

Fars moves to revive endangered handicrafts

Iranica Desk

With more than 120 traditional arts and crafts, two globally recognized cities, and four cities and villages nationally registered for their handicraft heritage, Fars Province remains one of Iran's leading regions in this field. The cultural heritage of its people is deeply intertwined with artistic traditions that have been passed down through generations and woven into the fabric of everyday life.

Over time, however, changing lifestyles and the rapid growth of industrial production have transformed the role of many traditional crafts. A number of functional handicrafts have gradually been replaced by factory-made products that are produced in large quantities and distributed widely in markets.

As a result, the production of many traditional crafts has declined under changing economic and social conditions. Some crafts have moved toward extinction, while others, due to their higher value compared with mass-produced goods, have become luxury items rather than commonly used products.

Today, the revival and restoration of handicrafts are among the priorities of the Handicrafts Department of the Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization of Fars Province. Special attention is being given to crafts that have disappeared, or are at risk of being forgotten.

Speaking to IRNA, the deputy head of the Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization of Fars said that restoring these traditional crafts is among the important responsibilities of cultural heritage authorities. "Over the past years, we have

gained successful experiences in reviving and restoring several handicraft traditions," said Majid Salimi.

He explained that specialized training courses have been organized with the participation of veteran master artisans to transfer their skills, techniques, and knowledge to younger generations and ensure the continuation of these artistic traditions.



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According to Salimi, training alone is not sufficient, and the next important step is to make handmade products more practical and compatible with modern lifestyles. Updating traditional designs and adapting crafts to contemporary needs can help these products return to the daily lives and purchasing habits of a wider range of consumers.

Salimi pointed to the revival of traditional woven crafts as successful examples of endangered handicrafts that have regained their place after facing the threat of decline.

He said that teaching these crafts, creating new combined products — such as bags produced through a combination of traditional textiles and leather — and developing smaller-sized items

have contributed to increased production and stronger markets for these handmade products.

According to him, these handicrafts, which were once close to disappearing, have now experienced significant growth and have created employment opportunities for many weavers in Kazerun, Firuzabad, and Qir and Karzin. At the same time, some handicrafts, despite remaining active or

He identified Gereh-Chini (trellis-work), pottery and ceramics, and Shiraz seven-color tilework as examples of crafts where some traditional stages of production have gradually been replaced by mechanized methods and factory-made materials.

Salimi added that, in order to protect Fars' intangible cultural heritage, traditional production methods are being document-



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being successfully revived, are no longer produced entirely through traditional methods. In some cases, parts of the production process have been replaced by modern techniques, machinery, and industrially produced materials.

ed through interviews with authentic veteran masters. These records are preserved in official archives to prevent valuable knowledge and techniques from being lost.

He said that the oral heritage and

traditional know-how of several crafts, including seven-color tilework, pottery and ceramics, wood carving have already been documented. Further measures have also been planned and implemented to safeguard these traditions for future generations. Another approach to preserving and reviving authentic handicrafts in Fars is incorporating them into the restoration of historical mon-

committee will also be formed in the coming week to evaluate different crafts, select suitable candidates for revival this year, and develop plans for their restoration and renewed production. Beyond their artistic and cultural significance, handicrafts can play a major role in expanding tourism opportunities and strengthening the local economy of Fars Province. Traditional crafts provide visitors with a deeper understanding of the region's history, lifestyle, and cultural identity, turning handicraft markets and workshops into important attractions alongside historical and natural sites.

The integration of handicrafts into tourism programs can create new sources of income for artisans and local communities. Cultural tours, craft workshops, and traditional markets allow visitors to directly purchase handmade products and learn about the skills behind their production. Such experiences not only increase the value of handicrafts but also encourage longer stays and greater spending by tourists. Fars' handicrafts also have the potential to support small businesses and create employment, particularly in rural areas where many traditional skills have survived. By improving access to markets, strengthening promotion, and connecting artisans with domestic and international visitors, these crafts can contribute to sustainable economic development.

The revival of endangered handicrafts therefore represents more than the protection of old techniques. It is also an opportunity to transform cultural heritage into a source of innovation, entrepreneurship, and income generation while preserving the unique identity of Fars for future generations.

uments and heritage sites, including traditional houses.

It has been approved and emphasized that, in order to maintain authenticity and support master artisans, restoration projects for historical houses in Shiraz should rely on original traditional methods and techniques.

