

# League of Historical Cities accepts Iran's Mashhad as member

Mashhad, Iran's second-largest city, joined the League of Historical Cities as its newest member. Mashhad's mayor, Mohammad Reza Ghalandar, said on Saturday that the city had become the League's 129th member and the 12th Iranian city to join the Japan-based organization, Press TV reported.

Mashhad, located in northeast Iran, has a population of nearly four million. It hosts the holy shrine of Imam Reza (PBUH), the eighth Shia imam. It is a regional hub of tourism that receives

nearly 30 million pilgrims per year from Iran and other countries. The city and its surrounding towns are home to some of the most important historical places of the Islamic and pre-Islamic periods. Ghalandar said that joining the League of Historical Cities will allow Mashhad to expand and promote its religious tourism infrastructure further, especially for pilgrims visiting the city from nine countries in the region, ranging from India to

Turkey. "This will create sustainable revenues for the city of Mashhad," he said. The League of Historical Cities was established in 1987 in Japan's Kyoto. Its manifest says the organization seeks to strengthen cooperation between historical cities around the world to enable them to exchange their experiences on how to preserve and use historical places and monuments. A total of 129 cities from 65 countries have joined the organization.



## 'Another View' painting exhibition offers fresh focus

Arts & Culture Desk

The exhibition 'Another View', featuring 20 of his paintings by Alireza Esmaili, is underway at the Laleh Art Gallery. Esmaili believes that his use of pure forms and colors in his works aims to invite the audience to experience beauty from a different perspective. At the opening ceremony, Esmaili stated, "David Martin believes that 'no other art can affect the audience as much as music.'" He added, "Some art thinkers believe that all forms of artistic expression strive to approach music in their most elevated forms. Unity, rhythm, harmony, and the organic connection between elements are features that bring music closer to human nature, evoking emotions,

and inspiring the audience." Esmaili emphasized that if a painter follows this approach, they will become closer to the essence of existence, nature, and human beauty. He said, "I have tried to achieve this harmony in my works, presenting a part of this fluid and floating harmony in existence through pure forms and colors, and inviting the audience to experience beauty from another perspective." Mohammadali Saeedi, the manager of Laleh Art Gallery and curator of 'Another View,' noted that Esmaili's abstract expressionist paintings demonstrate that a painting does not necessarily need to have a narrative or meaning. He explained, "The musical meaning of his colorful forms is created through the same

expectation that a music listener experiences. In these works, the painter revives tendencies in the audience that may not have been realized before, evoking visual and aesthetic inspirations that are ultimately resolved by the audience's internal interpretations." Esmaili is a graduate of the University of Soreh's painting department and has over 20 years of experience in the visual arts. He is also a member of the Institute for the Development of Visual Arts and an artistic advisor to the Research Institute of Islamic Culture and Art. The exhibition 'Another View,' opened on November 29 and will be open from Saturday to Wednesday, until December 7, at the Laleh Art Gallery, except for holidays.

## Shiraz, Dushanbe ink tourism cooperation agreement

Arts & Culture Desk

Shiraz, Iran and Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to boost tourism cooperation between the two cities. The agreement was signed on Sunday in the presence of the head of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Department in Fars Province Mohammad Sabet-Eghlidi, officials from the Shiraz municipality, the First Secretary of the Embassy of Tajikistan in Iran Hokimiddin Rahmonov, and representatives from the private sector active in the tourism industry of both countries, IRNA reported. According to Sabet-Eghlidi, Iran and Tajikistan share a common cultural heritage, which has made it easy for tourists and tourism industry advocates from Tajikistan to feel at home in Shiraz. "Iran and Tajikistan have a common cultural background, and Iran has been the capital of a civilization that has been home to 33 nations in the past, as depicted in the Persepolis," he said. Eghlidi added that the shared cultural heritage and common language have made it possible for Iranian citizens who love their history and civilization

to travel to Tajikistan and become familiar with its geography and attractions. He also highlighted some of Shiraz's tourist attractions, including Persepolis, the tomb of famous poets Hafez and Saadi, and the city's reputation as a global center for handicrafts. The Iranian official also mentioned that Fars Province is rich in natural attractions and can cater to fans of mountaineering and off-roading. Plus, he pointed out that Shiraz has become a hub for health tourism in Iran, attracting many tourists from the Persian Gulf region for medical treatment. Eghlidi emphasized the importance of organizing cultural weeks and tourism events to introduce the attractions of both countries and provide an opportunity for mutual tourism cooperation.



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## Ancient Chinese metalworking techniques shared in Iran

The specialized seminar titled 'Iron Smelting and Casting in Ancient China' was held on November 30, at the National Museum of Iran. The lecture was delivered by Linheng Mo from the Hunan Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology, China. The presentation was divided into two parts. The first part focused on metalworking methods, introducing various iron smelting furnaces discovered in archaeological excavations in China. The second part presented the achievements of the Guantian site excavation in Sangzhi County, Hunan Province, which primarily involved iron metallurgy. The Guantian excavation revealed diverse iron smelting furnaces and a stockpile of iron bars ready for use, indicating advanced technology at the site. In addition, various

iron alloys, including steel from periods contemporaneous with late Sassanian and early Islamic Iran (Han Dynasty China), were found. Jebrael Nokandeh, Director of the National Museum of Iran, noted that contemporary to the Bronze and Iron Ages in Iran, metalworking in China had made significant advancements, producing large and impressive bronze figures and objects. He further mentioned that given Mr. Mo and his colleagues' research background in ancient Chinese metalworking sites, their recent studies with Iranian colleagues in the cultural landscape of Masouleh, Gilan, could provide new insights into Islamic and historic metalworking. He expressed hope that this team of archaeo-metallurgy specialists could initiate focused research in Masouleh.

## Parliament, government resolved...

It appears that the law, like some hardline parliamentarians' insistence on dismissing Mohammad Javad Zarif from the government based on law, may lay the groundwork for new disputes between the government and parliament. According to the law, officials with dual nationality or family members with dual nationality cannot hold key positions. Opposition lawmakers in the parliament claim that Vice President Zarif falls under this law and should step down. Just days ago, MPs rejected the government's bill to amend this law. Comments from Qalibaf, who advised Zarif to resign as vice president, did not sit well with government supporters and reformists. Now, the hijab law is set to become another contentious issue between the government and parliament. However, Pezeshkian, who has himself served as a

lawmaker for several terms, has not reacted strongly to these issues, opting not to fuel the controversy. It seems he remains committed to national unity and cooperation, hoping to resolve these differences through dialogue and negotiations with high-ranking officials, away from media hype. As Sakineh-Sadat Pad, a legal expert and head of the Presidential Office's Social Freedoms and Rights Department, has suggested, the implementation or non-implementation of the hijab law could be discussed and reviewed in a meeting of the heads of the three branches of power. In any case, yesterday's joint session between the parliament and government, particularly the stances of the president and parliament speaker, indicates that the two bodies are committed to continuing cooperation and synergy to address the country's problems, and that some differences will not hin-

der this path. Qalibaf and Pezeshkian, more than anyone else, know that there is no way to stabilize the country's situation except by strengthening cooperation between various bodies. Regional and international circumstances have also underscored the need for internal unity. Thus, the joint session of the government and parliament sent a clear message about the executive and legislative branches' determination to work together to synergize the country's national power to overcome challenges. In the shadow of this unity and cooperation, it is possible to overcome some differences or find solutions. As Presidential Deputy for Communications and Information Mehdi Tabatabaei has written: "There are logical paths to amend flawed laws. Good governance will prevent the implementation of laws that go against the country's overall interests and create tension and division."

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