

Iran's cultural heritage heart of national identity: *Sprox*

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's cultural legacy is not just about historical artifacts; it's the very essence of the nation's identity, according to government spokeswoman Fatemeh Mohajerani.

During a visit to the Center for the Great Islamic Encyclopedia, she highlighted the deep-rooted impact of Iran's cultural heritage, emphasizing its role in shaping the country's past, present, and future, IRNA wrote.

During her visit, she noted, "No society can rise above the stature of its ideas," highlighting the importance of intellectual development.

Mohajerani praised the center's 40 years of dedication to encyclopedic scholarship, expressing gratitude for its contributions to the cultural landscape of Iran.

She reminisced about how the volumes of the encyclopedia have always adorned her family home and extended her best wishes for the continued success of its scholars and staff.

During her visit, the spokeswoman toured the center's scientific sections,



library, reading room, and the Iraj Afshar Research Collection.

She acknowledged the profound impact of Iran's cultural and historical legacy on national identity, stating that these elements not only hold spiritual value but also play a significant role in show-

casing the country's rich history. Mohajerani urged greater attention to be paid to cultural heritage, advocating for extensive promotion of Iran's achievements in this domain, particularly the efforts made to preserve and maintain this legacy.

Kish Island sees 104% surge in foreign tourist arrivals



The CEO of the Kish Free Zone Organization, Mohammad Kabiri, announced a remarkable 104% increase in foreign tourist arrivals to Kish Island over the past month compared to the same period last year.

In an interview with IRNA, Kabiri emphasized the organization's commitment to enhancing Kish as a prime tourist destination. He noted that the process of attracting international visitors has become more streamlined, with plans underway to develop new tourist routes. Recent additions include direct flights from Erbil, Baghdad, and other Iraqi cities. Kabiri also revealed that the first direct flight from Tajikistan to Kish is scheduled to commence

on January 4, 2025, a development attributed to discussions with the Tajikistan Ambassador in Iran.

The CEO highlighted the formation of a specialized committee aimed at boosting foreign tourism, focusing particularly on countries around the Persian Gulf and Central Asia.

He expressed optimism that by the end of the year, direct flights from Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Iraq, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan will be established.

Kabiri reiterated the organization's dedication to making Kish Island an increasingly attractive destination for international tourists, ensuring that the island's potential is fully realized.

Remembering the day Iranian soldiers stood firm at Aras River against Soviet Union

By Zahra Keshvari
Staff writer

The Aras River sits so calmly in your eyes that you doubt it is moving. The hesitation creeps into your soul, making you wonder if the experts are wrong when they call it one of the most rebellious rivers in the world. It is so silent that you doubt the world has stopped at this very point, at this very moment. Then, question after question and doubt after doubt arise in your mind: Where and when did the Aras River fall silent in northwestern Iran? Was it at the point where news of the death of Abbas Mirza, the official defender of Iran's borders against the Russian Tsarist invasion, the resistance against the audacity of the Ottoman Empire, and the confrontation with the disobedience of Afghan commanders and the local rulers of Khorasan reached the Aras? Or was it on August 25, 1941, when three people stood on the iron bridge at the Iran-Soviet border and lost their lives to keep Iran safe? Perhaps the Aras River fell silent that day and took its sorrow to the depths of its 200-meter flow, when the Treaty of Baharestan was signed in a village by the same name on the other side, the side where we stood; the side of Iran. Maybe it swallowed its rebellion and dangerous

waves that day when the Treaty of Turkmenchay separated 14 provinces and states of the Caucasus from the motherland, and the northern parts of the Aras remained separated from Iran.

Border zero

A soldier stands atop a watchtower, parallel to the Iron Bridge of Jolfa, at the border crossing; there, just a short distance away, the Aras River marks the boundary between two countries, between two Jolfas; the Jolfa where we (the journalists) are guests, and the other Jolfa that lies across the river in the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. At the foot of the watchtower, busts of three soldiers, three men who stood until the last bullet against the Russian army, a magnetic force that pulls you back to August 25, 1941; to that moment when the Aras River defined the border between Iran and the Soviet Union. The sorrow of the world falls upon your heart. It's as if you've reached those last 48 hours, wounded, a grief that settles upon you bit by bit; in the midst of a Russian army and three men standing on the side of their homeland. Your heart wants to reach back into history and change the story, or at least write it in a way that 59 years later, a family doesn't find the grave of their lost father; 70

years later, a mother doesn't cry at the border of Iran over her son's grave; a mother doesn't think her son has been taken to Siberia.

