



Artists voice solidarity with southern Iranian provinces under attack

Arts & Culture Desk

Leading Iranian actors, musicians and filmmakers voiced support for residents of southern Iran after attacks that began on July 13 and continued over the following days, using social media to express solidarity with affected communities and call for an end to the violence.

The wave of reactions spread across Iran's cultural community as artists from different generations shared messages of empathy for people in Khuzestan, Hormozgan, Bushehr,

Sistan and Baluchestan, and the Persian Gulf islands, where the attacks have dominated public attention in recent days, ISNA reported.

Veteran actress Fatemeh Motamed-Arya posted a series of videos from southern Iran accompanied by traditional southern music, while acclaimed actor Parviz Parastouei wrote, "From Baluchestan to Bushehr, from Qeshm Island to Kish, from Hormozgan to Khuzestan, my life for Iran," underscoring national unity.

Actor Saber Abbar urged Iranians never to become accus-

tomed to war, writing that no one should regard "a burning home, a frightened child, a waiting mother, or a city wounded day after day" as normal. He described southern Iran as "a piece of our heart beating beneath the sound of war."

Pop singer Reza Sadeghi, who hails from the south, pledged unwavering support for his homeland, saying the region's people have defended their land throughout history and would continue to stand by it. Veteran actor Abbas Jamshidi-far echoed that sentiment, praying that "the shadow of war" be

lifted from the Iranian people. Director Mehrdad Khoshbakht, who grew up in Abadan during the Iran-Iraq War, recalled childhood memories of air raids and argued that the reality of war should not be softened through language. "Changing its name does not make war any gentler," he wrote.

Other prominent figures, including actors Sam Dera-khshani, Mehran Ghafourian, Hesam Manzoor, Naeimeh Nezamdoost, Elham Pavhnejad, Ghazal Shakeri, composer Ali Ghamsari, and several musicians, also shared messages



portraying southern Iran as an inseparable part of the nation's identity and expressing hope that peace will soon return.

Digital heritage pact signed to safeguard national archives via cloud tech

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Iran's Information Technology Organization and the National Library and Archives of Iran signed a cooperation agreement on Tuesday to expand digital infrastructure, strengthen cloud computing capabilities and launch joint projects aimed at protecting and modernizing the country's written heritage.

The agreement marks a broader push to accelerate the digital transformation of Iran's archival system by combining advanced computing infrastructure with the preservation of historical manuscripts, documents and research collections, IRNA reported.

Mohammad Mohsen Sadr, deputy minister of information and communications technology and head of the Information Technology Organization of Iran (ITO), described the initiative as "a strategic and lasting step" that brings information technology into one of the country's most important cultural missions. "Protecting the nation's valuable data requires modern technologies," Sadr said. "We are ready to support



the National Library and Archives through processing infrastructure, cloud computing, specialized expertise and joint operational projects." He said preserving the country's documentary heritage had taken on greater significance and pledged to begin implementing projects immediately following the signing of the agreement.

Sadr also said the organization would provide the computing infrastructure needed to support the National Library and Archives' digital services while helping integrate its role into Iran's broader digital government architecture. Referring to Iran's digital government ecosystem initiative, he said planning documents covering seven

major digital ecosystems had been completed after more than 90,000 hours of work with universities. The framework, he added, drew positive attention at recent international meetings in Geneva focused on artificial intelligence, the information society and digital development.

Gholamreza Amirkhani, head of the National Library and Archives of Iran, said the country's written heritage forms "the backbone of Iran's identity and civilization" and increasingly depends on digital technologies for long-term preservation. "A substantial share of our documentary heritage has moved from paper to digital platforms," Amirkhani said. "This agreement opens a new chapter in strengthening technological infrastructure, expanding digital services and delivering tangible results in preserving and sharing Iran's written legacy."

He added that the National Library and Archives remains a leading research center for Iranian studies, the Persian language, Islamic studies and the Islamic Revolution, serving scholars worldwide through its electronic databases and digital services.

