



Iran, Tajikistan make joint musical work for Muharram

In a cross-border collaboration, renowned Tajikistani singer and musician, Davlatmand Kholov, joined forces with veteran eulogist, Sadeq Ahangaran, to create a special musical composition for the mourning days of Muharram.

Enjoy cool weather of highlands in Khuzestan Province during summer



Iranica Desk

Excruciating heat, humidity and lack of water are just some of the words that can be used to describe the weather of the southern province of Khuzestan Province during the summer. But it is not the whole truth about this land. It would be interesting to know that just when people in Ahvaz or Khorramshahr hardly tolerate the summer heat during the days, those who live in the eastern and northeastern highlands of the province not only do not

feel any need to use cooling devices, but on some nights they have to turn on their heaters.

Shimbar Plain

Shimbar Plain, with a very pleasant climate, is located at the border of the three provinces of Khuzestan, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province. The plain which is a pristine area with bubbling springs, flowing waterfalls and lush forests attract a huge number of tourists in all seasons of the year. One of the main routes that

help you escape the heat of Khuzestan Province and reach Shimbar Plain passes through Masjed Soleyman. Although this city has hot weather in the summer, passing through it towards Shahr-e Kord, the capital of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province, you would also encounter the vast oak forests on the slopes of Zagros Mountains. Shimbar Plain, also known as Shirin Bahar, located near Andika County, extends in an area of 50,000 hectares. Several springs, a roaring river and a forest covered

with oak and almond trees, wild shrubs, various types of mushrooms and citrus plants, grapes, berries, pomegranates are just a part of what you can see in this mesmerizing environment. In the past, various species of bears, wolves, hyenas, boar and hunting birds, such as eagles and vultures, lived in the Shimbar Plain. But unfortunately, illegal hunting has created many problems for the animals of the area. The road linking Masjed Soleyman to Shahr-e Kord has been used as a migration

route by the Haft Lang nomads of southwestern Iran. The people of Shimbar and its surrounding areas are Bakhtiari people who have been engaged in livestock breeding and farming for centuries. In addition to the pleasant nature, there are some historical attractions in this plain, too. Tang-e Botan, with twelve inscriptions, are on the hillside of Dela Mountain. These inscriptions date back to the Parthian period.

Susan Plain

Another route through

which you can reach a mountainous area and enjoy its cool weather is the main road linking Khuzestan and Isfahan provinces. This route, through which one of the main branches of Dez River passes, starts from the city of Izeh, at the foot of the Zagros Mountains. Susan Plain, 35 kilometers from northwestern Izeh, is one of the main tourism destinations of Khuzestan Province. The flow of the Karun River in the area as well as the bubbling springs, green hills,

and various plant species such as pomegranate trees, oaks, chamomiles, daffodils and anemones, along with its valuable historical sites, have turned the area into a tourist gem. Izeh is a historical town east of Khuzestan Province. The vast majority of its population are from the Bakhtiari tribe, which is one of the biggest in Iran. Izeh has temperate weather in the spring and summer, although in the winter it is usually the coldest city in Khuzestan Province.

Over 1.4 m foreign tourists arrive in Iran in three months



Arts & Culture Desk

Iran welcomed 1,410,822 foreign tourists during the first three months of the current Iranian year, which ended on June 21. This figure marks a remarkable 43-percent surge compared to the same period last year. The influx of tourists underscores Iran's growing appeal as a favored travel destination, attracting visitors from diverse corners of the world. The Domestic Tourism Development Office, in particular, emphasized the vital role played by various tourism-related activities conducted by each department, includ-

ing the organization of tourism events. Iran's array of tourism events has emerged as a key driver in attracting foreign tourists, making a significant contribution to the overall growth of the sector. Every year, a wide array of tourism events, featuring cultural, recreational, agricultural, religious, and historical themes, are hosted at local, provincial, regional, national, and international levels across the country. Notably, during the month of Ordibehesht (April/May) in the current year, a total of 90 tourism events were held, with Isfahan Province leading the charge, hosting

10 of these events, followed by Semnan, Mazandaran, and Fars provinces. In a bid to harness the potential of tourism events and bolster the tourism market, the Domestic Tourism Development Office has embarked on an ambitious three-year process to design and develop a comprehensive tourism events calendar. The tourism sector has also witnessed significant investment, with the approval of 32 major investment projects, amounting to over 72 billion tomans (\$1.44 million) during the current Iranian year. These investments, totaling \$226 million, have demonstrated a notable interest in tourism and hotel complexes, particularly in provinces such as Qazvin and Mazandaran. Furthermore, a total of 35 travel and tourism companies were recognized and rewarded for their commendable contributions to various international markets. Iran's thriving tourism industry continues to blossom, attracting global attention and positioning the country as a prominent player in the world of travel and leisure.

Health tourism revenue could equal 0.5m barrels of crude oil: Official

Social Desk

A member of Iran's Supreme Medical Council said Tuesday that the country could increase revenue from health tourism to the equivalent of about 500,000 barrels of crude oil per day by better utilizing existing capacities in its health care system. The official, Dr. Dabbagh, said Iran currently receives a maximum of 1.2 million health tourists annually. He estimated that if each visitor spent an average of \$2,000 on medical treatment in Iran, "plus around the same amount on travel and accommo-

datations," the total revenue would be close to \$5 billion, ISNA reported. By making better use of the 150,000 hospital beds that are currently only around 70 percent occupied, Dabbagh said revenue could easily grow to at least \$18 billion, or the equivalent of 500,000 barrels of oil daily, without oil extraction costs. "In recent years Iran has worked to expand health tourism but has not done enough," Dabbagh said. He pointed to India attracting many health tourists from Islamic nations despite cultural differences. He said sanctions, although having



some effects, have not prevented tourists from coming to Iran and, with better planning, the country could significantly draw revenue from health tourism. Dabbagh said Iran needs a more coordinated effort between its Health Ministry, tourism officials, hospitals and others to attract patients, care for them and send them home. He suggested opening an insurance agency to gain the trust of overseas patients. The Medical Council offi-

cial said there is no documented record of how much profit intermediaries make from health tourism in Iran, but he believes an "important share goes to brokers rather than to the country," due to the lack of a proper mechanism. Dabbagh also said Iran could attract more medical tourists through online advertising and promotion and by emphasizing its quality care and lower costs compared to other countries.

Over 7,000 entries received for TISFF

The deadline for submissions to the International Section of the 40th Tehran International Short Film Festival (TISFF) recently closed with an impressive record of 7,216 international entries received, making it the highest number of submissions in the festival's history.

The festival holds significant prominence as one of the accredited festivals by the Academy Awards. The winning film from this festival is nominated for the Oscars, which has garnered substantial attention from filmmakers worldwide. It is noteworthy that this remarkable achievement

in the International Section of the festival comes as Iranian filmmakers will have time until August 1 to register their works and compete for participation in the national section of the festival (Iranian Cinema). The 40th edition of the event, under the auspice of Mehdi Azarpendar, will



take place from October 19 to October 24 in Tehran.