Ask them, those three without insignias, how did they leave everything behind and stand firm? When you fired your last bullet, did your feet falter? When the central government ordered non-resistance and the evacuation of border posts for the entry of the Allies? Ask Mosayyeb Mohammadi when he was shot, what was the last image he saw before his eyes? What did he tell his mother, his son, and his wife? Whom did he entrust his children to? When soldier Qeytaran (the fourth person at the Jolfa border post) went to get reinforcements, did they know no help would come? Then, when pain falls upon your soul, when the lump in your throat swells, ask those three border guards what they did until today you come in peace and comfort at the border of Iran and Nakhchivan, gazing at the iron bridge where the Tabriz-Jolfa railway was built in 1913. Ask yourself, Corporal Mohammadi, Soldier Rasi, and Gendarmerie Hashemi, how many times have they told themselves the story of the bridge built without any welding or bolts, held together only by wooden pegs, for their fallen comrades. Perhaps Soldier Rasi has promised his four-year-old son, whom he left behind, and his seven-year-old daughter, who would forever wait for him, that the bridge is built in such a way that even in the most turbulent conditions, the Aras River remains two meters away from its raging waters. Then, strike your hand in regret that you don't know exactly what happened to them? Shouldn't you know their story? The story of

those who shaped your identity on August 25, 1941; which later became the National Day of Aras in the Iranian calendar. How did they stand for those last 48 hours against the Russian army? When did they fire their last bullet? The Aras remains silent, not answering. But the soul they put on the line to protect their land compels the commander of the 47th Russian Army to perform military honors, laying their bodies to rest in their homeland... It's as if these three intended to leave everyone in waiting. Perhaps the silence of the Aras comes from here. The Aras has stood here once, silent to every word and whisper. It's as if they have entrusted the story to you, to me, to him, to us. This is the story; three men who stood on a bridge at the border of Iran and Russia and gave their lives; like those five who stood on a bridge in Khorramshahr and forever remained in the minds of Iranians; five who crossed the bridge to prevent the advance of Iraqi forces or delay their movement. They passed on so that Iran would remain.

Sacrificed for Iran

Corporal Mosayyeb Mohammadi is laid to rest below the bridge, where he died because of the homeland; the place where he must have heard the murmur of the Aras River for the last time. Perhaps he heard the voice of his mother, Malek, asking for the thousandth time: "Where are you?" Malek, whose name was initially written on the grave of her lost son, later to be known as the mother of Mosayyeb, on whose tombstone only their names and the date of their martyrdom were written. The Aras weeps here. For it knows the pain of separation. It

understands loss. It has tasted wave after wave of sorrow in the Treaties of Turkmenchay and Gulestan. That night must have been stormier than any other night. That night, instead of all the women whose soldier did not return from the war, must have cried. But that day, every bullet took down several people; a mother, a father, a wife, and children. Several families in Tabriz. The Aras, as the symbol of Northwest Iran, must have wept bitterly. It takes time for someone to tell their families that their wait is not in vain. When Mosayyeb Mohammadi joined the army, his son Mohammad was four years old. He also had a little daughter. Malek, Mosayyeb's mother, after the Soviet invasion, wrote a letter to the border guards to get news of her lost son, but the letter remained unanswered, adding fuel to the fire in Malek's heart. Malek clung to every hopeful sentence and word. Occasionally, someone would come along who had seen Mosayyeb somewhere. For instance, someone told Malek that they had seen her son's liver in Baku. Malek never knew where her son's body was laid to rest. A photo published in the book "Jolfa from the Past to the Present" in 2007, reveals the tomb of the corporal, Mohammad, Mosayyeb's son, and Mohammad's sister died at the age of 20 without ever setting foot on her father's grave. It is said that no photo of Mosayyeb remains.

The grave of two other border guards alongside the railway tracks that pass through the middle of the Iron Bridge, is located; somewhere between the watchtower and the border post of Jolfa; there where a few soldiers stand guard without

uttering a word to us; at the border of two Jolfas.

A soldier from Basmenj

The military service of Abdullah Shahriari from Basmenj Tabriz, began during World War II and the Allied occupation of Iran. He put on his soldier's boots, came to Jolfa, stood on the bridge facing the Russian troops, and never returned to Tabriz. Abdullah's wife waited for him until her last breath, opening every door that was knocked in the hope that it was Abdullah, only to find that he was not there. That bullet took down two people, Abdullah and the woman whose heart beat in his chest. Abdullah's grandchild, 59 years later, sees the grave of his grandfather on TV and asks himself, "What is my grandfather's grave doing in Jolfa?"

Three men, a sacrifice for the homeland

Mohammad Rasi Hashemi, when he joins the border guards, leaves behind a five-year-old son and a seven-year-old daughter; children who, along with their mother, waited for seven years for their father's return. Years later, they realize that their father had lost his life somewhere along the Aras River, allowing them to rest in peace, but due to the difficulty of the journey, they are unable to visit their father's grave. The Aras is right to be silent. The world here, in August 1941, watches the patriotism of three men, three without insignias, standing; at the place where the Free Trade Zone Organization wants to create a park for families and travelers at the border, so that they can hear the story of those three men, a sacrifice for the homeland, every day from the Aras. In the hope that the Aras will no longer witness, on both sides, the loss of a soldier.

Saipa Wheel Manufacturing Company
Tender for Steel Wheel Rim Machinery

Saipa Wheel Manufacturing Company intends to purchase 6 steel wheel rim making machines. Interested companies are requested to offer their quotes based on the specifications mentioned in the attached RFP on our website www.kswco.com. Please receive the tender form and send your PI to commercial2@kswco.com by Jan 05 2025.

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