

Isfahan launches major restoration drive for damaged monuments

Iranica Desk

The head of the Isfahan Municipality's Renovation and Rehabilitation Organization has announced that 80 percent of restoration and reconstruction work on historical buildings damaged in recent attacks US and Israel has been completed, adding that most structural damage will be fully repaired within the next two weeks.

Speaking to IRNA, Mohammadali Izadkhasti outlined the municipality's crisis management and reconstruction measures aimed at restoring Isfahan's damaged historical fabric following the recent attacks.

He said that immediately after the incidents, and under the guidance of the provincial governor-general, Isfahan Municipality and the provincial Cultural Heritage Organization launched emergency operations. Initial efforts included extensive social and media campaigns, such as forming human chains around historical monuments to draw international attention to what he described as a cultural tragedy.

Izadkhasti added that detailed technical and legal dossiers documenting the scale and extent of damage to Isfahan's historical buildings were also prepared jointly by the municipality and cultural heritage au-



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thorities. According to him, the reports have been submitted to Iran's National Commission for UNESCO and other relevant international bodies.

He said explosions in southern areas of Isfahan caused damage to several Takyehs (traditional religious structures) and valuable buildings within the historic Takht-e Foulad Complex, prompting municipal authorities to immediately begin rescue, stabilization, and restoration operations.

"The Kazerouni Takyeh, whose restoration had only recently been completed, unfortunately suffered serious damage in the attacks," he said, adding that reconstruction work has already begun. He noted that structural stabilization and reinforcement

measures are also underway at Madar-e Shahzadeh Takyeh to ensure the building's safety and long-term durability.

Izadkhasti further stated that Mirzaei Takyeh, located near the explosion sites, was exposed to severe damage, and that restoration and preservation work on the structure is being pursued intensively and with urgency.

He also referred to damage in the Safavid Dowlatkhaneh Complex caused by strikes near the governorate building. Among the affected structures was the Rakib Khaneh Mansion, which houses the Isfahan Museum of Contemporary Art and sustained extensive damage.

"Our colleagues quickly entered



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the operational phase of restoration work on the building," he said.

Izadkhasti emphasized that approximately 80 percent of war-related restoration work in these areas has been completed so far and is expected to conclude within the next two weeks, at which point the structural damage will have been fully resolved.

Commenting on the condition of the Timurid Hall Mansion, he said experts are currently conducting detailed assessments and preliminary studies due to the building's complex architectural and structural characteristics.

"The restoration process for this valuable monument will begin soon and will be carried out

with great precision," he added. Cultural heritage experts and local officials have repeatedly warned that damage to Isfahan's historic sites could have long-term consequences for the city's cultural identity and tourism industry. Isfahan, home to numerous Safavid-era monuments and registered historical sites, is considered one of Iran's most important cultural centers and a major destination for domestic and international tourism.

In recent weeks, heritage figures and civil society groups have organized symbolic gatherings and public campaigns in support of preserving the city's historical fabric. Human chains formed around several monuments drew widespread

attention on social media and were described by organizers as an effort to highlight the importance of protecting cultural heritage during times of crisis.

Officials from Iran's cultural heritage sector have also stressed the need for increased international cooperation in documenting and restoring damaged sites. According to local authorities, technical assessments are continuing in several affected areas to determine the full extent of structural and artistic damage to historical buildings.

The Takht-e Foulad Complex, one of the sites affected by the recent explosions, is among Isfahan's most historically significant cemeteries and contains numerous Takyehs, mausoleums, and religious structures dating back several centuries. The Safavid Dowlatkhaneh Complex, another damaged area, is closely associated with Isfahan's role as the capital of the Safavid Empire and includes several important administrative and ceremonial buildings.

Cultural heritage officials have emphasized that restoration operations are being carried out under the supervision of conservation specialists in order to preserve the architectural authenticity of the monuments while ensuring structural safety.

Shirgah tourist train highlights revival of rail tourism

Iranica Desk

The first Shirgah (a city in Mazandaran Province) tourist train following third imposed war departed at full capacity in May 2026.

