

Iran Applies for UNESCO Listing of Mirrorwork, Falak-ol-Aflak

TEHRAN – Iran is seeking to gain the official recognition of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for Iranian mirrorwork art and the Falak-ol-Aflak fortress.

In a news conference, the deputy minister of cultural heritage announced that Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage formally submitted its dossiers on the two to UNESCO for their inclusion on the World Heritage List.

Ali Darabi said that the necessary paperwork for including the traditional decorative art of mirrorwork, known as Ayeneh-kari, as well as the historic Falak-ol-Aflak Fortress along with its surrounding cultural landscape, had been submitted to the UN's cultural organization for their assessment.

He expressed hope that both of the dossiers will be internationally recognized in the upcoming UNESCO evaluation round.

Darabi said if both of the dossiers are hopefully approved, these two items would further highlight Iran's diverse contributions to global heritage and reinforce efforts to preserve its centuries-old traditions and landmarks.

"We are optimistic about their successful inscription on the UNESCO lists," he added.

In order to be included on UNESCO's World Heritage List, a site must be of outstanding universal value and meet at least one out of several selection criteria.

These include representing a feat of human creative genius, showing a significant interchange of human values, having a sign of a traditional style used by a civilization which is living or which has disappeared, or being an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological structure representing a specific stage in human development.

Otherwise to be included on UNESCO's World Heritage List, the site must be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use, or be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance.

Areas featuring exceptional natural beauty



and aesthetic importance, or sites representing major stages of earth's history and on-going ecological and biological processes or natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity could also included on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

The Mirror Hall of Golestan Palace in Tehran alongside others in the Iranian capital as well as in Shiraz, Isfahan, and other cities highlight the enduring legacy and unmatched artistry of Iranian mirrorwork.

In the meantime, mirrorwork has a long history in Iran dating back to Iran's Achaemenid period (550-330 BCE).

During this era artisans first transformed polished stones and metals into reflective surfaces.

Iranian mirrorwork reached artistic mastery during the Safavid and Qajar dynasties, with mirrors intricately cut into a dazzling display of light floral and geometric patterns to decorate palaces, mosques, and mausoleums.

During the late Qajar era mirror pieces were often cut into small triangles, diamonds, or hexagons. Convex glasses, turned into mirrors, also became popular, adding depth and dimension to the designs.

At this time mirrorwork reached its zenith with

the creation of ornate patterns such as muqarnas, arabesques, and calligraphic inscriptions on mirrors.

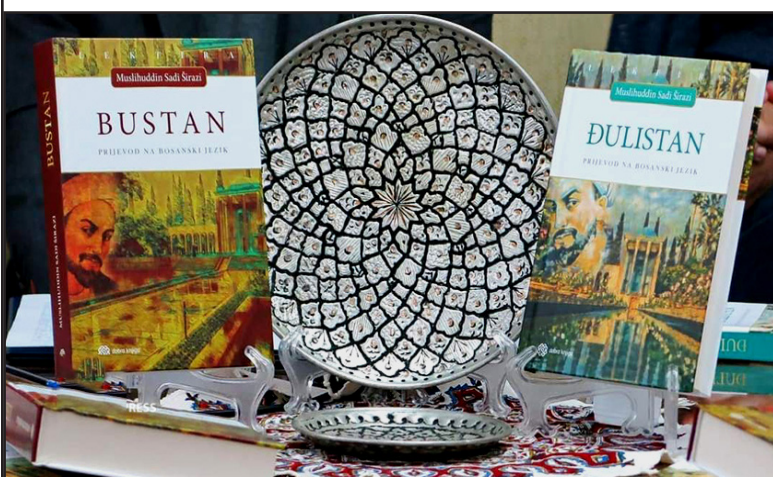
The Mirror Hall of Golestan Palace and Shams-ol-Emarat in the Iranian capital city, Tehran, stand as iconic examples of this artistic pinnacle.

An outstanding examples of this dazzling craft can still be seen at Chehel Sotun Palace in Isfahan where light and reflection interplay with one another to create hypnotic effect.

Also, in Lorestan province located in southwestern Iran, the Falak-ol-Aflak Fortress, towering over the city of Khorramabad with its eight imposing bastions is more than just a military fortress; it is a historic site representing a rich tapestry of Iran's cultural, natural, and historical legacy. Its surrounding landscape includes prehistoric caves, the Khorramabad Valley, historic bridges, and a river that meanders through the city's center. At night, when the fortress is illuminated, it offers striking views that draw both local and international tourists.

Cultural experts believe the site's combination of historical architecture and natural beauty makes it a sure nominee for UNESCO's recognition.

Bustan of Sadi in Bosnian Granted Best Translation Award



TEHRAN – The Bustan of Sadi has been awarded Best Translated Work in World Literature into Bosnian at the 36th Sarajevo International Book Fair, which concluded this week in the Bosnian capital. The announcement coincided with events marking Sadi's literary legacy on the fair's closing day.

