

# Heritage ownership reform targets long-standing gaps in cultural asset protection

## Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Reza Salehi-Amiri on Wednesday called for a nationwide drive to formalize the legal and registration status of historic properties, describing it as a sovereign priority to protect public assets and prevent ownership disputes. Speaking during a visit to the ministry's parliamentary, legal and provincial affairs department, Salehi-Amiri said a number of heritage properties still lack clear legal designa-

tion, a gap that could trigger overlapping claims and undermine public rights, CHTN reported. "Resolving the legal status of these assets is essential to prevent violation of public rights," he said, stressing the need for "measurable" and outcome-oriented action. He stressed that closer coordination with key state bodies, including parliament, the judiciary, and the national registry authorities, to accelerate case resolution and reinforce legal clarity. Without such institutional synergies, he warned, broader cultural

mandates would face "serious hurdles." The minister framed the initiative as part of a results-driven governance approach, urging that all legal and administrative efforts yield tangible progress in safeguarding national heritage. He also called for the expedited settlement of dormant legal cases tied to historical properties, describing their resolution as critical to enhancing transparency over state ownership and preserving the country's cultural legacy. Salehi-Amiri added that prop-

erties in legal limbo must be addressed within a defined timeframe through official title deeds, judicial rulings, or lawful agreements with private owners. Such measures, he said, would help lift uncertainty and ensure the protection of Iran's historical assets under clear legal frameworks.



## Iran's civilization 'will endure against all attempts,' Nassirian mocks US threats



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Veteran stage and screen actor Ali Nassirian said on Wednesday that Iran's civilization will "endure," invoking the country's deep cultural inheritance in response to recent hostile rhetoric from Washington, including threats issued in early April. Speaking in Tehran, Nassirian said repeated attempts by foreign powers across history to erase Iran had failed, stressing that the nation's cultural foundations remain intact. "Iran is not perishable," he said. "Many came, from Mongols to others, and sought to destroy it. They could not." His remarks follow a series of statements by

US President Donald Trump, who in an April 1 televised address from the White House said Washington would "bring them back to the stone ages," and later warned of sweeping destruction if Tehran did not comply with US demands. The comments drew sharp reactions across Iran's cultural and public spheres, IRNA reported. Nassirian framed resilience as rooted in a millennia-old civilizational continuum rather than physical infrastructure alone. "Even if buildings are damaged, they can be rebuilt," he said. "What does not vanish is a civilization sustained by culture." Citing canonical figures of Persian literature, he

pointed to Ferdowsi's 'Shahnameh' (Book of Kings) and the works of Sa'adi, Hafez and Rumi as enduring pillars of identity. He also highlighted the aesthetic legacy of Nasta'liq calligraphy, describing it as a "centuries-old model of beauty" that continues to inform artistic practice. The actor drew a contrast between generational experiences, noting that while younger Iranians often engage with national history through education and media, older generations carry lived memories of upheaval and resistance, including the 1979 Islamic Revolution and the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq War. He added that many artists have continued to express solidarity through their work despite what he described as "silence" from some public figures. "Those who understand Iranian art from within," he said, "carry this civilization forward." "We are not a 250-year-old nation," Nassirian said. "Our civilizational roots stretch back at least three millennia. That is why Iran remains."

## Screens fill again in Tehran as cinema represents post-conflict social outlet

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Iran's cinema sector is "gradually returning to normal life" following wartime disruptions, the head of the Cinema Organization of Iran said Wednesday after senior cultural officials toured a damaged Tehran movie complex, marking efforts to revive public entertainment and social cohesion. Raed Faridzadeh, head of the Cinema Organization, visited the Shokufeh Cinema in central Tehran alongside Habibollah Ilbeigi, head of Shahr Cinema Institute, filmmaker Rasoul Sadrameli and producer Ali Sartipi. The venue sustained significant damage during what officials described as the "third imposed war." Faridzadeh praised media coverage during the conflict and acknowledged damage to cultural infrastructure. "Tehran, which bore the heaviest burden, saw part of its cultural centers affected," he said, noting that Shokufeh "suffered the largest share of destruction among cultural and production facilities." Despite the disruption, he stressed that cinema activity never fully stopped. "Cinema was not completely shut down during the bombardments, either in Tehran or in other cities," he said. Faridzadeh pointed to a rebound in attendance, citing a recent daily audience figure of 96,000, the highest recorded since the start of the year. "This shows cinema is slowly returning to its natural life," he said.



He added that films reflecting wartime conditions continued screening during the conflict, while comedy titles have recently re-entered circulation and additional releases are expected in the coming weeks. "The screening cycle is returning to its normal rhythm," he said. The official emphasized cinema's role in post-crisis recovery, saying there is a "serious need for togetherness and social vitality" after the war, a demand he believes the film sector can help meet. "Cinema must fill the gap of hope and social energy," he said. On controversial film releases such as 'Shishlik' and 'The Killer and the Savage', Faridzadeh said their screening depends on legal procedures. "Any film that has received production permits must go through its

Raed Faridzadeh, head of the Cinema Organization of Iran, tours the renovated Shokufeh Cinema in central Tehran on May 6, 2026. ● IRNA

lawful process," he said, adding that unresolved issues must be addressed within regulatory frameworks. He also highlighted upcoming plans for children's cinema following recent incidents affecting minors, calling them "the most vulnerable group in wartime conditions." He said new films for young audiences will soon enter circulation. On ticket pricing reforms, Faridzadeh defended a flexible pricing model, arguing it remains below inflation levels and was delayed due to wartime sensitivities.

## Iran-Italy short film 'One of Them' enters Lanzarote competition in Spain



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A Iran-Italy co-produced short film 'One of Them' has been selected for the international competition section of the 26th Lanzarote International Film Festival in Spain, marking the work's continued trajectory on the global festival circuit. Directed and written by Mostafa Vaziri and produced by Hossein Kavand in collaboration with Italy's

Lights On production company, the short will compete in the festival's official selection in Arrecife, the capital of Lanzarote in Spain's Canary Islands, from May 13 to May 23, ILNA reported on Wednesday. The Lanzarote festival is regarded as one of Spain's established platforms for short-form cinema and serves as a qualifying event for the Goya Awards, Spain's premier national film honors. The 26th edition

will host a diverse lineup of international entries spanning countries including the Philippines, Brazil, Peru, Belgium, France, Serbia, Russia and Italy, alongside the Iranian-Italian production. 'One of Them' has steadily expanded its international footprint through multiple festival appearances. It previously earned a nomination for Best International Film at Kosovo's DokuFest in its world premiere run.

It later advanced to the main competition of the HollyShorts Film Festival in the United States, where it was shortlisted among the top 10 films from 427 entries for Best Short Film. The project also featured in the competition section of Georgia's BIAFF festival. International sales and distribution are handled by Lights On, positioning the film within a wider network of cross-border independent cinema.