Iran seeks to unlock tourism investment with faster project execution

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Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri, on Tuesday ordered officials to accelerate tourism investment projects by removing administrative bottlenecks and coordinating with relevant agencies during a meeting with private investors and business leaders in Tehran, according to the ministry.

The high-level session focused on resolving implementation challenges facing tourism developments and speeding up investment across the sector, bringing together ministry officials, provincial representatives, and private-sector investors. After reviewing individual projects and hearing investors' concerns, Salehi-Amiri instructed the ministry and related government bodies to promptly follow up on outstanding cases and eliminate obstacles delaying



project execution. "Investment is a key driver of tourism development, and barriers must be addressed through coordinated action," the minister said, directing officials to expedite administrative procedures and facilitate project implementation.

Among those attending the meeting were Ali-Asghar Shalbafian, head of the ministry's Investment and Economic Affairs Center; Behzad Moridi, director

general of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts for Fars Province; and Ahmad Tajari, director of the ministry's Office for Investment, Infrastructure and Tourism Model Areas.

The meeting forms part of the ministry's efforts to strengthen private-sector participation in tourism development by improving the investment climate and accelerating the rollout of tourism infrastructure projects across the country.

Tehran keeps museum treasures secure pending clearance



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Tehran's most valuable museum collections will remain in secure storage despite the ceasefire until Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts formally declares conditions safe for their return, a cultural heritage official said. Tehran City Council Heritage Committee Chairman Ahmad Alavi said the artifacts had been transferred to protected vaults as a precaution and would not be returned to museums until the ministry issues an official authorization.

"The security of historical artifacts is our red line," he said, adding that all decisions are being made in line with expert assessments by the relevant authorities.

He also said damage assessments have been completed for museums and historic sites affected during the recent conflict, with restoration and structural reinforcement now underway, particularly at properties managed by Tehran Municipality. Separately, Deputy Minister for Cultural Heritage Ali Darabi said 149 historical sites, 54 museums, seven historic districts and five nationally registered monuments in 18 provinces sustained damage during the conflict. He said Iran has sent more than 17 communications to UNESCO and other international bodies regarding the losses.

Darabi said the country operates seven secure heritage repositories and is extending backup storage facilities, financial assistance and loans to private museums to strengthen the protection of their collections.

He added that museums will reopen fully once stable conditions are officially confirmed.

He also announced plans to launch a nationwide virtual museum platform to broaden public access to Iran's cultural heritage.

Golestan eyes Kazakh medical tourists through Aktau air link

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Iran's northern Golestan Province is stepping up plans to attract visitors from Kazakhstan by expanding medical and cultural tourism around the direct Gorgan-Aktau flight, provincial tourism officials said after talks with Kazakhstan's Consul General Yerbol Abanuly Akhmetov in Gorgan on Wednesday.

Yaser Ghandehari, deputy director for tourism at Golestan's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department, said the direct air route has created "a valuable opportunity" to increase visitor flows and launch joint tourism initiatives between northeastern Iran and western Kazakhstan, CHTN reported.

He identified medical tourism as the partnership's top priority, saying Golestan's healthcare infrastructure



positions the province as a potential destination for Kazakh patients. Ghandehari said specialized meetings bringing together travel agencies, universities and medical centers will be organized to develop joint tourism programs, with similar initiatives planned in Kazakhstan.

The official also called for

stronger private-sector participation in designing joint travel packages, saying tourism businesses should play a larger role in cultural events to translate people-to-people exchanges into sustainable economic opportunities.

Ghandehari said training would underpin the initiative, with universities and academic institutions from

both sides expected to cooperate on language instruction, cultural awareness and professional tourism education to improve services for international visitors.

The Gorgan-Aktau direct flight, launched in June 2025, became the first scheduled air connection between Golestan Province and western Kazakhstan, opening a new corridor for tourism and business travel across the Caspian Sea.

Golestan is home to one of Iran's largest ethnic Kazakh communities, whose shared language, traditions, music, traditional attire and handicrafts have long linked the province with Kazakhstan. Those cultural affinities have increasingly been incorporated into tourism planning, including Iran-Kazakhstan cultural nights held during the 17th International Festival of Iran's Ethnic Groups in Gorgan in November 2025.