

Iran to attend India book fair

Iran's publishing industry is set to participate in the 21st Pune Book Fair, scheduled to take place from October 11 to 15, showcasing its diverse range of literary works and cultural products. In addition to presenting books and cultural products, Iran's Cultural House in Mumbai, India, will offer visitors an immersive experience by providing services that delve into the realm of Iranian culture and tourism.

Yazd 800-year-old Darayi-Bafi requires more support



By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

Darayi-Bafi, an exquisite and distinctive handicraft industry, holds a significant place in Yazd Province. This art form, a type of fabric weaving, has thrived in the city of Yazd for centuries, faithfully preserving its traditional and authentic techniques. While Darayi-Bafi was once practiced in other regions of the country, it gradually faded over time, leaving Yazd as the sole bastion of this craft in Iran. Presently, several workshops in Yazd, predominantly situated in the historic quarters of the city, are dedicated to producing Darayi fabric. Authorities in the province are actively pursuing its registration as an intangible heritage, under the name of Yazd, aiming to inspire Yazdi artists to safeguard this venerable art from fading into oblivion.

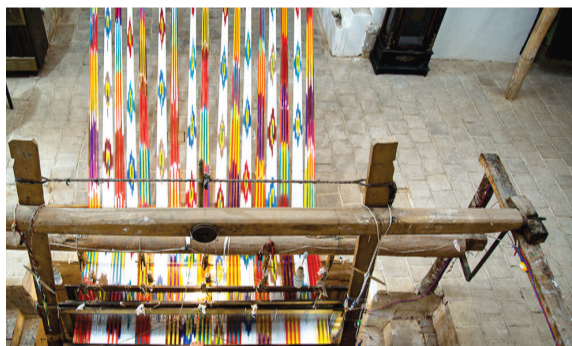
Masoud Malek-Sabet, a Darayi weaver in Yazd, has diligently pursued his craft for many years within a small room tucked away in the courtyard of Ziaieh School, also known as Eskandar Prison – an ancient monument within Yazd's historic section. The art of Darayi-Bafi runs deep in his family, with his grandfather having achieved renown as a Darayi weaver in Yazd. Masoud himself has dedicated a decade to honing his skills in this profession. Describing the distinctive features of Darayi, he explains, "Unlike other fabrics, Darayi undergoes meticulous design and patterning on threads, employing precise calculations before the actual weaving process begins." Traditionally, pure silk was used for weaving Darayi fabric, but nowadays, cotton and rayon threads (artificial silk) are used. In the past, possessing 16 pieces of Darayi fabric in a girl's dowry was a symbol of pride and affluence, elevating her social status and suggesting she hailed from a prosperous family. According to Malek-Sabet, Darayi fabric was predominantly employed for making bedspreads, curtains, and shamad (thin cotton blanket) in the past.



However, contemporary products such as scarves, tablecloths, bags, and shoes now showcase this distinctive fabric. Explaining the process of Darayi fabric production, he reveals that weaving Darayi fabric is accomplished using a handloom – a practice that has been ongoing for over 800 years in Yazd. Once the fabric design is established on the threads,

the spindle is placed within the loom, allowing the weaver to skillfully move the threads from one side to the other. The weaver's feet operate four pedals, enabling the weaving of straight, diagonal, or diamond patterns by adjusting their positions. Discussing the designs found in Darayi fabrics, he notes that these creations are adorned with intricate geometric patterns and motifs rooted in the culture, climate, customs, and traditions of desert-dwelling communities. A vivid and vibrant array of colors is skillfully employed throughout the weaving process. In this weaving art, conventional thread knotting techniques are eschewed, as they diminish the fab-

ric's quality. If necessary, apricot tree resin is utilized to bind the threads together. Regrettably, despite its longstanding presence, Darayi-Bafi remains relatively unknown on a national scale, risking gradual disappearance. Malek-Sabet emphasizes that Darayi-Bafi demands tremendous labor and presents considerable challenges, thereby garnering limited interest among younger generations. To ensure the vitality and continuity of this craft, he calls upon the government and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts to provide the necessary support and create an enabling environment for those involved in this field.



DoE to collaborate exclusively with standardized zoos

Social Desk

The Director General of the Wildlife Protection and Management Office of the Department of the Environment (DoE), Gholamreza Ebdali, has announced that the organization will only cooperate with zoos that meet specific standards. Ebdali emphasized that zoos should not solely focus on economic and financial aspects, but also prioritize education, species protection, and animal rights. According to ISNA, Hassan Akbari, the Deputy Director of Natural Environment and Biodiversity of the Natural Environment of the DoE, previously addressed the issue of wildlife loss in the country's zoos. Akbari announced a rating plan for zoos, which has significantly limited the issuance of permits. Zoos that meet the required standards and demonstrate suitable activity are supported, while those failing to meet the standards are either removed or encouraged to improve. Ebdali provided further details on the zoo ranking system. He



explained that until recently, there was no criterion for ranking zoos to determine the level of cooperation. However, in the second half of the previous year, a rating plan was launched, and evaluation indicators were compiled. The plan currently

includes about 16 axes with 70 indicators. The organization's evaluators assess zoos, bird gardens, and conservation centers based on these set standards and assign them a score. The zoos are then ranked based on these reviews

and scores. Ebdali stated that following these ratings, the organization can only cooperate with zoos that meet the specified standards and can protect a wide variety of species. Ebdali emphasized that the organization's expectations from zoos

are clearly defined in this plan. He said, "In this plan, issues such as education, animal rights, and protection have been emphasized a lot. Zoos should assist in the field of wildlife species protection and survival of many species, in addition to cooperating with the Environmental Protection Agency." The plan also addresses issues such as the quality of animal food, species welfare management, security of the storage place, species health, and disease management. Each of these areas has its own evaluation axes and indicators. In conclusion, Ebdali stressed that the guidelines are completely up-to-date and stated, "We expect zoos not to operate only with economic and financial goals. Zoos can have much more important goals. Issues such as education, respecting animal rights, species protection, and research should be emphasized and given more importance as scientific centers where university projects and animal behavior studies are conducted."

Iran, Qatar pledge to strengthen cultural diplomacy



Officials from Iran and Qatar underscored the importance of bolstering cultural diplomacy between the two nations, with a focus on fostering closer ties through arts and culture.

Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad Al Thani, the Minister of Culture of the State of Qatar, made these remarks during a meeting with Yaser Ahmadvand, Iran's Deputy Minister for Cultural Affairs, held on the sidelines of the 32nd edition of the Doha International Book Fair, Mehr news agency reported.

Highlighting this year's participation of Iran in the book fair, the Qatari minister acknowledged a notable difference compared to previous editions. He proposed the organization of a cultural week in both countries to enhance collaboration and expand cultural relations.

Ahmadvand, in turn, emphasized Iran's significant cultural potential for cooperation with Qatar, particularly in the field of book publishing. He stressed the need to develop cultural relations between the two nations.

The Iranian official expressed appreciation for Qatar's hospitality towards the Iranian delegation and for hosting various cultural meetings and programs. He also expressed gratitude for Qatar's presence as a special guest at the 33rd Tehran International Book Fair.

The Doha International Book Fair, known for being one of the oldest and largest international book fairs in the region, enjoys a stellar reputation, attracting significant interest from Arab and foreign countries. The fair is currently taking place at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Center from June 12 to 21.