



President calls for unity among Islamic nations as Ramadan begins

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian extended heartfelt wishes for the arrival of the holy fasting month of Ramadan to leaders and citizens of Islamic nations. In a message issued on Sunday, he called the month a "valuable opportunity" for reflection on the creation of humanity and the universe, as well as a call to adhere to divine principles that foster compassion and support for the needy, president.ir reported.

Pezeshkian expressed hope that, through collective efforts among Islamic leaders, this blessed month would lead to enhanced cooperation among Islamic countries. He stressed the importance of working towards alleviating the suffering of the Palestinian people, particularly those in Gaza and Lebanon.

Iran's VP says only 17 Asiatic cheetahs remain worldwide, urges collaboration for conservation

Social Desk

Iran's Vice President and head of the Department of Environment (DoE), Shina Ansari, announced that only 17 Asiatic cheetahs are left in the world, all of which inhabit Iran. She emphasized the urgent need for collaboration among various agencies, particularly the traffic police, to control vehicle speeds in their habitats, IRNA reported. During a signing ceremony for a memorandum of understanding between the Department of Environment and the traffic police, Ansari highlighted that the Turan area is one of the most crucial habitats for the cheetahs, with parts of it located along the road from Abbas Abad to Mashhad. She noted that there have been annual fatalities of cheetahs due to collisions with passing vehicles, and the traffic police have been instrumental in implementing speed reductions in these areas.

"This cooperation is essential for the protection of the valuable cheetah species and all living beings in nature," Ansari added. Ansari underscored the importance of education and public awareness in environmental issues, referencing Article 50 of the Constitution, which designates environmental protection as a collective responsibility. She urged every Iranian to become an environmental ally to effectively address the pressing challenges facing the environment. While acknowledging that this endeavor will take time, Ansari is optimistic that success can be achieved through the joint efforts of various entities. She mentioned that the memorandum will enable the traffic police to leverage their resources in safeguarding the environment and the Asiatic cheetah's habitat. Ansari also said that the police could assist in identifying offend-

ers, as they have successfully reduced speeds in areas frequented by cheetahs. She pointed out that issues such as waste management and the illegal dumping of sewage present significant challenges that could be better managed with police collaboration. "Vehicle inspections, addressing polluting cars, and noise pollution are other areas where the police can work effectively with the Department of Environment," she added. Ansari expressed hope that the signing of this memorandum would lead to constructive steps towards environmental preservation and the well-being of Iran's natural heritage. Hadi Kiadaliri, the Deputy for Education and Public Participation at the Department of Environment, praised the traffic police's awareness and responsibility regarding environmental issues, stating it



provides reassurance.

He emphasized that protecting the environment directly impacts public health and that the police can assist in preventing certain violations. Kiadaliri highlighted the challenges posed by natural and human-induced degradation, wildlife fatalities, and the necessity for serious

action against offenders, alongside educational efforts. He referred to the successful issuance of green rulings and their deterrent effects, expressing hope that the newly signed memorandum would lead to practical solutions, advocating for a "covert environmental police" to bolster conservation efforts.

Iran unveils funding agreement to boost tourism infrastructure, investment



Arts & Culture Desk

The Iranian government is positioning itself as a facilitator for investment in the tourism sector, emphasizing the need for collaboration among banks to complete key tourism projects. To this end, a memorandum of understanding was signed to provide funding from the National Development Fund for priority projects within the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, IRNA reported. The signing ceremony, attended by Reza Salehi Amiri, Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, along with key leaders from the banking sector, including Mehdi Jahangiri, Chairman of the Board of the Tourism Financial Group, and Mohammad Reza Fahimi, CEO of Tourism Bank, was held at the central office of the Tourism Bank. Salehi Amiri described the signing of this agreement as a strategic step to accelerate the completion and operation of 223 hotels that are over 70% physi-

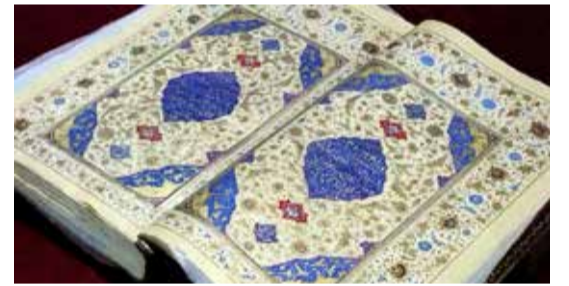
cally completed. He noted that the memorandum is the result of ongoing discussions with the Central Bank and the National Development Fund, culminating in an agreement for loan disbursement through Tourism Bank as the executing bank. "This agreement will allocate financial resources from the Central Bank, the National Development Fund, and a substantial portion of Tourism Bank's resources to expedite the completion of tourism projects and strengthen the necessary infrastructure for this industry," Salehi Amiri stated. The minister underlined the critical importance of enhancing tourism infrastructure to attract both domestic and international visitors, stressing the need for comprehensive support from governmental and banking institutions. According to the country's seventh development plan, the Ministry is tasked with increasing hotel capacity from 455,000 to approximately one million beds,

