site has been a hotbed for artifact finds, including pottery fragments, also from the fifth century B.C., hidden "in earlier walls incorporated into the foundations of the house," which dates to the Hellenistic period, according to the statement. The Hellenistic period occurred after the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C. and lasted until the conquest of the final Hellenistic kingdom by Rome in 31 B.C. During the sixth century B.C., Notion was incorporated into the Persian Empire along with other Greek cities. In the early fifth century B.C., it was freed from Persian rule for a time, only to be reintegrated into the empire during the fourth century B.C., according to the statement. Ratté said that these events could have led to the burial and eventual loss of the hoard.



An aerial view of the house shows the locations of the coins as well as other artifacts, including pottery shards.  
 ● NOTION ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

## President vows commitment to serving Arbaeen pilgrims



Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian pledged his administration's full support for the Arbaeen pilgrimage, urging relevant organizations to honor their commitments to ensure a successful religious event. "We are committed to what the Arbaeen Headquarters has committed to do," Pezeshkian said, in reference to the body in charge of sending Iranian pilgrims to Iraq for Arbaeen and offering services to them during the pilgrimage, IRNA reported. Pezeshkian made the comment on Saturday as he paid his first vis-

it to the headquarters four days after he was inaugurated as Iran's new president. Several Iranian organizations have pledged to contribute to efforts to hold the annual religious pilgrimage. Pezeshkian assured that the government would uphold its promises regarding the provision of services to pilgrims. The President expressed gratitude to the Iraqi government for their cooperation and concluded by reiterating the importance of upholding the values of truth and justice, which are central

to the legacy of Imam Hussein. Arbaeen marks the 40th day since the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (PBUH), the third Shia Imam and the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Imam Hussein along with his 72 companions was martyred on Ashura, the tenth day on the lunar Islamic calendar. Every year, Muslims from different countries travel to Iraq for a march toward the city of Karbala, which hosts the holy shrine of Imam Hussein, to mark Arbaeen.

## Iranian animation 'Before Heaven' awarded at UK's Free Palestine festival

The Iranian short animation 'Before Heaven,' produced by Soureh Film Club, won the first prize in the animation category at the Free Palestine International Film Festival in London, the UK. The film, directed by Ahmad Heydarian and produced by Mohaddeseh

Pirhadi, was selected from among 537 submissions from 77 countries. The festival, which runs until August 4, aims to present a realistic image of Palestine, its people, history, culture, and society, while also showcasing the unwavering faith, hope, and resilience of the people of Palestine

and Gaza in their struggle for freedom, ILNA wrote. Organized by a group of young Palestinian and Arab artists, the Free Palestine International Film Festival seeks to raise awareness about Palestine and bring attention to the ongoing injustice and genocide faced by its people. It provides

a platform for filmmakers and human rights activists to share their perspectives, ideas, and artistic expressions related to Palestine. 'Before Heaven' tells a story about Palestine and has now won its 16th award after being showcased at various international festivals.

## Ramsar Museum Complex attracts 88% more foreign visitors

**Arts & Culture Desk**  
 The Ramsar Martyrs Cultural-Museum Complex in northern Iran has experienced a significant surge in foreign tourist visits, with an 88% increase in the first four months of the current Iranian year. Official statistics show an average of 25 foreign visitors per day, indicating the success of the complex's initiatives to attract international travelers. The complex's manager, Mohammad Ali Yazdanshenas, attributed the appeal to the diverse range of attractions. From March 20 to July 21 this year, 3,137 foreign tourists visited, IRNA reported. Yazdanshenas added that the number of foreign visi-

tors in the first four months of last year was 1,660, while this year it increased to 3,137, with tourists from 12 countries, including Oman, Iraq, Lebanon, Russia, Italy, South Korea, China, Turkey, Pakistan, Armenia, the US, and the UK. The largest groups were from Iraq and Oman. The daily average of foreign visitors has also increased from 13 to 25 per day during the same period. Yazdanshenas further noted that the total number of foreign tourists visiting the complex in the entire previous year was 3,790, while in just the first four months of this year, the number has already reached about 83% of that figure.



He expressed hope that by the year's end, the number of foreign visitors would double that of the previous year. The complex also recorded a total of 111,961 visitors, including Iranian tourists,

during the first four months of this year. With 280,313 visitors last year, the management aims to raise awareness and promote museum culture to attract even more visitors to this unique cultural and historical site.