

Necropolis Discovery Opens New Horizon in Tehran History

Construction operations in Valiran village of Damavand in Tehran province on July 5 led to the discovery of a cemetery dating back to the Arsacid dynasty, deputy head of Tehran Cultural Heritage and Tourism Department for preservation and revival said.

Qadir Afrond told Fars News agency, "A mechanical spade at a university complex near the city of Damavand unearthed a pit leading to several crypts stretching back to Arsacid (Parthian) Empire.

"A team of the department's experts were immediately dispatched to the site for primary studies thanks to coordination made by the Islamic Republic of Iran Police, caretaker of Damavand Cultural Heritage and Tourism Office as well as archeologists working at

Boumehen's Golkhandan Castle (near Damavand)." He said the police had taken initial security measures to preserve the historic site. Unearthed objects had later been transferred to a safe place.

The official noted that experts who had carried out early studies came across crypts containing skeletons and a great number of potsherds.

According to Afrond, coordination was made via phone calls on July 8 to obtain permits from the Archeological Institute (affiliated to Iran Cultural Heritage and Tourism Organization) to conduct emergency excavations at the ancient site.

Head of the institute gave his oral consent for the operation, the official noted, adding the department was following up administrative procedure to obtain written permits as well.

An archeologist, Mohammad Reza Nemat, had been introduced to head of the excavation team.

Afrond's office in a telephone talk to Iran Daily acknowledged that written permits had been issued by the institute and the excavations would begin as of July 23.

Turning to the unearthed relics, the official said the potteries discovered from the crypts include ritual cups (Rythons), bowls, decanters and other earthenware which are mostly intact.

A Rhyton is a ceremonial drinking cup shaped like an animal head or horn. Rhyta were favored ceremonial cups in the Ancient Near East and in Persia from the second millennium BC onwards.

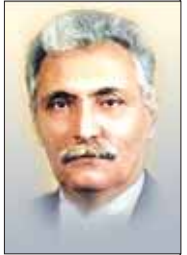
"Rythons found at the site resemble those discovered at the ancient city of Nisa, capital of Arsacid dynasty, in Turkmenistan. The most important aspect of the discovery is that so far, similar ancient pieces have not been found in Tehran province."

He cited historical inscriptions based on which the current Tehran province was situated within the territories of Arsacid Empire.

"Although some historical texts name the ancient Shah-e Rey as the Parthian capital, nothing has yet been found there, apart from a number of coins and a temple near Cheshmeh Ali."

He reiterated that the discovery would open new horizons for archeological studies in Tehran province.

Hamid Mosaddeq



Noted poet and lawyer, Hamid Mosaddeq was born on Jan. 30, 1939 in Shahreza near Isfahan city. He completed his primary and high school education in Shahreza and Isfahan. Mosaddeq came to Tehran in 1960 for his higher education. He graduated in commerce from the University's Administrative Sciences and Commerce Institute. After graduation, he joined the Economic Research Institute.

In 1963, he decided to continue his higher education. Mosaddeq obtained a bachelor's degree in law from Tehran University. He was later conferred a master's degree in economy.

Mosaddeq started instructing at Kerman, Isfahan, and Azad universities as an associate professor in 1969. After obtaining a master's degree in administrative law from the then National University (the present Shahid Beheshti University) in 1972, Mosaddeq became a faculty member of the higher education institution. He became a lawyer in 1977.

Mosaddeq was a faculty member of Tehran University's Faculty of Law, Allameh Tabatabaee University and a member of Association Bar as well as editor-in-chief of Kanoun Newsletter.

Mosaddeq passed away in Tehran in 1998 due to a heart attack.

Mosaddeq is also one of the most outstanding contemporary poets. His poetry is very influential. Mosaddeq's Selection of Poems has been republished 12 times. His famous poetry books include Derafsh-e Kaviani, Blue, Grey, Black, Year of Patience, and The Red Lion.

Apart from composing poetry, he authored and compiled An Introduction to Research Methodology as well as a number of books on law.

Unique Oil Museum In Masjed Soleiman

The first oil and gas field museum will be established in Masjed Soleiman city in southern Khuzestan province, caretaker of Masjed-Soleiman's Oil and Gas Exploitation Company was quoted by ISNA as saying.

Esmail Farhadian added that the field museum will be located near the first oil well of the Middle East, discovered and drilled in Masjed Soleiman.

He stated that the museum is to be situated adjacent to the No. 306 well, since it holds the only rig remaining from the early exploration years.

The official highlighted that drilling tools and equipment will be displayed at the museum.

According to Farhadian, visitors will be briefed on methods of drilling oil and gas as well as exploration equipment.

Middle East's first oil drilling was made in Naftoon region, in central Masjed Soleiman in 1908. The city will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first oil discovery in 2008.

Unfettered Constructions Threaten Isfahan's Ancient District

Unbridled constructions in Isfahan's Jolfa district are endangering its historic texture, IRNA wrote.

Formerly the region, which boasts valuable monuments from the Safavid and Qajrid eras, used to be mainly inhabited by Armenians who had migrated there in 1605 during the Safavid rule.

Today, however, Jolfa located on the southern banks of Zayandehroud River, is not solely

occupied by Armenians.

An architect, who requested anonymity, said the historic region is plagued by unrestrained constructions.

He went on, "Isfahan Cultural Heritage and Tourism Department has specified a maximum height of nine meters for new buildings within the boundaries of the historic texture. This is while, lots of new buildings along the designated route have exceeded the height limits."

The modern luxury buildings are inconsistent with the traditional architecture styles in the area, he added.

The architect criticized the official apathy toward eateries and shopping malls mushrooming in Jolfa in total disregard for the district's historic value.

In related news, a member of Isfahan Islamic City Council insisted that any modifications in ancient mansions registered on the National Heritage List are subject to permissions by the department.