with the goal of inaugurating 100 new hotels annually. Achieving these objectives necessitates collaborative efforts with financial institutions. "The government acts as a facilitator and supporter in this process, committed to removing barriers to expedite investment and project development. Capital, investors, and infrastructure development are the key pillars for tourism growth and must remain a focal point, as infrastructure development is essential for the advancement of the tourism industry," he added. Mohammad Reza Fahimi, CEO of the Tourism Bank, highlighted the investment volumes and funding allocations, revealing that around \$21.8 million from the Central Bank and National Development Fund have been earmarked for completing tourism projects. A portion of these funds, along with resources from the Tourism Bank, will be dedicated to financing the completion of the 223 hotels. Ali Asghar Shalbfavian, head of the Investment and Economic Affairs Center at the ministry, identified securing financial resources for tourism projects with over 70% physical progress as one of the center's key missions. He expressed optimism that with the support of the Central Bank, National Development Fund, and cooperation from executing banks, 2,700 ongoing tourism projects will gradually be completed.

Manuscripts of Qur'an on display in Tehran

Arts & Culture Desk

In celebration of the holy fasting month of Ramadan, a new exhibition titled "Finest Manuscript Works of the Qur'an" opened at the Museum of Books and Documentary Heritage in Iran's National Library and Archives. According to a report by ILNA, the exhibition was inaugurated by Gholamreza Amirkhani, the head of the library, alongside senior officials and department heads. It features a collection of exquisite handwritten Qur'ans, including an octagonal Qur'an dating back approximately 660 years and a Qazvini Qur'an from



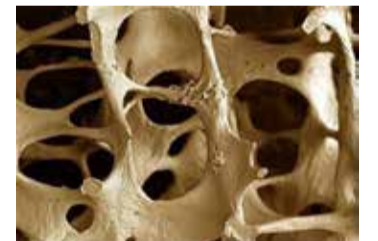
around 227 years ago. The exhibition will be open to visitors from March 2 to 18.

Iranian scientist innovates injectable gel for enhanced bone tissue regeneration

Social Desk

Iranian researcher Mehri Sohrabi has made significant strides in improving bone tissue with her project titled "Investigation of the Osteogenic Behavior of Injectable Gels Based on Bioactive Glasses Containing Quercetin." According to a report from the Iranian National Science Foundation (INSF) on Sunday, Sohrabi, who holds a PhD in Materials Engineering from Iran University of Science and Technology, explained that bone is the most studied tissue in the field of tissue regeneration, IRNA reported. Despite its intrinsic ability to heal after injury, various damages can disrupt the highly organized process of bone formation. Bone tissue engineering aims to mimic the extracellular matrix of tissues and the various biochemical pathways that lead to successful regeneration. For many years, the use of external agents to modulate these biological processes has been the preferred approach in this field. Sohrabi noted that various materials and forms, including dense or porous blocks, granules, and molds with moldability, have been employed to treat bone diseases or

fill bone defects. However, each of these materials and forms poses specific challenges, such as machining difficulties or migration to adjacent tissues. She further explained that injectable gels have eliminated these issues, allowing for controlled drug release and delivery. Bioactive glass gels offer many advantages over bulk ceramics, with their flow and injectability properties making them suitable for a wide range of applications. One significant advancement in this field is the development of hydrogels that can be used alone or in combination with bioactive materials like hydroxyapatite and bioactive glass, providing suitable properties for biomedical applications. Structurally, these systems resemble the extracellular matrix of many natural tissues and offer variable processing methods. They can serve as scaffolds in drug, cell, and growth factor delivery systems or act as barriers or adhesives at the biomaterial-tissue interface. Injectable hydrogels provide minimal invasiveness, low injection costs, and suitable scaffolding for drug encapsulation, tissue repair, and reconstructive surgery. However, Sohrabi pointed out that



while injectable hydrogels may be suitable for tissue repair, they must also be biocompatible, biologically stable, and non-toxic. Sohrabi noted that the use of quercetin in the formulation of the aforementioned injectable gels has not yet been explored. The addition of this osteogenic agent represents an innovation in her research, as it enhances bone formation at the defect site and aids in faster healing. Quercetin has been approved as a bone density enhancer when administered orally and has also been investigated in scaffolds and polymer microspheres. Sohrabi highlighted that while there have been no prior reports on the use of this drug in injectable gels, its effects on other properties such as injectability and washout remain unclear, questions that her research aims to address.