

# Shiraz to become Iran's tourism hub: Minister

## Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Reza Salehi Amiri, emphasized the significance of Shiraz as a platform for the development of Iran's tourism sector, citing the city's rich cultural heritage and handicraft industry. In a two-day visit to Shiraz, Salehi Amiri participated in the 3rd International Multimedia Festival of Cultural Heritage, which took place from November 5 to 8. The festival featured a diverse range of works from artists in 11 countries, with non-competitive entries from abroad showcased for the first time, IRNA reported. During his visit, the minister highlighted the importance of Fars Province, where Shiraz is located, as a hub for tourism and handicrafts, with over 3,000 historical monuments and 400 handicraft complexes employing over 22,000 people. He also emphasized the need to create jobs in the handicraft sector, with a target of creating 100,000 jobs per year, rising to one million jobs by the end of the five-year development plan. The minister also visited various historical sites in Fars Province, including the Meymand ancient village, where he emphasized the need to facilitate people's access to historical sites while ensuring their protection. He visited the Jaameh Mosque, which dates back to the Qajar era and has been registered as a national monument, as well as the historical bathhouse, and the anthropology museum. He also announced plans to renovate the historical bathhouse and turn it into a museum, with a new layout and design. The minister also visited a glasswork workshop in Meymand and praised the production of rosewater and flowers in the city as a valuable tourist attraction. In addition, Salehi Amiri inaugurated the Shiraz Art Bazaar, which features 35 permanent handicraft stalls and 16 stalls from cities and villages participating in the festival. The bazaar showcases the creativity and artistry of Iranian handicraft artists, and the minister expressed his optimism about the future of the industry. The minister also emphasized the need to provide facilities and job opportunities in the handicraft sector, as well as to promote the industry through marketing and advertising. Furthermore, a 4,000-year-old silver Elamite cup, discovered in Marvdasht 58 years ago, was unveiled at the Persepolis Museum in Marvdasht, Fars Province. The cup dates back to the Elamite era and is a significant cultural artifact.

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Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Reza Salehi Amiri holds a turquoise copper dish at the Shiraz Art Bazaar in Fars Province, Iran, on November 7, 2024. ● IRNA



## Iran considers national day for three Persian Gulf islands

The Iranian government is contemplating a proposal to designate as a national day the anniversary of the British withdrawal from the Persian Gulf islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb, and Lesser Tunb. Niknam Hosseini, head of the Public Relations Department of Iran's Culture Ministry, announced that the Public Culture Council has placed the proposal on its agenda, Press TV reported. He noted that the decision follows a social media campaign advocating for December 1 to be recognized as the national day of the islands. The three islands —

Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs — are located in the Persian Gulf between mainland Iran and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The islands have historically been part of Iran for many centuries, proof of which can be found and corroborated by countless legal, historical, and geographical documents in Iran and other countries. However, the UAE has questioned Iran's sovereignty over the islands over the past decades. Iran has time and again stressed that the three islands are an "integral part of Iran's territory"

and advised the Arab country not to take positions undermining bilateral friendship. The root of the issue goes back to the early 20th century when, with the weakening of Iran under the Qajar dynasty and the British imperial expansion in the Persian Gulf, the three islands fell under British control — first Abu Musa in 1904, followed by the two Tunbs in 1921. Over the next half-century, London entrusted local administration to the British-appointed Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah Sheikhs. Iran and the UK intermittently engaged in heated discussions



about the status of the three islands to no avail. On November 30, 1971, a day after British forces left the region and just two days before the UAE was to become an official federation, Iran's sovereignty over the islands was legitimately restored. Sometime later, the

newly established United Arab Emirates began to claim full control over the three Iranian islands, which has continued to this day. These demands have occasionally disrupted Iranian-Emirati relations, as well as the internal relations of the seven emirates of the UAE.

