

Cultural heritage serves as Iran's 'soft power' shaping national identity: *Minister*

Arts & Culture Desk

Reza Salehi Amiri, Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, underscored the significance of cultural heritage as a form of soft power that plays a vital role in shaping the nation's identity. Speaking at the seventh national specialized meeting of commanders, deputies, and officials of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, held on December 14, at the Niavaran Cultural-Historical Complex, Salehi Amiri stated, "The protection unit is the guardian of the nation's

identity." Highlighting the geographical and cultural wealth of Iran, Salehi Amiri noted that both tangible and intangible heritage represent the country's soft power, IRNA reported. He emphasized that society thrives on this soft power while being safeguarded by hard power. "The protection unit safeguards the identity of a nation, a job that is both valuable and commendable," he added. Salehi Amiri pointed out that sites such as Jiroft, Hegmataneh, Shahr-e Sukhteh (Burnt City), Marvdasht, Estakhr, Firuzabad, and Naqsh-e Jahan are inte-

gral to the historical identity of Iran. He affirmed, "Iranian heritage stands as an unparalleled cultural and historical asset among United Nations member states. No other country possesses the diverse historical and civilizational capacities that Iran has." The minister also remarked on the community's intelligence and self-organization among cultural and religious components, emphasizing that religious elements have never opposed the national identity. "Iranian identity and Islam are two wings of our identity, and there is no conflict be-

tween them," he stated. Salehi Amiri acknowledged the shortcomings in preserving historical artifacts due to limited resources and facilities. He stressed the importance of developing and safeguarding the country's cultural heritage, particularly in light of the younger generation's passion for recognizing and protecting it. "We can organize complementary efforts with the protection unit and utilize local forces, organizations, and associations for more effective heritage preservation," he suggested. Furthermore, the minister highlighted the need for



joint and effective collaborations to enhance the capabilities, equipment, and human resources of the protection unit.



Reza Salehi Amiri (C), Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, speaks at a meeting of cultural heritage managers at Tehran's Niavaran Cultural-Historical Complex in Tehran, Iran, on December 14, 2024.

Call for identification of chemical suppliers

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4	A.O. 1010	15	CA STEARATE
5	M.S. 168	16	NA BENZOATE+ A.O. B225
6	A.O. B225	17	UV770
7	A.O. B215	18	PEROXIDE DHBP
8	GMS 90(ATMER 129)	19	NALCO 7330
9	WHITE OIL V-70	20	DSTDP
10	NALCO 3988	21	GREASE VASELINE
11	TALC	22	DONOR C


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Iranian film 'Unparallel World' awarded at Euroshorts in Poland

Arts & Culture Desk

The Iranian short film 'Unparallel World', directed and written by Mohammad Yaraghi, clinched the Main Award aka The Mayor of Gdansk Award at the 23rd edition of the Euroshorts Film Festival in Poland. This marks the second international award for 'Unparallel World' and the seventh international accolade for director Mohammad Yaraghi, ILNA reported. 'Unparallel World' has garnered significant attention for its innovative narrative and compelling storytelling. The film has previously screened in cities such as London, Budapest, Warsaw, and Gdansk, and has been featured at the 29th Portobello Film Festival in the UK and the 20th BuSho Film Festival in Hungary. The Euroshorts Film Festival, held annually since 1992, is a well-known event in Eastern Europe dedicated to showcasing the works of emerging filmmakers and innovative short films, animations,

and experimental pieces from around the world. In a synopsis of the film, 'Unparallel World' explores the notion that the events unfolding in the present day are not confined to a parallel or surreal universe; rather, they are the result of actions and influences from all of us. The exclusive distribution rights for 'Unparallel World' have been acquired by the Italian company Alpha Film, further cementing the film's international reach and recognition.

Health minister warns Iran to become oldest country in region within 15 years

Social Desk

Iranian Health Minister Mohammad Reza Zafarghandi highlighted the pressing issue of population aging in Iran, predicting that the country will become the oldest in the region within the next 15 years. "With the current rate of population growth, we will reach this significant demographic shift in the near future," he remarked during the 58th session of the Medical Council of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Tasnim news agency reported. Zafarghandi emphasized the gravity of the situation, noting that by the end of the current Iranian year (March 20, 2025), the country is expected to witness fewer than one million births annually. He stated, "The population issue is serious and carries cultural, economic, social, and political dimensions." The health minister point-

ed out that other countries are also grappling with demographic crises, but Iran's situation is particularly alarming as it has reached this point in just a decade, unlike other nations that have taken 50 to 70 years. He stressed, "Our development trajectory is different; we are facing this phenomenon while in the process of development." Echoing the minister's concerns, Mohammad Javad Mahmoudi, head of the National Institute for Population Research (NIPR), reported that the elderly population is increasing at a rate five times that of the overall population growth. He explained, "Aging is a process where the proportion of older individuals in the population rises while the share of younger people declines, primarily due to decreased fertility rates." Mahmoudi elaborated on the implications of this demographic shift, stating

that while reductions in mortality rates across all ages have minimal impact on age composition, a decline in mortality during the later stages of life significantly contributes to aging. "As economic and social conditions improve, mortality decreases and life expectancy increases, resulting in more individuals living to older ages," he noted. This trend, combined with declining fertility, leads to a structural transformation in the population's age distribution. He further highlighted global aging trends, indicating that in 2019, there were 703 million individuals aged 65 or older worldwide, a number projected to double to 1.5 billion by 2050. Mahmoudi warned that by 2050, nearly one-third of Iran's population will be elderly, with the percentage of those over 60 expected to rise from around 10% in 2015 to 33% in 2050.