

Archaeologists Reveal Harireh’s Hidden Treasure on Kish Island



TEHRAN -- After a fourteen-year hiatus, the seventh season of excavations at the historic city of Harireh on Kish Island has resumed under the auspices of the Iranian Cultural Heritage and Tourism Organization, with collaboration and support from the Kish Free Zone Authority.

Archaeologists focused their efforts on the southern sector of Building 3, uncovering a rich assemblage of material culture, including ceramic fragments, shells, animal bones, architectural plaster ornamentation, stone tools such as grindstones and pestles, metal objects, glassware shards, and enigmatic bronze coins.

The primary aim of this latest campaign has been multifaceted: to document the site meticulously, clarify the findings of previous excavations, and pave the way for the integration of Harireh’s grand houses and the central mosque into a heritage tourism corridor.

Scholars are also intent on understanding the historic relocation of regional power from Siraf to Kish and the island’s pivotal role in maritime trade with the Far East.

One of the most significant features of Harireh is the thoroughfare stretching from the central mosque and its adjacent glass workshop to a trio of grand residences, a historic bathhouse, and the harbor complex.

The latter contains facilities for date syrup production, cargo unloading, and carved port architecture. Many of the architectural spaces align with the ancient water channels, offering key insights into the ingenuity of Kish’s historic urban planning. Currently, attention is centered on the palatial residences.

Excavation director Muhammad Mortazavi highlighted a remarkable discovery: an array of thirteen types of Chinese celadon pottery, evidence of Kish’s centrality in ancient trade networks with East Asia. The ceramics range from modest utilitarian wares to luxurious, decorative pieces, alongside locally produced imitations, underscoring the sophistication of indigenous craftsmanship.

The excavated building, constructed from coral stone across two levels in accordance with the island’s topography, includes domestic quarters as well as spaces likely used for industrial activities such as pearl processing. A wealth of shell debris and related tools, along with a nine-meter-deep well connected to basins and channels, reveal a complex architectural plan, with fourteen distinct spaces now documented.

Additional finds include turquoise and gilt-star tiles, hinting at the opulence of the structure and the prominence of its occupants. Chronological studies suggest these artifacts date from the 4th to 8th centuries AH, though precise stratigraphic dating will follow the completion of fieldwork.

This season continues a legacy of archaeological research on Kish, from pre-Revolution surveys in the 1960s to post-Revolution campaigns led by Mahmoud Mousavi and successive teams. The ongoing efforts promise not only to enrich our understanding of Harireh’s urban and commercial history but also to open restored spaces to the public, offering a tangible connection to Iran’s maritime and cultural heritage.

The Qur’anic Interpretation That Still Shapes Islamic Thought

TEHRAN -- For over seven decades, the monumental work of Allameh Seyyed Muhammad Hussein Tabataba’i, Tafsir al-Mizan, has stood as a beacon of Qur’anic scholarship.

Its enduring relevance is rooted not merely in its size—twenty volumes in Arabic, roughly eight thousand pages, with Persian translations spanning forty volumes—but in the extraordinary vision and dedication of its author.

Muhammad Fakhr Meybodi, a scholar Al-Mustafa International University, points to two central factors that explain the lasting impact of al-Mizan: the sincere devotion of Allameh Tabataba’i and the depth of his intellectual vision.

“Allameh composed this work solely for God,” Meybodi explains, noting that Allameh Tabataba’i carefully studied the needs of contemporary society and the religious seminary in Qom.

Recognizing a profound need for a comprehensive, accessible interpretation of the Qur’an, he sought to illuminate the divine text with clarity and precision, ensuring that the wisdom of



the Qur’an could reach scholars and laypeople alike.

Beyond devotion, al-Mizan reflects Allameh Tabataba’i’s remarkable thinking. The interpretation is unmistakably social in orientation, addressing the practical dimensions of Islam: governance, justice, individual freedom, women’s rights, social order, and

the obstacles facing the Muslim world.

It engages with both internal theological debates and external critiques—from materialist philosophers to Western Orientalists—while also confronting emerging questions of the modern era, including science, human rights, and political structures.

Scholars have long hailed al-Mizan

as an encyclopedic resource. As the late Morteza Motahhari noted, “Few issues in Islamic studies arise that cannot be unlocked through al-Mizan.”

Similarly, Allameh Abdollah Javadi Amoli likens it to a Qur’anic encyclopedia, indispensable to interpreters in the same way that classical works of jurisprudence guide legal scholars.

Despite not being initially recognized as a specialist in Qur’anic exegesis, Allameh Tabataba’i produced a work now considered among the most authoritative in the Islamic world. The text’s intellectual rigor, coupled with its ethical and spiritual sincerity, has inspired generations of scholars and guided discourse in Iran and beyond.

Al-Mizan has also reached a global audience through translations into English, Urdu, Turkish, and Spanish, extending its influence across cultures and communities. As the Islamic world continues to confront modernity, Allameh Tabataba’i’s masterpiece remains a vital, living guide—a testament to a scholar’s lifelong commitment to understanding and conveying the divine.

Animation Holds Firm as Legacy Films Falter at Iranian Cinemas



TEHRAN -- Last week, Mr. Leech firmly consolidated its position at the top of the Iranian box office, while the long-awaited release of Cinema Shahre Gheseh, after a seven-year hiatus, struggled to find an audience.

