

Kamarzarin Trove of Coins Unlocks Isfahan’s Medieval Trade Legacy



TEHRAN -- Excavations at the Kamarzarin archaeological site in Isfahan have yielded a significant trove of over 100 historical coins, bolstering the theory that the area once hosted a vital trading center.

Announced by Amir Karamzadeh, Director General of Isfahan’s Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department, this latest discovery emerges from the second season of systematic digs conducted opposite the Kamarzarin Mosque.

Of particular note is the recovery of 35 coins in a single day — a remarkable find that speaks to the dense archaeological deposits preserved beneath the surface. While preliminary assessments suggest these coins predominantly belong to various Islamic periods, ongoing laboratory analysis will help refine their precise chronology and provenance.

The coins’ presence alongside architectural remnants hints strongly at the site’s former role as a bustling trade nexus, possibly a caravanserai or commercial outpost. This aligns with earlier findings from the initial excavation season, which revealed an array of artifacts including an inscribed water structure predating the Mongol invasion, a pottery kiln, Seljuk-era brick flooring, and stone walls — all pointing to a complex urban environment with diverse economic activities.

This phase of excavation was originally authorized for 40 days by the Archaeological Research Institute, but the recent exten-

sion grants archaeologists further opportunity to explore the site’s stratigraphy and recover additional artifacts. Karamzadeh underscores the importance of this continued work, emphasizing its potential to illuminate Isfahan’s role in regional trade and its broader cultural heritage.

The discovery at Kamarzarin traces back to two years ago when construction for a new urban passage uncovered architectural features that prompted a halt in development and initiated formal archaeological investigations. This collaborative effort involves the Cultural Heritage Institute, the municipal Renovation and Development Organization, and the University of Art, highlighting a growing commitment to preserving Iran’s archaeological patrimony amid urban expansion.

Looking ahead, plans are underway to convert the Kamarzarin excavation zone into an open-air museum—a public space dedicated to showcasing the region’s archaeological riches and fostering greater appreciation for Isfahan’s layered history.

As excavations progress, the combined evidence of architectural remains, Islamic-period glazed tiles, ceramics, and now this substantial numismatic assemblage promises to deepen our understanding of economic life in medieval Isfahan. Each new find enriches the narrative of a city that long served as a crossroads of commerce, culture, and civilization in the Iranian plateau.

Iran’s Quiet Cultural Outreach Across Asia

TEHRAN -- In a world often dominated by geopolitical headlines and diplomatic tension, Iran is carving out a different kind of presence across Asia—one grounded in cultural connection, storytelling, and shared heritage.

Through a trio of meaningful initiatives spanning Malaysia, Thailand, and Pakistan, Iran is quietly but powerfully fostering ties that celebrate history, nature, and the human spirit.

The journey begins in Malaysia, where a remarkable literary event unfolded. Iran played a key role in launching the Persian translation of Parman: A Prescription for a Better Malaysia, a thoughtful book by Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim.

Translated by Iranian scholar Habib-Reza Arzani and meticulously edited by Fereydoon Rahedan-Mofrad, the book distills a vision of sustainable development, social equity, and inclusive governance—six guiding principles that Anwar Ibrahim advocates for his nation’s future.

But the significance of Parman goes beyond policy prescriptions. It acts as a cultural bridge, a rare instance of literary diplomacy that unites two nations through shared values and aspirations.

The Persian edition’s unveiling was met with enthusiasm and gratitude, symbolizing not only a partnership between governments but a genuine exchange of ideas and hopes.

Travel eastward to Thailand, and you encounter a different form of cultural storytelling: the vivid, immersive documentary series Irangard (meaning “Iran Wanderer”).

This captivating series has begun streaming online with Thai subtitles, courtesy of the Iranian Cultural Center in Bangkok, and it offers viewers an intimate look at Iran’s extraordinary landscapes and cultural richness—beyond the usual tourist landmarks.

Irangard journeys deep into Iran’s varied terrains: from the emerald rice terraces of Mazandaran in the north, to the shimmering salt flats of the central deserts, and the rugged mountain villages scattered across the



Iranian scholar Habib-Reza Arzani poses with a Persian copy of Anwar Ibrahim’s book along with the Malaysian prime minister.

Zagros range.

Rather than a fast-paced travelogue, the series is a slow, reverent exploration, capturing moments of quiet connection—sharing tea with shepherds, camping beneath starlit skies, and wandering alongside nomadic tribes.

This narrative approach offers Thai viewers a nuanced

and authentic portrait of Iran’s countryside and the enduring bonds between its people and the land. It’s an invitation to experience Iran as a living mosaic of cultures, traditions, and ecosystems.

Meanwhile, in Pakistan, Iran’s cultural diplomacy is taking root in the academic sphere. A recent meeting at the Iranian Cultural House in Karachi gathered more than 20 Pakistani scholars, including Sunni and Shia intellectuals, who voiced strong support for Iran’s resilience amid regional challenges.

This gathering was far from ceremonial; it marked the beginning of a collaborative vision encompassing educational exchanges, joint research initiatives, and cultural festivals designed to strengthen ties between the two neighboring countries.

The Pakistani scholars emphasized their commitment to broadening academic and cultural engagement, seeing this as a natural extension of the deep historical, religious, and cultural connections that bind Iran and Pakistan.

What ties these seemingly disparate initiatives together is a new kind of cultural itinerary—one less about tourism in the traditional sense, and more about intellectual curiosity, empathy, and mutual understanding.

Iran’s active cultural presence in Asia is an invitation to see the country beyond stereotypes, to appreciate its rich heritage and natural beauty, and to engage in conversations that matter.

