

# UNESCO committee approves Hegmataneh conservation report

Iranica Desk

The conservation report submitted by Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts on the UNESCO-listed Hegmataneh archaeological site in Hamedan Province has been reviewed and approved by members of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee during its 48th session, currently underway in Busan, South Korea. The committee assessed the measures taken to protect, conserve, manage, and continuously monitor the World Heritage property. It welcomed Iran's efforts to safeguard the Hegmataneh site and emphasized the importance of maintaining the current conservation and management approach. Under the committee's decision, Iran is required to continue implementing its



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conservation, management, and monitoring programs for the historic site and submit an updated report on the latest measures and progress to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre by the end of 2027. The committee's approval of the conservation report

reflects its confidence in the management and protection of Hegmataneh, one of the oldest centers of civilization in Iran and the world. It also indicates that the conservation policies implemented by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts are in line

with the requirements of the World Heritage Convention and international conservation standards. Hegmataneh, one of the most significant cradles of Iranian civilization, was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List during the 46th session of the

World Heritage Committee. The continuation of specialized monitoring and conservation programs is expected to ensure the preservation of the site's Outstanding Universal Value for future generations. Iranian archaeologists have recently discovered

an Achaemenid column base, remains of water management systems, and architectural structures from the Qajar and early Pahlavi periods during excavations at Hegmataneh. Yaqub Mohammadifar, professor of archaeology at Bu-Ali Sina University and director of the 25th season of excavations at the Hegmataneh World Heritage Site, said that a series of geophysical studies and mapping operations were carried out alongside the latest archaeological excavations to identify buried structures and complete research data on the historic site. Referring to the discoveries made during the first two weeks of the current excavation season, Mohammadifar said that the findings so far include an Achaemenid column base, water con-

veyance structures dating back to the Middle Islamic period, and architectural remains from the Qajar period and the early Pahlavi era. Archaeological research has shown that Hegmataneh preserves the remains of one of the oldest urban settlements on the Iranian Plateau. Excavations have uncovered extensive mud-brick architectural complexes, a planned urban layout, residential quarters, workshops, and sophisticated water management systems, providing valuable evidence of the site's continuous development over thousands of years. These discoveries have made Hegmataneh one of Iran's most important archaeological sites for understanding the evolution of early urban life and state formation in ancient Iran.

## Safavid-era cistern reveals hidden layers of Isfahan's history

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The director-general of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization of Isfahan Province has announced the discovery of a historic cistern during excavation work on Apadana Street and the suspension of construction activities to allow for documentation and further studies. Amir Karamzadeh said that during excavation work carried out by the Isfahan Water and Wastewater Company on First Apadana Street, experts encountered a historical area. Following the presence of archaeologists and preliminary examinations, it was determined that the re-

main of an old cistern dating back to the Safavid era were located at the site. After the identification of the historic structure, experts were dispatched to the location, and excavation work in the area where the remains were found was halted to allow for more detailed investigations, documentation, and specialized studies of the historic structure. Karamzadeh noted that the location of the discovery makes it particularly significant, explaining that the cistern is situated about seven meters below the current street level of Apadana Street. He added that one of the main issues at this stage is assessing the preservation

conditions of the structure and determining how it should be managed, given its location on one of Isfahan's main and heavily trafficked thoroughfares. He said the historic structure is located in the central section of Apadana Street and, considering the urban development around it, necessary assessments will be carried out in cooperation with relevant authorities, including Isfahan Municipality, after the completion of initial documentation to determine the best approach for its protection and management. Karamzadeh added that expert studies on the exact date and architectural characteristics of the cistern are still underway.

At present, the main priority is completing field studies and documenting the structure, after which decisions will be made regarding conservation measures and the appropriate approach to this historic discovery. He further noted that the discovery of historical remains during urban development projects highlights the need for closer coordination between executive bodies and cultural heritage authorities, ensuring that development plans can proceed while safeguarding the historical layers of Isfahan. Karamzadeh emphasized that many modern streets in Isfahan have been built over layers of the city's historical landscape, and



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the discovery of this Safavid-era cistern once again underlines the importance of archaeological

studies before carrying out construction activities in historically significant areas.

## Threads of heritage weave through Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad's handicrafts



Kilim-weaving  
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Gachmeh  
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Siah Chador  
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Iranica Desk

Handicrafts in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province, as an inseparable part of the region's economy and cultural identity, play a significant role in preserving indigenous heritage and promoting sustainable development in nomadic areas. Among the province's most notable crafts are kilim, Gachmeh, and black tents, each representing centuries-old traditions and the creativity of local communities. In the past, handicrafts were not only a major source of livelihood for the people of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad but were also deeply intertwined with the everyday life of nomadic and rural communities.

These unique handwoven products form an essential part of the province's cultural heritage, carrying stories of past generations through their patterns, colors, and designs. This report introduces three of the province's most distinctive handicrafts — arts that represent only a small part of the remarkable skills of the Lor-speaking men and women of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad and reflect the deep roots of an ancient and authentic culture. Almas Ghobadi, deputy head of handicrafts at the province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization, said these woven arts embody the region's turbulent history and

that protecting them is a historical responsibility.

Kilim

Today, kilim is the most widespread and widely used handwoven product produced across the province. These valuable textiles are generally woven double-sided and in various practical sizes. Studies show that most looms used for kilim weaving are vertical metal looms, while the raw materials vary depending on the intended use of the final product. The colors and patterns used in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad kilims are entirely traditional, authentic, and based on geometric motifs. Today, raised kilims are also woven across the

province, featuring exceptional beauty and delicacy. These embossed textiles depict themes ranging from Islamic architecture to diverse military, social, and historical scenes with remarkable skill. Another type of raised kilim reflects contemporary culture through a creative combination of tradition and modernity.

Gachmeh

Gachmeh is another distinguished craft, combining elements of kilim and carpet weaving, in which motifs appear in raised and knotted forms. Considered one of the signature handicrafts of the province, this exceptional product was once at risk of disappearing but has

been revived through the efforts of artisans and cultural heritage enthusiasts. One of the technical features of Gachmeh weaving is that it does not use traditional weft threads; instead, the same materials used in kilim weaving are employed with special precision. After the warp is prepared, carpet-weaving techniques are applied to the borders and patterns, creating fully raised designs. Nomadic communities in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad use colorful Gachmeh pieces as floor coverings and for decorating the interiors of tents and homes. Today, this unique craft is regarded as one of the province's most beautiful and valuable woven products.

Siah Chador

Among the Lor people's traditional arts, the black tent (Siah Chador) stands out as one of the most remarkable and practical handicrafts of the region. This traditional nomadic shelter has unique ecological and engineering features and has preserved its original design and structure over generations. Serving as a secure and intimate home for nomadic families in the heart of nature, the black tent is carefully woven from goat hair. Its roof contains tiny openings that allow air to circulate during hot summer months, keeping the interior cool and comfortable. The remarkable feature of this structure appears with the arrival of rain: when exposed to moisture, the goat hair fibers expand, automatically closing the openings and preventing rain, snow, and hail from entering the living space. Today, these traditional crafts continue to serve as symbols of the cultural identity of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province, while also offering opportunities for sustainable livelihoods and the preservation of indigenous knowledge.