Ahmad Aminpour asserted the council had received no recent complaints from the department about destruction or conversion of historic mansions into modern buildings.

Aminpour went on, "The municipality can issue construction permits for areas which have not been registered by the department. Should the department seek to restrain construction of high buildings in Jolfa, it ought to register the whole district as national heritage."

The councilor, however,

blamed setting up too many eating places and shopping centers in the historic region, adding the measure has disturbed public tranquility and created unnecessary traffic congestions.

He gave assurances that the council intends to prevent further expansion of commercial units in the area.

Meanwhile, director of Isfahan Cultural Heritage and Tourism Department, Alireza Khajouei, complained that old mansions are being constantly replaced by new apartments.

"High prices of land in the area have driven constructors to pull down old houses and erect apartment buildings instead without getting permits from the department," he noted.

Yasouj Plans Tribes Culture House

Iranian Tribes Culture House is being constructed in Yasouj

Boyerahmad Tribal Affairs Department told IRNA.

The budget assigned to the first phase of the project totals 22.54 billion rials, he added.

The official explained, "Settlements belonging to various tribal communities including the Lor, Kurd, Balcuh, Bakhtiari, Qashqaei and Boyerahmadi clans have been designed in the complex, which will also include restaurants, venues for holding tribal festivals, amphitheaters and museums."

Cheragh-Sahar explained that the initiative was an effort to help the indigenous tribal cultures and lifestyles to survive.

He estimated that the project would take four years to complete, provided the funds are disbursed in time.

Kohkiloeyeh-Boyerahmad is home to 13,300 tribal households with a 92,000 population.



A Bakhtiari couple in their tribal tent

Forest Park in an area measuring 76,000 square meters, director general of

Fayez, Cheragh-Sahar noted, "The complex will have a built-up area of 5,400 sq.m."

New Home for Dali Museum

York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, balked at its owner's strict conditions.

Ohio philanthropists A. Reynolds and Eleanor Morse were charmed by the city's eclectic offer of an old boat warehouse to display their collection.

Like a lot of things in Florida these days, a 14-year-old plan to build a more fitting and sturdy home for the collection was kicked into high gear by the hyperactive hurricane seasons of 2004 and

2005. "Right from the start, it was the safety of the collection that was motivating thinking about this," said Hank Hines, the Dali museum's director. "The new building has been created to protect the collection...It will be engineered to withstand 265 kph winds, which is really the top you can do practically and still have doors."

Groundbreaking is set for early next year. The new building will open in 2010.

Greedy Traders Compromise Khuzestan Heritage



Historic Shadravan Bridge in Shoushtar, Khuzestan province

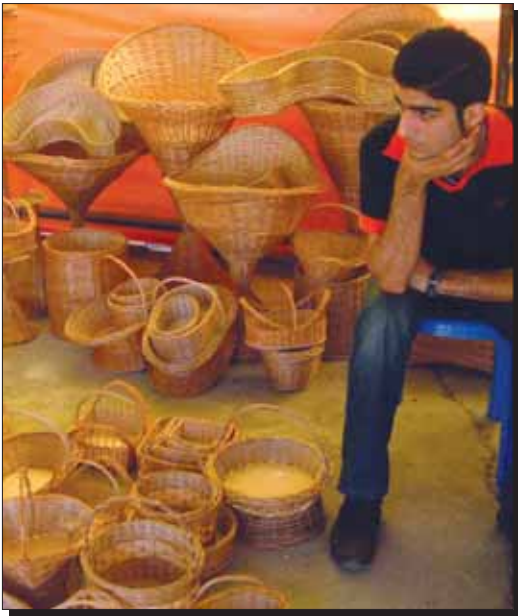
A cultural heritage officer expressed concern over the damages caused to historic buildings by graffiti, complaining about a commercial graffiti on an ancient bridge in Shoushtar, Khuzestan province.

Mohammad-Hossein Arastouzadeh, director of Shoushtar Cultural Heritage and Tourism Department, told ISNA that the local patrol had spotted a man writing on the historic Shadravan Bridge.

"The guard tried to dissuade the man from doing that, but he insisted on his vandal act in spite of the warnings," he added. "Legal action was taken against him by the local Cultural Heritage and Tourism Department. He was ordered by the court to remove the graffiti under the supervision of experts. A verdict is now awaited on the amount of compensation he has to pay for the damage done."

Arastouzadeh warned that graffiti has become a scourge of many historic walls around the city. He called for prevention of and legal confrontation with enterprises using graffiti on historic masonry to market their products. "It is almost impossible for the department to assign round-the-clock guards to watch every single one of Shoushtar's 1,000 historic edifices. However, heritage guards regularly patrol the sites to prevent vandalism. Also several public meetings have been organized to increase people's appreciation of the value of historic monuments," he elaborated.

"The priorities in preserving historic edifices against vandal acts go to public awareness campaigns, preventive steps and prosecution of violators."



A man vending hand-woven baskets of natural fiber in Mazandaran (IRNA Photo)

Anecdote

Letter

Mommy always told her, "Your daddy's gone to heavens and turned into a star."

That day in the park, the little girl sent her balloon up to the sky.

She had drawn daddy's picture on the balloon and attached a letter to it.

She jumped with joy as she looked the balloon moving higher and higher.

From that day on, she's been waiting for daddy's reply.

Salvador Dali never set foot in this Gulf Coast city where the dominant art form is the watercolor beachscape. But in a strange twist worthy of one of the Spanish surrealist master's paintings, St. Petersburg will soon be home to a new \$30 million signature museum to house the world's most comprehensive collection of Dali's works, AP reported.

St. Petersburg snatched up the private Dali collection in 1982 when more likely locales, such as New