For global travelers, these efforts highlight a profound truth about travel itself: it is not merely about visiting places but about connecting with people, ideas, and histories.

Whether it’s through the pages of a translated book in Kuala Lumpur, the subtitled scenes of Irangard in Bangkok, or the thoughtful dialogues in Karachi’s cultural center, Iran’s cultural outreach embodies travel’s deepest purpose—to open minds, build bridges, and nurture relationships.

Biggest Travel Exhibition of Year Opens in Tehran

TEHRAN -- The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts of Iran has announced the forthcoming eighth edition of the Travel and Nature Tourism Exhibition, scheduled to take place from September 2 to 6 at the sprawling Shahr-e Aftab International Exhibition Center in Tehran.

This annual event, now a fixture in the country’s tourism calendar, promises an expanded footprint this year, reflecting the burgeoning interest in nature-based travel among Iranians.

Mustafa Fatemi, the Director General of Domestic Tourism Development, described the exhibition as one of the largest and most popular specialized gatherings devoted to nature tourism.

It draws a diverse crowd—from intrepid young adventurers and seasoned nature enthusiasts to travel aficionados eager to explore Iran’s rich landscapes. The event boasts participation from a broad array of prominent companies, both domestic and international, offering the latest in outdoor gear, off-road vehicles, camping equipment, and related technologies.

This year’s exhibition will unfurl over a generous 13,000 square meters and 30,000 square feet of exhibition space, a significant increase that speaks to the sector’s rapid growth.

Visitors can expect to navigate four distinct pavilions: one devoted to camping and moun-

taineering equipment, another showcasing off-road vehicles and their accessories, a pavilion dedicated to four-wheel-drive automobiles, and finally, a space presenting diverse nature tourism equipment.

Together, these halls paint a comprehensive portrait of modern outdoor exploration, catering to a wide spectrum of tastes and interests.

The event is not merely a commercial showcase but also an implicit call to responsible travel. The organizers emphasize the importance of fostering a culture of sustainability—encouraging visitors to travel thoughtfully, protect natural environments, and embrace domestic tourism as a means to curtail the outflow of foreign currency.

In a country blessed with vast deserts, towering mountains, lush forests, and a myriad of historical sites, the potential for nature-based travel is immense.

The opening ceremony, scheduled for 2:30 p.m. on the first day, promises to set the tone for an event that is as much about celebration and education as it is about commerce.

As Iran continues to navigate its place in the global tourism landscape, initiatives like this exhibition highlight a growing recognition that the future of travel lies in balancing adventure with stewardship.

For those who long to reconnect with na-



ture—and with the rich tapestry of Iranian landscapes—this event will offer both inspiration and opportunity.

Ahmad Peman: Composer Who Reimagined Iran’s Soundscape

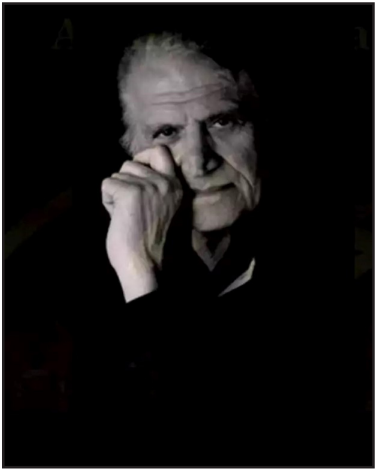
TEHRAN -- Ahmad Pejman — the Iranian composer whose work blurred the boundaries between East and West, tradition and experimentation — died Friday night (August 30) in Los Angeles at age 90 after a long illness.

With a career that spanned over six decades, Pejman leaves behind a legacy that challenged the architecture of classical composition while fiercely anchoring itself in Iranian identity.

Born in 1935 in the southern city of Larestan, Pejman’s early exposure to Persian folk music laid the groundwork for a lifetime of genre collisions. His classical training began in Tehran, but he soon took his sound global, studying in Vienna and later at Columbia University in New York.

There, under the mentorship of avant-garde heavyweights like Vladimir Ussachevsky, he immersed himself in electronic music and modern compositional theory — knowledge he brought back into a distinctly Persian context.

If Pejman is often referred to as a “bridge” between Iranian music and



Western classical forms, it’s because he didn’t just blend styles — he reimagined them. His orchestral works, like Poem Symphonique Nowruz and Oratorio Resurrection, live in a space that feels borderless: modal Iranian melodies suspended in modernist counterpoint, ancient rhythms thundering through the bones of a Western orchestra.

Pejman scored over two dozen films and numerous TV shows, including collaborations with directors like Bahman

Farmanara (The Blue-Veiled) and Majid Majidi (Baran).

His film work wasn’t just accompaniment — it was narrative, emotional architecture that often outlived the visuals it supported. He also dabbled in pop and jazz, composing more than 30 crossover songs in the 1970s, helping to reshape the sonic DNA of Iranian mainstream music.

In the wake of his passing, tributes have poured in from Iran’s musical community. Composer Houshang Kamkar called it “a national mourning,” and Hussein Alizadeh wrote, “With Pejman’s name, we learned love.” Kayhan Kalhor, Majid Entezami, and many more echoed that sense of loss — not just of a musician, but of a spiritual force within the culture.

What’s emerged in these days of remembrance is also a public plea: several of Pejman’s peers and students have called for the return of his body to Iran. For many, including composer Shervin Mohajer, Pejman’s final journey should end among the people and places he never stopped composing for, even from across an ocean.

Picture of the Day



Jazin village in southern Khorasan Razavi is known for its Safavid-era architecture, winding alleys, adobe walls, windcatchers, and the shrine of Imamzadeh Ali ibn Ahmad Khodashahi.

Photo by ISNA