



Heritage sites at forefront of protecting cultural identity

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Reza Salehi-Amiri on Sunday called for stronger national and world heritage sites across the country, describing them as the "front line" in safeguarding Iran's cultural identity and civilization. Speaking at a specialized meeting in Tehran on September 13 to review the challenges, capacities and executive structure of Iran's cultural heritage sites, Salehi-Amiri said reorganizing the network, strengthening its specialized workforce and preserving provincial authority were among the ministry's strategic priorities, CHTN reported.

National and world heritage sites

stand at the forefront of protecting the country's history, civilization and cultural identity, he said, stressing that their structural, scientific and operational reinforcement was vital to the sustainability of Iran's cultural heritage ecosystem. Salehi-Amiri called for a comprehensive reorganization of the sites and the creation of a more robust framework for their management and development. "Our fundamental mission at this stage is to comprehensively organize and structurally empower these sites while establishing a network of skilled and elite experts," he said. Such a network, he noted, would help ensure that conservation and research activities move forward

in line with the latest professional standards. Salehi-Amiri also highlighted the ministry's approach to balanced development and institutional decentralization, saying provincial cultural heritage departments should play a stronger role in managing and protecting the country's vast historical assets. "Our central policy is to strengthen the position of provincial general departments and avoid any weakening of executive structures at the provincial level," he said. The minister said empowering heritage institutions nationwide and reinforcing their specialized capacity would remain central to efforts to preserve Iran's rich cultural legacy for future generations.



CHTN

Vietnam eyes new chapter in cooperation with Iran

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Vietnam's ambassador to Iran said Saturday that the Southeast Asian nation is pursuing a new growth model centered on technology, innovation and strategic self-reliance while seeking to expand economic, scientific and cultural cooperation with Iran.

Speaking at a reception in Tehran marking the 81st anniversary of Vietnam's National Day, Ambassador Nguyen Luong Ngoc said Vietnam had transformed over eight decades from a country emerging from war and hardship into a dynamic economy valued at \$514 billion. His identity as Vietnam's ambassador to Iran was confirmed in recent reports by Vietnamese state media. Ngoc said Vietnam's gross domestic product grew 8.02% in 2025, while per capita GDP surpassed \$5,000. Total trade reached \$930 billion, foreign investment amounted to \$38.5 billion and the country welcomed more than 21 million foreign visitors. "Independence and self-reliance have remained fundamental



principles" throughout Vietnam's national defense and development, he said, referring to the Sept. 2, 1945, declaration of independence by President Ho Chi Minh. Vietnam now maintains trade relations with 230 countries and territories and diplomatic relations with 195 countries, Ngoc said. After four decades of economic reforms known as the Renovation process, the country has become increasingly integrated into the global economy. Vietnam is now moving toward a development model driven by science, technology, innovation and high-quality human resources, he said. The country is also pursuing institutional reforms, digital transformation, green growth and infrastructure development as it seeks

upper-middle-income status by 2030. Turning to the Middle East, Ngoc said Vietnam hoped the region would achieve "lasting peace and stability through negotiations and dialogue," based on respect for sovereignty, the United Nations Charter and international law. Vietnam and Iran established diplomatic relations on Aug. 4, 1973, and this year marks 53 years of ties between the two countries. Ngoc said Hanoi considers Iran an important partner in the Middle East and pointed to expanding political, economic and cultural exchanges. He also cited recent calls by Vietnamese and Iranian leaders to broaden cooperation. In July, Vietnamese General Secretary and President To Lam identified four

priorities for relations with Iran: enhancing political trust, promoting economic cooperation, making science and technology a new area for breakthroughs, and expanding cooperation in culture, education, training and tourism. Trade between the two countries rose from \$133 million in 2023 to \$170 million in 2025, according to the ambassador. Vietnam and Iran have complementary economic strengths, with Vietnam exporting products including rice, coffee, seafood, textiles and electronics, while Iran has strengths in industry, construction, pharmaceuticals, minerals and agricultural products. "There is considerable room for further cooperation between Vietnam and Iran," Ngoc said, citing science, technology, education, culture and people-to-people exchanges. The reception also featured performances of Vietnamese and Iranian music, bringing diplomats and guests together to celebrate Vietnam's National Day and the longstanding friendship between the two nations.