The Sarajevo International Book Fair, one of the region's largest cultural gatherings, annually attracts more than 50,000 visitors and features over 200 exhibitors from Bosnia and Herzegovina and beyond.

The fair's awards recognize outstanding achievements in various literary categories, including translations between Bosnian, Serbian, Croatian, and other languages.

This year, the Bosnian edition of Bustan —translated by Muammer Kudrich—received the top honor for translated works. The translation was produced through

a collaboration between Iran's Cultural Center in Bosnia and Herzegovina and local publisher Dubrovkinja, with support from the Center for Organizing the Translation and Publication of Islamic Knowledge and Humanities, part of Iran's Cultural and Relations Organization.

The project is part of the 'Translation of Persia (TOP)' initiative, which aims to promote Persian literature in new languages.

Kudrich's translation is the first complete Bosnian rendition of Bustan, based on the critical edition by Muhammad-Ali Foroughi. The translator sought to preserve the poem's original structure and style as faithfully as possible.

In his introduction, Kudrich highlights Sadi's enduring influence across the Islamic world, noting that Bustan and Golestan are among the most celebrated and widely published works of classical Persian literature.

Tehran, Beijing Universities Sign Cooperation Agreement



TEHRAN -- The Caspian International Campus of the University of Tehran and the Beijing International Exchange Association (BIEA) have inked a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to further bolster scientific ties and cooperation.

In a meeting held online, the two sides agreed to expand cooperation on developing joint strategies for the expansion and exchange of education, research, science, technology, and entrepreneurship; establishing and expanding a communication network among experts at the university and research and technology centers; participating in organizing annual BRICS technology competitions with a focus on an innovative environment and knowledge-based startups in order to further expand scientific and technological achievements in University of Tehran and other universities in the country.

The MoU aims to establish relations with universities and research centers in BRICS member states since Univer-

sity of Tehran is a member of BRICS Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) cooperation.

Based on the MoU, the University of Tehran can introduce other institutions and research centers to cooperate with BIEA.

Iranian universities are exploring the potential for developing scientific and research collaborations with Chinese institutions under the strategic partnership with China.

During a meeting held in China in April, Saeed Habiba, the Iranian deputy minister of science, research, and technology, and Sheng Jianxue, the secretary-general of the China Scholarship Council, discussed ways for developing scientific cooperation between the universities of the two countries.

The meeting centered around holding joint academic courses, exchanging professors and students, growing government scholarship programs, expanding technological ties, scientific interactions, and sharing expertise.

Elusive Pallas's Cat Sighted in Kerman

TEHRAN -- A rare sighting of the elusive Pallas's cat has been reported once more in Iran's southeastern Kerman province, raising hopes for the species' conservation in the region.

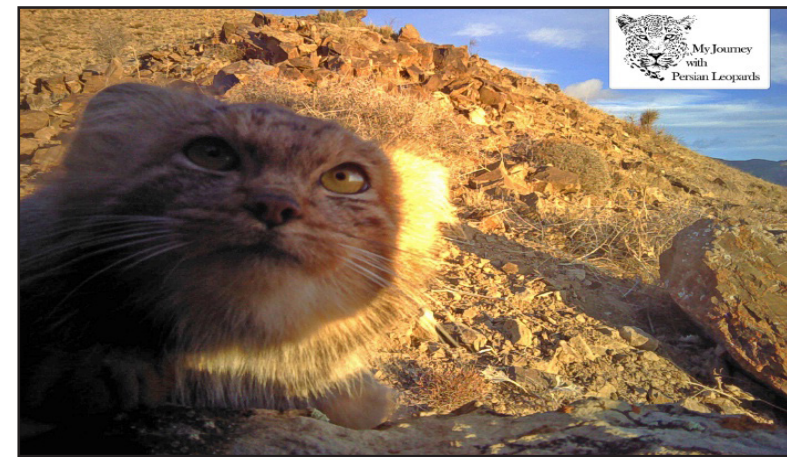
According to the head of Kerman's Department of Environment, one of the local environmental volunteers succeeded in observing two Pallas's cat cubs in the mountainous area of Rabor County, capturing an image of one of them.

Due to the considerable distance between the two cubs, photographing the second one was not possible.

Officials say this rare sighting suggests a potential increase in the local population of this vulnerable species, which is known for its reclusive nature and declining numbers across its native range in Central Asia and parts of the Iranian plateau.

The Pallas's cat (*Otocolobus manul*), also known as the manul, is listed as Near Threatened by the IUCN due to habitat loss, prey depletion, and other environmental pressures. The species is extremely difficult to monitor due to its solitary behavior and elusive presence.

Conservation experts in Iran consider repeated sightings of the animal in Kerman a positive indicator and are calling for heightened protection measures to safeguard its habitat and support possible population recovery in the region.



Picture of the Day



Fakhrabad Caravanserai in Bajestan, Khorasan Razavi dates back to the Qajar era. It is one of the 25 Persian caravanserais listed by UNESCO.

Photo by ISNA