

## Minister calls for embracing diversity to strengthen national identity



Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Reza Salehi Amiri, addressed the critical issue of national unity and identity. He made the statements during a meeting held on December 31 at the Iran International Conference Center, highlighting the country's rich history and the challenges it has faced, IRNA reported. Salehi Amiri began by asserting, "No one has been able to implement a project of uniformity in society; cohesion is directly related to plurality, and unity is formed in a society where diversity is recognized."

He referenced the Pahlavi era, where attempts to impose uniformity through forced migration and language restrictions failed, stating, "Pahlavi I, due to a lack of political literacy, thought that if Azerbaijanis were relocated to North Khorasan, the country's security issues would be resolved." The minister drew a comparison with other nations, questioning, "How is it that in Canada, Australia, and other countries, over 200 nationalities, races, religions, and colors live together without issues? This shows that cohesion is directly related to plurality." He emphasized that unity is fostered when diversity is embraced, not through forced means.

Salehi Amiri expressed deep concern about the younger generation's diminishing sense of patriotism and national identity. He criticized the education system, saying, "Education has not been able to teach this generation that your land is a land of pride, glory, and joy. The university has also failed to educate our youth about the unique and enviable qualities of their homeland." The minister highlighted Iran's historical resilience, stating, "Iran has remained firm, strong, and resistant throughout history, from the Mongol war to Saddam; because Iran and the Iranian belong to this land." He emphasized the importance of the Persian language in preserving Iran's identity, saying, "All languages in history have faced crises, but Persian has resisted. Islam was embraced by the monotheistic people of this land, and their culture absorbed it without disappearing." In a powerful call to action, Salehi Amiri urged, "Use the concept of Iran in your writing and engage with the youth and teenagers to foster a sense of belonging to this land." He emphasized the need to educate the younger generation about the country's rich heritage and the importance of national identity in a diverse and pluralistic society.

## IRNA opens office on Bu Musa Island CEO: Iran's friendship with neighbors long-standing policy



Hossein Jaberi Ansari, CEO of Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), opens a new office on southern Iran's Bu Musa Island during a ceremony on December 31, 2024. ● IRNA

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The Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) inaugurated a new office on Bu Musa Island, a strategic island in the Persian Gulf, marking a significant step in Iran's commitment to the development of this region. During the opening ceremony on Tuesday, IRNA's CEO, Hossein Jaberi Ansari, emphasized that the establishment of the office is a reaffirmation of Iran's longstanding policy of friendship and cooperation with its neighbors, IRNA reported. "Iran, as one of the great powers of the world, has had deep ties with its neighbors throughout history, and after the Islamic Revolution, the fundamental policy of Iran has been to expand cooperation and solidarity with its neighbors as the first ring of its foreign policy," said Ansari. The new office will provide real-time coverage of events and news from Bu Musa Island, ensuring that the world is kept informed about Iran's initiatives in this region. "Previously, Bu Musa Island's news was covered by IRNA's central office in Bandar Abbas, but given the island's importance and its transformation into a significant hub for cultural, social, political, economic, and construction activities, it was essential to establish an IRNA office there to cover the news with greater seriousness, discipline, and speed," added Jaberi Ansari.

The opening of the Bu Musa Island office is part of IRNA's broader strategy to strengthen its provincial offices and expand its presence across Iran. "The approach that IRNA is pursuing is to explain the position of this media for the government and people and to strengthen the bridge of connection between different strata of society, and the expansion of IRNA offices is an important step to realize this strategy," Jaberi Ansari explained. The Bu Musa Island office is the third provincial office in the Persian Gulf, joining existing offices in Qeshm and Kish Islands. The Iranian islands of Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb, and Bu Musa are strategically located near the Strait of Hormuz, a vital international waterway connecting the Persian Gulf to the Sea of Oman and the Indian Ocean. Given the Hormozgan province's extensive coastline and unique potential, establishing IRNA offices in this region is of great significance, ensuring comprehensive coverage of events and developments in these critical areas. During his four-day visit to Hormozgan, Hossein Jaberi Ansari will also explore the province's blue economy opportunities, as highlighted by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, and President Masoud Pezeshkian.

## Eva; Iran's first smart travel assistant unveiled

Eva, a groundbreaking AI-powered travel assistant platform, was unveiled at the 6th annual IRSA Group's best platforms. Eva is designed to assist Iranian travelers in finding flight tickets, planning trips, and discovering tourist attractions. In addition, Eva provides financial advice for investment and savings, IRNA reported.



The event, which was the largest gathering of private sector tourism professionals in Iran, was attended by over 1,500 representatives from more than 700 travel agencies and tour operators. During the ceremony, Eva was demonstrated through a live conversation, where questions were asked and the answers were confirmed. Eva will be available on Iranian app stores from January 20, with additional services such as hotel and ecotourism accommodation reservations, as well as tour bookings across the country, to be added soon. Mehdi Najafi, the founder and CEO of IRSA Group, addressed the challenges facing the tourism industry and potential solutions.

Najafi stressed that the most crucial solution to the tourism industry's challenges is enhancing global engagement, lifting sanctions, and attracting tourists. Lifting sanctions would also help prevent pessimistic scenarios regarding currency exchange rate hikes, which would improve citizens' purchasing power for both domestic and international travel. Najafi highlighted the significant role of lifting sanctions in boosting Iran's economic growth, stating that research shows a 1.5-unit growth in tourism for every unit of economic growth in developed countries and up to 8 units in developing countries.

### Intended invitations for prequalification: Vacuum Oxygen Decarburization (VOD) Unit

Invitation No. (F-1403019)

**South Kaveh Steel Company (SKS)** intends to establish a Vacuum Oxygen Decarburization (VOD) unit for producing high-quality steel. All qualified international companies with proven experience in the design, supply, and construction same equipment, utilizing modern technology and capable of handling a production capacity of 170 tons per melt, are invited to submit their documentation and relevant evidence and reference.

#### Deadline for submission of documents:

Interested applicants are requested to visit the company's website at [www.skSCO.ir](http://www.skSCO.ir) to complete the Supplier Information Form attached to the announcement. Required documents and information should be sent to the following email address no later than the end of the day on Tuesday, January 7, 2025

Email: [Vodplant.tender@skSCO.ir](mailto:Vodplant.tender@skSCO.ir)

For further information, applicants may contact Mr. Khosravi at:

Phone: +98 76 31917172

#### Note:

This invitation prequalification is only for the purpose of evaluating the qualifications of contractors and does not make any right to participate in the tender on the applicants.