According to the head of Tamin International Travel and Tourism Company Mehrshad Kazemi, the journey symbolized the resilience of Iran's tourism industry and revive social vitality through rail tourism.

the iconic Veresk Bridge, and the renowned engineering landmark known as the "Three Golden Lines (Se Khat Tala)."

In an interview with chn.ir, Kazemi emphasized the importance of relaunching the tourism route.

"At a time when the tourism industry needs stronger resilience and fresh experiences to return to its peak days, the launch of tourism trains has become a central priority for Social Security Tour-

ism Holding (HEGTA), he said. "This initiative is not merely an operational step, but also a message of renewed hope and dynamism for the country's travel network."

Kazemi described rail tourism as a narrative linking history and nature, adding that HEGTA is pursuing a strategic approach

aimed at maximizing the capacities of the rail transportation sector to promote travel equity and achieve a more balanced distribution of tourists across different regions of the country.

He added that the initiative marks the beginning of broader and more coordinated programs designed to strengthen the tourism value chain within the holding company. The Shirgah railway route, known for its con-

temporary architectural value and ecotourism attractions, has long been considered one of Iran's most popular rail corridors. Officials say the route has once again become a focal point for tourists under HEGTA's new strategy of sustaining tourism activities under all conditions.



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The rail tour takes passengers through some of the country's notable engineering and natural heritage sites.

During the trip, travelers enjoyed the scenic Tehran-Shirgah railway route and visited attractions including the historic Bon-e Kuh railway station, the local market of Shurab,

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Iranian cultural heritage is key to national identity



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The director of the Iranian Association for Cooperation with UNESCO has stressed the need to transform traditional endowments into modern forms in order to safeguard Iran's national identity.

Speaking at a gathering of the South Khorasan Province's Association of Cultural Heritage Benefactors attended by intellectuals and cultural figures, Mohammadreza Majidi, a faculty member at the University of Tehran, highlighted the strategic importance of Iran's civilizational heritage in the contemporary world, according to chn.ir.

Rejecting what he described as a "museum-only" view of ancient artifacts, Majidi said cultural heritage should not be regarded merely as relics for display. "These works constitute the cultural backbone and a primary source of security and identity for Iranians, especially younger generations," he said. "We live in a world where

identities are increasingly fragile, and our heritage serves as a national anchor."

Referring to the importance of manuscripts in preserving Iran's civilizational continuity, he noted that handwritten documents kept in private homes and libraries are "the veins of our history," demonstrating the nation's long-standing tradition of knowledge and intellectual achievement.

Majidi also expressed concern over the widening gap between generations, particularly between older generations and Generations Z and Alpha, who have grown up in digital environments. He stressed that Iranian identity extends beyond official documents and is deeply rooted in the country's written and cultural heritage. According to him, strengthening this awareness would help future generations face the future with greater confidence.

He further described attacks on Iran's cultural sites

and identity-related documents as part of a broader "civilizational war" aimed at weakening the historical memory of the Iranian nation. Majidi argued that preserving cultural heritage should therefore be viewed as a strategic component of cultural passive defense.

Turning to the economic potential of heritage, Majidi called for a transition from an oil-dependent economy toward a heritage-based economy. He said that if cultural heritage were integrated into everyday economic and social life rather than confined to museums, tourism alone could account for up to half of Iran's oil revenues.

"The distinguishing feature of Iranian tourism compared to emerging destinations is its authenticity and historical depth," he said, adding that proper management could bring cultural heritage to the center of local livelihoods and community development. Majidi also called for a reassessment of the traditional concept of waqf (endowment)

within Iranian-Islamic culture. He urged religious scholars and experts to redirect charitable endowments toward modern needs such as the restoration of historical monuments, preservation of manuscripts, and heritage education.

He also referred to the successful digitization of 27,000 manuscripts at the Library, Museum and Documentation Center of Iran Parliament and proposed the establishment of secure archival and digitization centers in South Khorasan Province in cooperation with the National Library to protect historical documents from destruction and natural deterioration. Majidi described families as playing an irreplaceable role in preserving national identity. "Our true heritage is inside our homes," he said, emphasizing that every household should serve as a stronghold for protecting historical objects and passing on cultural authenticity to future generations.