'Dark Moon' wins honors at four international film events

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Iranian short film 'Dark Moon' has collected three awards and an honorary diploma at four international film events in the United States and Europe, recognizing its producer, screenplay, lead performance and overall cinematic achievement, ILNA reported. Produced by Mehdi Ansari pour, written by Masoumeh Rezaeizadeh and directed by Saeed Mo-joodi, the socially conscious short film has continued its international run with a series of honors for its creative team,



ILNA reported. Ansari pour received the Best Producer award at the 10th Hollywood Gold Awards in the United States, while 'Dark Moon'

earned an honorary diploma for Best Film at the sixth Milan Gold Awards in Italy. Rezaeizadeh also won Best Actress at the seventh New York Movie Awards for her performance in the film. Her screenplay was named Best Screenplay at the 23rd Accolade Global Film Competition in the United States. 'Dark Moon' explores addiction and its social consequences through the experiences of children affected by the crisis. Inspired by real stories and events, the film takes a child-centered look at the human cost of addiction.

Iran's choice on ...

Their ultimate objective is to align their national interests with the transition in the regional order as the global order itself undergoes change, while securing a share of the distribution of power within the emerging system. So what is Iran's way forward? Should it join or stay out? In either case, the strategy of resistance risks disruption. Under the current circumstances, Iran could choose to play by the rules of Chinese Go and step out of the game for a round, leaving the request unanswered. But given the existing conditions, such an approach would amount to even greater passivity on Iran's part. Alternatively, like turning the board over in a game of Ludo, Iran could attempt to create an agreement of its own. Yet given the current circumstances, including the conditions surrounding oil sales, Western pressure on Iraq and the failure to recognize Yemen's Ansarullah as a government, such an option is not realistically available to the two actors supporting Iran's strategy of shaping the regional order. There is, however, another possibility. Iran could put forward a pro-

posal that would strategically redesign the objectives of the Mecca Pact. It could argue that Iranian membership would contribute to reducing tensions across the region and consolidating security and stability. At the same time, Iran could use membership as diplomatic leverage by making its participation conditional on the simultaneous inclusion of Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt. Such a move could foil the attempt to use the Mecca Pact to create a diplomatic dead end for Iran and undermine the legitimacy of the resistance. At the same time, it could turn a potential crisis into an opportunity for regional action in response to the Abraham Accords. This would allow Iran to demonstrate and consolidate its regional power while moving toward a model of power distribution it considers desirable. In this way, Iran could pursue de-escalation while retaining its position as a regional actor capable of helping shape the emerging order. China could also be brought into the equation as a super-power operating at a higher level of the international order. Its involvement could help balance power in the global sys-

tem vis-à-vis the United States, with corresponding effects on the regional order, and could strengthen the durability of the order taking shape in the region. The proposed inclusion of Syria and Egypt could create further diplomatic leverage. Syria's inclusion could provide a bargaining chip for securing formal regional recognition of Syria under the government of Ahmed al-Sharaa. It could also create an opening for relations and allow Syria's geopolitical potential to be used to strengthen the resistance. In Egypt's case, the proposal could, for the first time since Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution, create the basis for establishing a diplomatic partnership with Cairo and taking bilateral relations to a new level. The same approach could also help shape the foreign policy of the Lebanese government in a direction supportive of the resistance. If the three existing members accepted such a proposal, the Mecca Pact would have to be strategically recalibrated in line with its revised objectives. If they rejected it, the three countries themselves would be placed in a position of diplomatic passivity.

173 foreign films reviewed for children's festival

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The international selection committee of the 38th International Film Festival for Children and Youth has reviewed 173 foreign entries and selected 17 films from 14 countries to compete in the festival's international section in Isfahan, organizers announced. The submissions included feature films, animations and short films from across Asia, Europe and the Americas, reflecting broad international interest in one of Iran's leading cinema events



for young audiences, ILNA reported. Following the review process, the committee selected eight feature films and animated works, along with nine short

films. The titles will be announced shortly before the festival opens. The international lineup comes after the festival drew a record 771 entries for its national section, marking unprecedented participation across its previous editions. The 38th International Film Festival for Children and Youth will be held in the historic central city of Isfahan with the participation of the Farabi Cinema Foundation and Isfahan Municipality. Hamed Jafari will serve as the festival's secretary.