The dominance of comedies and animated features has become a recurring trend in recent weeks, steering the dy-

namics of Iran’s cinema screens. Yooz, the family-friendly animation, held onto second place, demonstrating the enduring appeal of animated storytelling in the local market.

Meanwhile, comedies Mr. Leech and Kaj Pileh (The Crooked Cocoon) battled for weekly supremacy, underscoring the genre’s continued draw for broad audi-

ences.

Mr. Leech, the latest work by Mehran Ahmadi, registered a weekly haul of 14 billion tomans, maintaining a strong average of 180,000 viewers over the past two weeks, following its initial opening. The film’s steady performance highlights the sustained appetite for lighthearted domestic fare amidst a landscape often dominated by blockbusters and art-house fare.

Yooz retained its audience with approximately 100,000 viewers, contributing roughly 5 billion tomans to the weekly tally. The film’s stable performance is a testament to the growing foothold of animated cinema in Iran, which has been steadily rising since the start of the year.

In contrast, Koj Pileh, directed by Hatf Alimardani, experienced a marked decline in its second week, dropping to third place with 3 billion tomans in receipts, a sharp contrast to its opening week’s 10.5 billion. The arrival of Mr. Leech on screens appears to have accelerated this downturn, highlighting the competitive pressures within the domes-

tic comedy sector.

Other notable entries included Qosantinia (Constantinople), securing fourth place with 2.8 billion tomans, and Two Days Later, a foundation-backed release, which attracted 27,000 viewers and earned roughly 2 billion tomans.

Among mid-tier performers, The Man With Glasses collected 1.7 billion tomans, while the week’s lower-ranking dramas—In the Form of Love, Majnoon, and Someone Else’s Child—each crossed the 1.4–1.5 billion tomans mark.

The return of Cinema Shahre Gheseh to cinemas, however, was modest. Its opening weekend yielded a mere 34 million tomans, a stark reminder that even long-awaited releases can struggle to resonate with contemporary audiences.

Overall, last week’s box office underscores the continued commercial dominance of comedies and family animation in Iran, while the reception of prestige or legacy films remains unpredictable—a landscape in which audience loyalty and timing prove as decisive as critical acclaim.

Call for Entries Opens for Fajr Festival Theater Photography



TEHRAN -- The organizers of the 44th Fajr International Theater Festival have opened submissions for the festival’s photography section, spotlighting the independent and creative perspectives of theater photographers.

According to the festival’s press release, theater photography “is a unique art form that captures the emotion and energy of live performance, playing a vital role in preserving the essence of theater

and promoting its culture.”

Building on previous years’ experience, the festival aims this year to elevate the role of theater photography while encouraging bold, innovative approaches.

Submission Guidelines:

Each photographer may submit up to five works, in color or black-and-white.

Submissions are accepted only through the official festival website: <https://fitf.theater.ir> along with the competition entry form.

Photo editing is permitted only for adjustments in lighting, color, clarity, and framing. Manipulation, combining multiple images, or the use of AI is not allowed; any such works will be disqualified.

Submission of works implies acceptance of all terms and conditions.

Each photograph accepted for the exhibition will receive a 500,000 IRR honorarium.

A catalog featuring all selected works will be published and presented to contributors.

The Secretariat reserves the right to publish selected works in all festival-related events, exhibitions, the official website, and the catalog, with full attribution to the photographer and details of the performance and director.

Images should be submitted at 300 dpi and sized 60×40 cm.

All participants in the competition will receive a certificate of participation.

Eligible photographs must document performances held publicly or in festivals between December 22, 2024, and November 20, 2025.

Timeline
Submission deadline: November 29, 2025
Selection and judging: December 5, 2025
Jury
Mahmoud Kalari
Maryam Ghahremani-Zadeh
Siamak Zamoudi-Motalleq
Awards

First Place: Festival statuette, diploma of honor, and 500,000,000 IRR cash prize
Second Place: Certificate of appreciation and 300,000,000 IRR cash prize
Third Place: Certificate of appreciation and 200,000,000 IRR cash prize
The winners will be announced,

and awards presented during the closing ceremony of the Photography Section of the 44th Fajr International Theater Festival, under the direction of Niloufar Javanshir, in the city of Kerman.

The 44th Fajr International Theater Festival, chaired by Seyed Vahid Fakhrmousavi, will take place this February.

Roudaki Hall Hosts Three Nights of Bach

TEHRAN -- A three-night program devoted to the music of Johann Sebastian Bach opened on Sunday at Roudaki Hall in Tehran, led by the conductor Sahar Anzali.

The series, titled “A Night With Johann Sebastian Bach,” continues through Tuesday and brings together a full choir with piano and flute soloists.

dation, the concerts feature selections from Bach’s vocal and instrumental works, with Anzali directing a program that highlights both the clarity and emotional depth of the composer’s writing.

She is joined by Aynaz Ghadirirajad, the pianist, and Rajan Bayat, a flutist whose playing adds a more intimate texture to the large choral setting.

The choir comprises more than two dozen singers: sopranos including Saba Atoofnia, Maral Naderi and Nazanin Zamani; altos such as Saeedeh Abaeean, Yasaman Mohseni and Parya Yarahmadi; tenors like Ehsan Tajik and Omid Salehifar; and basses including Kiaresh Moti’-ol-Hagh and Beniamin Beyglari.

Performances are held at 8 p.m. each night.

Picture of the Day



People gather at the Imamzadeh Saleh shrine to perform a prayer ceremony seeking rain.
Photo by Mizan Online News Agency