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Iran seeks three new UNESCO heritage listings

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran is seeking to add three elements to UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage lists, a move that would raise the number of its registered entries to 30 if all are approved.

The nominations cover Tirgan, a tradition honoring water and rain; lullabies and singing traditions for children; and traditional felt-making.

They will be considered at the 21st session of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, scheduled for November 30 to December 5 in Xiamen, China, Hassan Fartousi, secretary-general of the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO, said.

Iran and Armenia jointly prepared the Tirgan nomination, while Iran and Turkmenistan submitted the lullaby file. The felt-making nomination focuses on a traditional craft passed down through generations.

A delegation representing Iran's national UNESCO commission, foreign ministry and cultural heritage ministry will attend the meeting, alongside officials and experts who helped prepare the files.

Iran currently has 27 elements and programs recognized under UNESCO's intangible heritage mechanisms, ranking fourth worldwide, Fartousi said.

Approval of all three nominations would bring the total to 30.

Iran's registered heritage includes Nowruz, the Persian New Year; Mehregan and Sadeh festivals; Yalda Night; traditional wrestling; Tazieh; Naqqali storytelling; Persian classical music; carpet weaving; miniature painting; Chogan; and traditional boatbuilding in the Persian Gulf.

The latest Iranian inscription, added in 2025, was the art of mirror-work in Persian architecture. In 2021, UNESCO also registered Iran's national program to safeguard traditional calligraphy. Naqqali storytelling and traditional Iranian sailing and boatbuilding skills are also included on UNESCO's List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.



Fertility rate drops to 1.34 as aging accelerates



Social Desk

Iran's fertility rate has fallen to 1.34 children per woman, well below the 2.1 needed to maintain its population, secretary of Iran's National Population Headquarters said.

Marzieh Vahid Dastjerdi announced the figure at the 24th International Conference of the Iranian Society of Reproductive Medicine.

She said that rate compares with six to seven children per woman in 1986. Iran's population is currently estimated at about 87 million.

Dastjerdi said more than 75% of the decline was linked to rising education and social development without corresponding economic progress.

Inflation, high housing costs, individualism and the difficulty of balancing employment and motherhood were also major factors.

Iran has about 7.3 million unmarried men aged 20 to 54 and between 6.5 million and 7 million unmarried women aged 15 to 49.

"The average age of mothers at their first birth is 27.6 nationwide and 30.8 in Tehran. Annual marriages fell from 900,000 in 2010 to 431,000 in 2025," she added.

The share of people aged over 60, currently 13% of the population, is projected to reach 32% by 2051.

Dastjerdi warned that Iran's population could shrink to 31 million within 75 years if current trends persist.

The government launched a Mother Hope Card program in March 2026, providing mothers with 20 million rials a month for two years.

Officials have also proposed full insurance coverage for infertility treatment. Iran currently has 79 secondary-level and 130 tertiary-level infertility treatment centers.

Despite the demographic challenges, Deputy Health Minister Shahin Akhondzadeh said Iran ranked fourth globally in infertility research, alongside the United States, India and Italy.

The country's average citation count per paper in the field stands at 9.1.

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Sirjan Jahan Steel Company is pleased to announce the sale and export of 10,000 tons **STEEL BILLET** (Size 150 x 150 mm), with the possibility of increasing the contract amount to 20,000 tons on basis of FOB Bandar Abbas according to INCOTERMS 2020. Interested applicants are hereby invited to obtain the tender documents by visiting the official website of Sirjan Jahan Steel Company at sjsco.ir, through the Sales and customer portal, Tender and Foreign Tender section. Alternatively, interested bidders may collect the physical tender documents in person from the head office of Sirjan Jahan Steel Company at the following address: 2nd FLOOR, No. 2, JOOBIN ALLEY, SHAHIDI STREET, JAHAN KOODAK JUNCTION, TEHRAN, IRAN
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Iranians bid farewell to unknown soldiers fallen in 1980s Iraqi war

Social Desk

A funeral procession was held in Tehran and other Iranian cities for hundreds of unidentified martyrs of Iraq's 1980-88 war on Iran on Friday.

The event held on the occasion of the martyrdom anniversary of Lady Fatima (PBUH), the daughter of Islam's Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian also attended the ceremony.

Mourners gathered in front of the University of Tehran to carry the remains of the newly-recovered martyrs to their final resting place.

In addition to Tehran, other Iranian cities bid farewell to 240 other unknown soldiers fallen in Iraqi-imposed war.

The war began on September 22, 1980, when Iraq attacked Iran, and a ceasefire took effect on August 20, 1988, after nearly eight years of fighting.



People in Tehran attended funeral procession of 110 unknown soldiers fallen in 1980s Iraqi war, which was held on November 13, 2026.
AKBAR TAVAKKOLI/IRNA

Tehran, Ankara discuss war's environmental toll at COP31

Social Desk

Iran and Turkey discussed the environmental damage caused by two wars waged by the United States and Israel against Iran, in June 2025 and late February 2026, at the COP 31 climate summit. COP31 is the 31st United Nations Climate Change Conference and is underway in Antalya from November 9 to 20, 2026. They discussed pollution from fuel storage explosions and greenhouse gas emissions and Tehran called for regional stability to support environmental protection, Iran's environmental chief said after meeting Turkish Vice President Cevdet Yılmaz at the summit.

Shina Ansari thanked Ankara for its stance on two imposed wars, highlighting the environmental consequences of military action, particularly explosions at fuel storage facilities and the resulting release of pollutants and greenhouse gases. She said effective environmental protection depended on security and stability in the region.

Yılmaz cited longstanding cultural ties between the two countries and said Turkey was ready to expand cooperation with Iran in various fields, including environmental protection. He pointed to the activation of a joint environmental committee following last year's Zero Waste Summit and stressed the need to sustain cooperation to protect natural resources and habitats.

Regional developments had once again underscored the importance of peace and stability, Yılmaz said, adding that the two countries would continue to pursue their shared responsibilities in tackling climate change alongside regional issues.

Environmental cooperation between Iran and Turkey is pursued under a bilateral memorandum of understanding through a joint committee.



Head of Iran's Department of Environment Shina Ansari (L) and Turkish Vice President Cevdet Yılmaz poses for a photo at COP31 summit in Antalya, on November 12.
IRNA