

Official says deep cultural, religious ties underpin Iran-Pakistan relations

Arts & Culture Desk

EXCLUSIVE

Iran and Pakistan share deep historical, cultural and religious ties that continue to underpin relations between the two neighboring countries, Gholam-Ali Haddad-Adel, head of Iran's Academy of Persian Language and Literature, said on Tuesday at the opening of an exhibition highlighting Pakistan's history and cultural heritage.

The exhibition, titled 'Pakistan Through the Ages', was organized by the Embassy of Pakistan in Iran in cooperation with the ECO Cultural Institute, Iran Daily reported on Wednesday.

Haddad-Adel said Persian language and literature had played a significant role in shaping the historical and cultural connections between the two countries.

He described their shared cultural, literary and religious traditions as an important foundation for strengthening bilateral relations.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Haddad-Adel also praised Pakistan's efforts to help restore peace and stability in the region following United States and Israel attacks against Iran in late February.

"In the unjust attack by the United States and Israel imposed on the Iranian nation, Pakistan is trying to play an and effective role in establishing peace stability in the region, and we are grateful for that," he said. Haddad-Adel expressed hope that a culture of peace and human solidarity, which he described as the spirit of Islamic culture, would prevail over what he called a culture of domination and hegemonic

power, allowing peace and stability to return to the region.

He said relations between Iran and Pakistan were currently at a very good level and that their historical connections offered opportunities to expand cooperation.

He argued that Islam in Pakistan had been introduced largely through Persian rather than Arabic. Persian mystical poetry, he said, had helped convey Islamic teachings and spiritual concepts to the region, partly because its themes resonated with the cultural outlook of Pakistani society.

Haddad-Adel also pointed to similarities between Iranian and Pakistani urban cultures. He said Iranians visiting major Pakistani cities could encounter familiar surroundings, comparable in some respects to those found in Isfahan, a historic city in central Iran.

Urdu, Pakistan's national language, was another expression of the countries' shared history, he said, as a large proportion of its vocabulary had Persian roots.

Mohammad Hassan, head of the ECO Cultural Institute, highlighted Pakistan's cultural diversity, describing the country as a mosaic of languages, traditions, histories and ways of life united within a shared national identity.

He said the value of this cultural mosaic lay not in making its different elements identical, but in allowing each to preserve its distinct character while contributing to a broader national identity.

Pakistan's cultural richness, Hassan said, stemmed from diversity rather than uniformity.

From plains and deserts to valleys and high mountains, communities



Gholam-Ali Haddad-Adel, head of Iran's Academy of Persian Language and Literature, speaks at the opening of a Pakistani exhibition in Tehran on October 20, 2026.

● IRNA

across Pakistan have maintained their own languages, music, handicrafts, food, festivals and customs, he said. Each community contributes to the country's wider identity while retaining its regional traditions.

Hassan stressed that a common national identity did not require regional identities to disappear. Cultural differences should not be treated as weaknesses, he said, adding that recognizing and respecting them could enrich societies and strengthen ties between people.

Cultural boundaries in the region, Hassan said, had never been as rigid as modern political borders. Communities had interacted, learned from one another and drawn inspiration from neighboring cultures, contributing to mutual enrichment.

He said cultural programs focused on Pakistan offered more than an opportunity to celebrate the heritage of one ECO member. They also provided a chance to learn about the achievements of different communities, revisit historical links among the region's peoples and promote friendship and mutual understanding.

Pakistan's history reflects deep cultural ties with Iran: Ambassador A message from Pakistan's ambassador to Iran, Imran Ahmed Siddiqui, was read at the ceremony by Deputy Ambassador Ismat



Hassan Sial. Siddiqui was unable to attend because of the presence of a high-level Pakistani delegation in Tehran.

In his message, Siddiqui described "Pakistan Through the Ages" as an invitation to explore the connections between people and outlined the historical development of human settlements and civilization in Pakistan.

He said evidence of agricultural activity, animal domestication and toolmaking in parts of Pakistan, including Baluchistan in the country's southwest, dated back more than 9,000 years. These early communities established settled societies that gradually developed as new settlements emerged, trade expanded and skills advanced.

Over time, one of the great urban civilizations of the ancient world emerged along the Indus River and

its tributaries, he said.

Persian became one of the principal languages of literature, scholarship, culture and administration across large parts of what is now Pakistan, Siddiqui said. Its influence extended beyond official and court life into local languages.

The works of Persian poets Saadi, Hafez and Omar Khayyam crossed mountains and political borders and became a lasting part of the region's cultural heritage, he added.

