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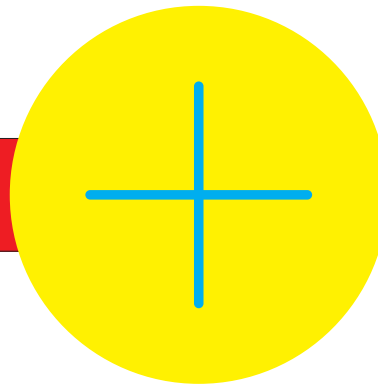
Chinese archaeologists find building ruins in ancient city



Archaeologists discovered the ruins of a large building foundation in an imperial city dating back to the Liao Dynasty (907-1125) in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.

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Goldsmithing, a significant craft in Iran



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EXCLUSIVE

Among all arts originating from the human desire for beauty, goldsmithing has had a special place in history. Due to its extraordinary shininess, high resistance to oxidation, other chemical reactions and desirable malleability, gold has been used for making ornaments and decorative artworks since ancient times. Goldsmithing is a profession in which an artist melts the precious metal and molds it into various shapes.

Goldsmithing can be a rewarding career for creative and detail-oriented people because they can enjoy this type of metalworking which is more delicate than similar jobs such as blacksmithing. Due to the fact that goldsmithing requires skill and attention to detail, the income earned from this job is higher than other similar jobs. Learning to make jewelry causes one to develop his or her creativity and combine some business skills with innovative techniques. Goldsmithing is an art, the product of which is considered a handicraft. Iran, which has had rich de-

posits of metals and precious stones, has helped develop the global goldsmithing industry throughout history. A number of copper ornaments and strings of colored beads, dating back to the Bronze Age, have been discovered during archaeological excavations carried out in various parts of Iran. The jewels unearthed in Susa, an ancient site in Khuzestan Province, in southern Iran, which include bracelets and necklaces decorated with various beads, show the old history of jewelry making in Iran. The priceless jewels and gold ornaments kept in famous and

prestigious museums in Iran and elsewhere, as well as those found in famous collections indicate that Iranian goldsmiths and jewelers have had extraordinary creativity and skill in making precious ornaments in the course of history. The first Iranian gold bracelet, the end of which is in the shape of a lion's head and belongs to the Achaemenid Era, was discovered on Marlik Hill, an ancient site in Gilan Province. According to historical documents, the metalworking art

flourished in the Iranian Plateau during the Achaemenid Period, when casting and hammering metals, especially gold, and the use of precious stones as ornament became very popular. During the Parthian Period, gold was mostly used to make earrings, rings, bangles and necklaces. Rhytons remaining from the Achaemenid Period, golden plates from the Sassanid Period, and silver and gold jewelry from the Seljuk and Safavid eras show the antiquity of goldsmithing in Iran. Since the beginning of the

Islamic Era, the art of goldsmithing has been used mostly in making jewelry for people from different classes of society. The combination of goldsmithing and other arts, and the use of lapis lazuli, agate, ruby, emerald, turquoise and diamond have helped make Iranian jewelry more and more beautiful. Finally, in the 20th century, Iran's goldsmithing industry entered a new era. Due to an increase in travel by Iranians to Europe, not only has Iranian clothing changed from its traditional form, but the goldsmithing industry has also been affected.

Iranian handicrafts bridge of cultural communication in Mideast: WCC chief



World Crafts Council (WCC) Director Saad Hani al-Qaddumi described Iran's handicrafts as a bridge of cultural communication in the Middle East. He wrote in a message to the 7th Fajr International Handicrafts and Traditional Arts Festival, adding that the event

provides the necessary infrastructure for the quantitative growth and qualitative development of Iranian handiworks. The WCC chief said that paying attention to handicrafts as immortal treasure trove is not only beneficial, but also necessary in any form and at any time, according

to ILNA. He noted that handicrafts are the beating heart of human life, which has passed through the ages and millennia, boosted its strength and minimized its weaknesses, adding that these arts are one of the most notable cultural features of all nations. The 7th edition of the fes-

tival, under the auspice of Seyyed Morteza Emadi, opened on February 15 at the National Museum of Iran in Tehran and will run through February 23. The six previous editions of the crafts festival were held at national level and this year is the first year the event is being held at international level.



▲ A priest leads the burning of the palms to produce ashes for Ash Wednesday, at a parish in San Juan City, Metro Manila, Philippines, on February 21, 2023.
● LISA MARIE DAVID/REUTERS