## Fajr Film Festival's Int'l Section to be held separately

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The Fajr Film Festival has a new director, Manouchehr Shahsavari, who has been appointed by Raed Faridzadeh, the head of Cinema Organization of Iran. Shahsavari's appointment comes just under three months before the festival is set to take place, ILNA wrote. Faridzadeh has issued a decree naming Shahsavari as the director of the 43rd Fajr Film Festival. The decree highlights Shahsavari's expertise, commitment, and valuable experience in the field of cinema. The festival's international section, which has been separated from the national section, will be held independently at a later date agreed upon with the International Federation of Film Producers Associations. This move is expected

to boost Iran's cultural diplomacy and promote the country's film industry abroad. Shahsavari has a proven track record in the film industry, having produced several notable films and held various executive roles, including vice president of Iran's House of Cinema, board member of the Film Producers and Distributors Guild, and chairman of the Screening Guild Council. The separation of the national and international sections of the festival has been a topic of discussion since 2021. The weak performance of the international section in recent years has been met with criticism, especially compared to previous years when the festival was held independently. Faridzadeh has also thanked Mohammad Khazaei for his efforts in preparing for the 43rd edition of the festival.

## Shadow of Trump's ...

In foreign policy, Trump is expected to consider individuals like Richard Grenell and Robert O'Brien as main candidates for Secretary of State and National Security Advisor. Grenell, who has worked closely with Trump on security and diplomatic issues, could, given his experience in international relations and the strategies adopted during Trump's presidency, pursue more aggressive policies towards Iran and its allied countries. This approach, coupled with support for anti-Iran regional coalitions, particularly in West Asia, could lead to intensified sanctions and increased diplomatic pressure on Iran. Robert O'Brien, who has collaborated with Trump and support-

ed aggressive policies, especially in national security, might play a crucial role in strengthening Trump's administration's policies against Iran, particularly in preventing Iran from acquiring advanced technologies. With his harsh and critical views on Iran's role in shaping regional dynamics, O'Brien might attempt to increase pressure on Iran in international negotiations, especially in the UN Security Council, and challenge any nuclear agreement. Regarding national security, Mike Waltz and Tom Cotton are potential candidates for Secretary of Defense and National Security Advisor. Both figures advocate for stringent and interventionist policies globally. Mike Waltz, particularly sensitive to security threats from China and Russia,

might propose new strategies to counter global threats with an aggressive approach. On the other hand, Tom Cotton, a representative of the interventionist wing of the Republican Party and a staunch supporter of military aid to Ukraine and increased pressure on Iran, is likely to intensify US military and security policies in West Asia if appointed. The presence of these individuals in Trump's cabinet, especially in the Department of Defense, could pose new threats for West Asia's security and result in military actions against Resistance forces. Specifically, these policies could lead to increased US military presence in Middle East countries, particularly in Saudi Arabia

and Iraq, could escalate regional tensions. In domestic security, figures like Thomas Homan and Chad Wolf are considered potential candidates for the Department of Homeland Security. Both individuals, with significant security backgrounds, pursued stringent policies towards immigrant communities and opposition groups, especially during Trump's post-election period. These approaches might ultimately strengthen the anti-Iranian atmosphere within the US, particularly at a time when domestic political tensions in the US have sharply increased. Adopting such strict immigration policies and increasing pressure on Iranian-American communities could negatively impact cultural and

diplomatic relations between the two countries. Given the potential composition of Trump's cabinet and the presence of hardliners in key positions, Iran must adopt a smart approach to diplomacy to handle potential threats and pressures from this cabinet. This diplomacy should not only focus on increasing cooperation with allied countries in West Asia and other parts of the world but also actively engage in international forums to counter US economic and military pressures. This requires greater international coordination with global powers like China, Russia, and even the European Union to prevent the negative consequences of Trump's potential actions while steering the situation towards managing

tensions and negotiating with the "deal-making Trump". In conclusion, it's important to note that the potential presence of hardliners in Trump's cabinet could lead to significant changes in US's domestic and foreign policies. These changes will not only impact the global economy and security but could also initiate a new phase of tension between Iran and the US. Therefore, the Iranian government and establishment must adopt a smart strategy, focusing on strengthening national cohesion to manage both domestic and international arenas in a way that reduces potential threats, whether they be economic or military and security, while maximizing the opportunities arising during Trump's second term.