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Tehran Intl. Book Fair

Tehran International Book Fair (TIBF) serves as a vitrine for showcasing Iranian culture to the world, according to Seyyed Ahmad Oboudatian, the Assistant to the Iranian President in Popularizing the Government. He said the book fair holds high significance as it caters not only to a special group but also to people from all walks of life with varying thoughts and needs. The upcoming 34th edition of TIBF is scheduled to take place from May 10 to 20.

Chega Sofla, proving Iran's ownership of Persian Gulf

Arts & Culture Desk

The National Day of the Persian Gulf is a celebration observed annually on April 30. Despite the significance of this day, the village on the 6,000-year-old area of Chega Sofla, which is considered the most important document showing that the Persian Gulf belongs to Iranians, has not yet been moved. In 2020, the Iranian government urgently wrote to the governor general of Khuzestan, Housing Foundation of Islamic Revolution, and Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Ministry, demanding the relocation of the village from the ancient city of Chega Sofla, located 20 kilometers from the coast of the Persian Gulf. The purpose was to secure the city from the construction and widening of the road, but nothing has been done vet

It is worth noting that the archaeologists who excavated the site discovered evidence that indicated the influence of Persian civilization in the following millennia on Palestine, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Mesopotamia.

However, the village's relocation has become a major obstacle to the preservation and development of this site. In 2018, an archaeological team proposed a plan to relocate the village to an area outside the Zohreh plain, close to the Chega Sofla site, so that the villagers could benefit from the presence of tourists. The proposed plan aimed to preserve the villagers' rights and ensure that they would not be separated from their roots.

Abbas Moqaddam, the head of the excavation team, said in an interview with the Persian-language Iran newspaper that the relocation of the villagers to the new area could redefine the economy through agriculture, while



preserving their names and roots. Furthermore, the village would be the first to be constructed from the cultural heritage perspective. The plan would focus on the architecture of the town's houses, and their coordination with Chega Sofla, to turn the new village into an attraction related to the valuable history of the ancient city.

Historical background

Historically, an Achaemenid inscription was found on Khark Island in the 2000s that showed that the Persian Gulf belonged to Persians at least 2,500 years ago. Experts demanded the inscription's protection since some small countries on the shores of the Persian Gulf were looking for the Iranian islands on this turquoise expanse, giving them a fake name. However, their voices were not heard, and the inscription was distorted forever. On the other hand, Chega Sofla indicates that the history of the Persian Gulf dates back to 6,000 years ago, when Persians lived on the coast.

Archaeologists have found stelae with the image of two goats facing each other in Chega Sofla. Three thousand years later, these characters were carved in the form of two Arabian gazelles on the graves of Al-Ain, the UAE. The UAE claimed in UNESCO that the cultural roots of Al-Ain necropolis are rich and registered it globally. Still, the Chega Sofla petroglyphs are over 3,000 years older than the Al-Ain pictures. Furthermore, archaeologists have found figurines in the eastern and western parts of the Arabian Peninsula that show the influence of Chega Sofla on them. The petroglyphs discovered in Chega Sofla have the ancient historical roots of the discoveries in Hazor area of occupied Palestine. The stelae discovered in Hazor date back to the Bronze Age, which means 1,200 years B.C. Chega Sofla stelae are 3,800 years older than the Hazor finds.

The story does not end with the discovery of the ancient ritual cup called Varka. This artifact belongs to the Uruk culture in Mesopotamia and is adorned with ritual motifs that depict offerings to the temple. To the surprise of many, a similar cup with the same form of pottery was found elsewhere. According to Moqaddam, an expert in Mesopotamian art, the Varka cup was heavily influenced by the cup found in Chega Sofla, an ancient city located in modern-day Iran. The latter cup, Moqaddam notes, is 700 years older than its Mesopotamian counterpart.

Moqaddam also draws attention to the burial practices in Chega Sofla. He compares the number of cemeteries in the city to contemporaneous sites in Mesopotamia such as Obeid and Ur. Moqaddam concludes that the burials in Chega Sofla are incredibly rich, indicating that the city was prosperous and had extensive connections to other parts of the world.

However, the discovery of such significant artifacts and cultural heritage sites raises an important question. Why is it that when Persian Gulf countries are looking to establish a fake history and a fake name, they fail to mention the cultural assets that demonstrate that the Persian Gulf takes its name from Persia (Iran)?