Siddiqui said the exhibition offered an opportunity to view Pakistan not simply as a country, but as part of a wider cultural sphere whose history was closely intertwined with that of Iran and other regional societies. Iran, Pakistan look to tourism to deepen ties

Tourism was another focus of the ceremony. Anoushirvan Mohseni Bandpey, a deputy minister of

cultural heritage, tourism and handicrafts in Iran, said tourism could help expand regional cooperation, support economic growth and improve mutual understanding among nations.

He identified the development of tourism routes, easier travel among ECO member states, the promotion of shared cultural heritage and stronger cooperation between public and private sectors as measures that could create new opportunities for sustainable development.

The ceremony highlighted how language, literature, cultural diversity and tourism continue to shape the relationship between Iran and Pakistan. Speakers presented shared heritage not only as a record of historical interaction, but also as a potential basis for closer regional cooperation and greater understanding between societies.

Hamadan names honorary tourism ambassadors

Arts & Culture Desk

The spouses of ambassadors from six countries and Romania's ambassador to Iran have been named honorary ambassadors for cultural heritage, tourism and handicrafts in Hamadan, western Iran, IRNA reported on Wednesday.

The ceremony was held on Tuesday in cooperation with Iran's Foreign Ministry. The participating countries were Denmark, Romania, Mexico, Uruguay, Nicaragua and Armenia.

Mohammadreza Akbari, acting head of Hamadan's Department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, said cultural heritage could help bring nations closer despite geographical borders and differences in language and nationality. He described cultural heritage as a common language that creates opportunities for dialogue, friendship and mutual understanding among cultures.

"The honorary titles were intended to encourage the guests to introduce Hamadan's



historical sites, local arts, handicrafts and cultural traditions to people in their home countries," Akbari added.

He said the initiative could help expand international tourism and strengthen cultural ties, but its impact would depend on continued engagement, joint planning and effective promotion of the province's attractions abroad.

Hamadan is known for its ancient heritage and diverse tourist attractions. These include Hegmataneh, an archaeological site; the mausoleums of Persian polymath Avicenna and poet Baba Taher; the Ganjnameh inscriptions and waterfall; Ali Sadr Cave; and the Alavian Dome. The nearby city of Lalejin is internationally known for its



Iranian officials pose with spouses of foreign ambassador holding honorary ambassador plaques during a ceremony in Hamadan, western Iran, on October 20, 2026.

● IRNA

pottery.

Akbari expressed hope that the initiative would lead to lasting cooperation in preserving cultural heritage, expanding tourism and promoting peace and coexistence among nations.

The appointments are intended to use diplomatic connections to raise international awareness of Hamadan's cultural and historical assets. Whether they lead to practical cooperation will depend on follow-up activities beyond the ceremony.

Mexican artist honors Minab schoolchildren with butterfly artwork

Arts & Culture Desk

A Mexican artist presented an artwork in memory of children killed in Minab, a southern Iranian city where a US missile strike on a school killed dozens of people, to Iran's ambassador to Mexico.

Maria Xitcat presented her work, titled 'Butterflies of Minab' in a gesture aimed at keeping the victims' memory alive at Iran's embassy in Mexico City on October 20, IRNA reported on Wednesday.

She aimed to express solidarity the families of children at the Shajareh Tayyebbeh school. It was hit by a US missile strike on February 28, the first day of the US-Israeli war against Iran, killing 168 people, most of them children.

Made from paper, cardboard and recycled materials, the artwork depicts children transformed into butterflies flying toward a sun in the Iranian sky.

It also features a school, books, school supplies and the inscription "Minab 168," referring to the death toll reported by Iranian authorities. Xitcat, who previously worked in cybernetics engineering, said war could destroy bodies and physical



objects but could not erase children's dreams and stories.

She expressed hope that her message of sympathy would reach the bereaved mothers in Minab.

Pasandideh thanked the artist for her gesture, describing the tragedy in Minab as a shared pain for humanity. He said the world must not allow the killing of children and innocent civilians to become commonplace. Xitcat's artwork uses recycled materials to convey a message that extends



Mexican artist Maria Xitcat (R) and Iranian Ambassador to Mexico Abolfazl Pasandideh pose for a photo holding the artwork "Butterflies of Minab" at the Iranian Embassy in Mexico City on October 20, 2026.

● IRNA

beyond a memorial. It seeks to carry solidarity across borders, from Mexico to the families of the victims in Iran, and to preserve the children's memory in the public consciousness.