

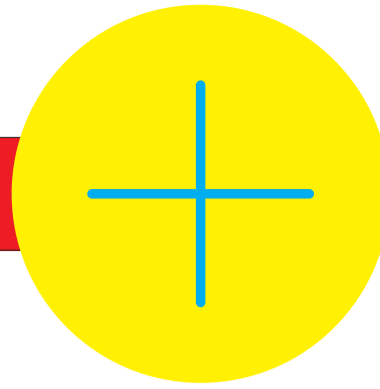
Exhibition on Silk Road heritage underway in Tehran

IBNA – An art exhibition entitled, 'Silk Road Heritage Narrated by the National Museum of Iran' opened in Tehran on February 1.

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Toghrol Tower considered for UNESCO's World Heritage List



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EXCLUSIVE

Toghrol Tower in Shahr-e Rey, Tehran Province, is expected to join the list of Iranian shrine towers which are nominated for the collective registration on UNESCO'S World Heritage List, said the director of Rey National Heritage Site.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with Iran Daily, Abdolmehdi Hemmatpour said that Toghrol Tower was registered on Iran's National Heritage List in 1931. "We are trying to include the tower on the list of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The measure will help facilitate the global registration process of the tower," he added. He noted that the tower was completely restored during the reign of Nasserddin Shah Qajar (1831-1896 CE), adding that Tehran Province's Cultural Heritage De-



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partment carried out another renovation project on the monument after the victory of the Islamic Revolution (1979). Hemmatpour continued that a new restoration project is expected to be implemented on Toghrol Tower in the next Iranian year (to start March 21, 2023). "In addition to carrying out emergency renovation, new facilities

would be established to not only increase the time spent by tourists in the area, but also provide the conditions for the people with mental and physical disability to visit the tower," he said. He noted that towers are tall, cylindrical or multi-sided structures that were established for observation and defensive purposes. They were built inde-

pendently or attached to the walls of ancient cities, castles and caravanserais. He noted that Toghrol Tower is probably a tomb structure, adding that during the early Islamic era, Iranian architects used the artistic architectural elements of ancient Persia to create new masterpieces. He observed that tombs are among historical, artistic, and religious structures, the designs and decorations of which have been changed based on the economic, social and political conditions of various historical eras. He said that after mosques, the architecture of tombs attracted the attention of people during the early Islamic era in such a way that there are only a few Iranian cities which do not have such structures. Hemmatpour, a cultural heritage expert, said that Toghrol Tower is one of the same monuments, but there is uncertainty about the exact date of its construction.

The date of 534 AH (1129 CE) was written on the inscription installed on the iron door of the tower which was transferred to the University of Michigan's Museum of Art by Ernst Emil Herzfeld, a German archaeologist and Iranologist. He noted that according to some historical documents, the tower is the tomb of Toghrol Beik, the founder of the Seljuk Dynasty. This is while some other sources indicate that it is the tomb of Khalil Sultan, the grandson of Teymur, and ruler of Transoxiana. Special attention was paid to the height of the tomb towers and the exterior views; thus, many decorations have been used on its outer surface. He noted that the height of the tower is about 21 meters, and its external diameters are 11 and 15 meters, respectively. "There are such towers in all parts of Iran, with slight differences, such as Qabus Tower in Golestan Province, and Radkan Tower in Khorasan," he concluded.

Iran, Iraq ink theatrical agreements

Theatrical ties to be expanded

EXCLUSIVE

In the wake of signed agreements between Iran and Iraq on theater and the performing arts, bilateral ties will be expanded, said the director-general of the Cinema and Theater Department at Iraq's Ministry of Culture, Ahmed Hassan Moussa. The agreement aims to stage joint performances, improve the specialized theatrical skills of both sides, and construct auditoriums, he said in his exclusive interview with Iran Daily. Having participated in the 41st Fajr International Theater Festival, Moussa said the Iranian festival is of a high level and quality, expressing hope that the event would continue on its path as it has done for the last four decades. Theater all over the world brings about communication among various cultures, languages and beliefs, Moussa said, adding that the Iranian event was highly successful in this regard. "To my mind, the success

of such festivals is their ability to establish and institutionalize interpersonal skills between different nations through theater," he explained. As the former president of Baghdad International Theater Festival, he said that the Iraqi event is held at the global level like its Iranian counterpart, adding that every year Arab and Islamic countries are invited to participate in the festival and its related workshops and discussion sessions. Referring to the cultural impacts of theater and the performing arts, he said theater, in its broad sense, is a groupwork that is staged based on a script, with the cooperation of its cast members including directors, actors, and backstage crew, with a high impact on its audience. Each theatrical troupe is formed in a certain part of the world and came from the culture of that region; thus, their arts carry their particular intellectual characteristics and beliefs. He noted that what international theater festivals



do is to bring together different thoughts, beliefs and cultures and create interaction between them. Referring to the holding of the international meeting of the Islamic World Theater Union on the sideline of this year's Fajr International Theater Festi-

val, Moussa said that this union does not intend to impose Islamic thought and belief on any culture; rather, it introduces the theater and culture of Islamic states to the world. Since the advent of Islam around 1,400 years ago, the Holy Qur'an and Is-

lamic teachings have influenced all parts of the Muslim world, and it is quite normal that it has influenced their theaters as well, he said. Referring to the long history of the theater and performing arts in Islamic countries, he said, ta'zieh (Persian passion play), for instance, is one of the performing arts in Iraq and some other Islamic countries, which comes from the heart of the Islamic culture and shows the depth and richness of the performing arts in the Islamic world. He said that the art of the theater has the capacity to convey the culture and values of different regions to its audience. Just as European and Western Theater has introduced part of Christian and Western culture to the world during the ancient Greek and Renaissance periods, Muslim World Theater could also present the Islamic culture that is formed based on morality and humanity, he concluded.



A man walks with an umbrella in the main square of the snow-hit city of Hamedan, Iran, on January 31, 2023.
Iman Hamikhu/MEHR



Ali Kaviani, a 64 year-old blacksmith, showcases skills in his hometown of Saman, Chaharmahal-e Bakhtiari Province, Iran, on February 1, 2023.
Hossein Torabi/ISNA