This issue has been troubling public opinion and cultural heritage activists for years. The first documented case of such falsification occurred in 1958, when the British author Roderic Owen published a book called 'The Golden Bubble: Arabian Gulf Documentary.' In the preface to his book, Owen explained that during his several years' stay in the Persian Gulf (Bahrain), he noticed that all the inhabitants of the shore were Arabs. As a result, he decided to rename the gulf after them, claiming that the name "Persian Gulf" was inappropriate.

Such attempts to rewrite history and erase the rich cultural heritage of the Persian Gulf region are deeply concerning. It is essential to preserve and protect these artifacts and cultural heritage sites for future generations, as they provide critical insights into the rich history and cultural diversity of the region. In doing so, we can ensure that the world can learn and appreciate the contributions of the Persian Gulf to human civilization.

Traditional handicrafts of Kurdestan Province







ing various types of jewelry from copper, bronze, and nickel silver scraps, which generally have a local design and shape. Local products include necklaces, bracelets, headbands, bangles, rings and earrings.

These are only a small part of the industries and crafts of men and women with artistic taste in different regions of Kurdestan. Presently, handicrafts have an influential role in boosting employment in Kurdestan. Nonetheless, providing better working conditions for artisans will fur-





Handicrafts and traditional arts are among the most attractive ways to become familiar with the culture of different tribes. Handicrafts are associated with and symbolize the cultural heritage of societies. They also provide unique opportunities for boosting employment, developing businesses and generating wealth, IRNA wrote.

Kurdestan is among the Iranian provinces which possess a remarkable capacity in the field of handicrafts. Inhabitants of Kurdestan, in urban and rural areas, are engaged in the production of handicrafts with passionate enthusiasm.

Kurdestan footwear

Kalash, a local giveh, is among major handicrafts of Kurdestan Province. It is an espadrille like traditional footwear woven from natural fibers. Kalash has earned global fame. It is soft, comfortable

and durable.

Kalash production in this province is very prosperous. Many men and women are engaged in the business in the cities of Sarvabad, Marivan and Uraman. Women produce the upper part of Kalash, which has a delicate texture. They sew the upper part of the footwear using a kind of needle called "javaldooz". Men are responsible for making the sole because it needs more strength, and comes in red, white and blue. The upper part is usually made from cotton yarn, while the sole is made of leather or plastic.

Kalash is the only footwear that is symmetrical, which means it does not have a left foot and a right foot; both are the same.

Kilim weaving

Kilim weaving is another beautiful handicraft of Kurdestan, which has gained fame across the globe. Kilim is a kind of rug which has a smooth and lint-free surface, made of warp and weft. Unlike Persian carpets, it does not have long piles. Historical documents show that kilim weaving dates back thousands of years.

Carpet weaving

Carpet weaving is among the most important and most beautiful handicrafts of the province. The most famous carpets of the region come in different designs. The provincial capital of Sanandaj and the city of Bijar are the major producers of carpets in the province, which are famous worldwide. Many craftspeople are engaged in this traditional business.

Shawl weaving

Shawl weaving is also among well-known crafts of Kurdestan, which has been popular for centuries. It is a type of men's

clothing.

The raw materials of the hand-woven fabric are made from the hair of a type of goat called Markhuz, which forms a soft wool. Men and women produce delicate and beautiful shawls. The fibers that are used in weaving these shawls have provided them with special properties. They are cool in summer and warm in winter.

Kurdish clothing

Artisans in Kurdestan produce a wide range of beautiful and colorful clothes which are worn by men and women. Sewing Kurdish clothing is one of the richest arts of Kurdestan Province, which requires a lot of knowledge and expertise.

Traditional and local jewelry

Local jewelry has a long history in Kurdestan Province. Craftspeople in the provincial capital of Sanandaj have been producther lead to reducing unemployment and creating jobs not only in the province but also across the country.

Economic prosperity

A deputy of the Kurdestan provincial governor said handicrafts are among spiritual heritage of the province and can pave the ground for creating jobs and boosting the economy.

"The art that is created through the creativity of artisans represents the deep-rooted culture and civilization of this country. Due to its great efficiency, it plays an important role in creating employment and bringing economic prosperity to the province," Hamed Qaderzadeh added. The caretaker of the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Department of Kurdestan Province also touched upon the economic aspects of developing handicrafts.

Mansour Mehrzad said Kurdestan exported \$124,000 worth of handicrafts in the year to March 20, 2023.

He said traditional ornaments, kalash, giveh, pottery, felt, mats and leather products were among the exports.