Salimi explained that, as part of efforts to revive Gereh-Chini, Fars cultural heritage authorities are determined to use traditional methods in restoring doors and windows of historical houses. This approach aims to protect all aspects of Shiraz's Gereh-Chini heritage and prevent them from fading into oblivion.

The identification, study, and revival of extinct or endangered handicrafts in Fars will continue. According to him, a technical

Reading Room

Pieces; new collection bringing poetry to life

In an era when the relentless pace of life has left little room for reflection, the four-volume collection "Pieces", compiled by Atena Derakhshani seeks to restore a sense of pause and contemplation to the Iranian mind. Organized around four fundamental concepts — love, mourning, homeland, and hope — the collection serves as a bridge between forgotten verses buried in large poetry anthologies and the pulse of contemporary life.

According to IBNA, Mehdi Yazdani Khorram, in his introduction to the collection, opens a window into an old literary tradition, writing that "Pieces returns to the ancient tradition of selecting aphoristic passages in our literature." This tradition is rooted in the Iranian tendency toward measuring time and reflecting on experience. Iranians have long turned to poetry during times of turmoil, using contemplation of its themes to connect the past with the present.

Yazdani Khorram notes that although these selections have been extracted from larger bodies of work — the complete collections of poets — they possess a strong sense of independence. They speak

for themselves and continue to live in collective memory. In this sense, the collection attempts to connect timeless concepts with the mind of a reader seeking to give form to their own thoughts through classical poetry.

Love

The book "Love" is the first volume of the series. In classical Persian literature, love is considered one of the most important and frequently explored themes. In this volume, Atena Derakhshani examines one of the most complex human experiences.

The selected poets — including Sanai, Araqi, Sa'di, Hafez, Vahshi Bafqi, and Bidel — each represent a different

chapter in Iran's emotional and literary history. From Sanai's mystical and ascetic love to the refined language of Sa'di and Hafez, and finally to Vahshi's passionate expression and Bidel's complexities of the Indian style of Persian poetry, the volume presents a wide spectrum of interpretations.

A distinctive feature of this book is the brief explanations accompanying each poet, clarifying the reasons behind their selection and helping readers understand why certain verses continue to resonate centuries later.

Homeland

The volume "Homeland" explores a human being whose relationship with geography

and belonging has constantly evolved. The book presents Iran as a space for reflection and thought.

This volume features selected verses from the Constitutional Era and later periods, including works by Iraj Mirza, Malak al-Shoara Bahar, Aref Qazvini, Farrokhi Yazdi, Mirzadeh Esghhi, and Nasim Shomal. By raising fundamental questions such as "Can one sacrifice the body for the homeland?" the author challenges readers to reconsider the meaning of national identity.

In this collection, patriotism is presented as a concept that has endured despite competing ideological currents and debates over national belonging. These selections offer a

reminder for those who see the homeland not merely as territory, but as a part of their own identity.

Hope

The book "Hope", another volume in the collection, turns toward the brightest moments found within humanity's darkest experiences. Persian poetry's ability to reveal light is a central theme of this volume. Poets such as Khayyam, Sa'di, Hafez, Saeb Tabrizi, Malak al-Shoara Bahar, and Parvin E'tesami are brought together to show that hope can appear both in moments of expression and in silence. The volume carries a simple message: "It is still possible."

At a time when despair has become widespread, these selections revisit the persistence of life in Khayyam's poetry and the wisdom of Parvin's works, offering a renewed understanding of endurance.

Mourning

The final volume, "Mourning", explores humanity's ongoing relationship with loss and death. Covering poetry from the fourth to the seventh centuries (AH), the book demonstrates how Persian literature has expressed the psychologi-

cal dimensions of human suffering.

Ferdowsi's tragic vision, Masoud Sa'd's experience of imprisonment, Khaqani's intense elegies, and Rumi's transcendent view of death are among the voices featured in this volume. Readers encounter the diverse ways grief has been expressed in Persian poetry — not only as an experience of pain but also as a path toward deeper understanding of life and unexpected events. Publisher Khob has paid special attention to the visual and physical quality of the collection. All four books are designed in pocket size with hardcover bindings, making them suitable for carrying during daily routines and reading whenever an opportunity arises.

The "Pieces" collection, compiled by Atena Derakhshani, is ultimately a mental exercise. As emphasized in the introduction, these selected passages "continue themselves and remain in memory." The series is designed for the "modern Iranian individual" — someone navigating between tradition and modernity while searching for roots that keep them grounded in reality.

