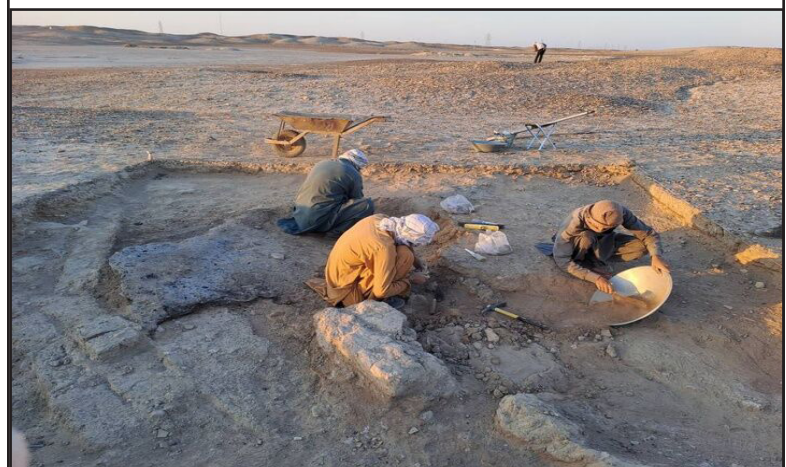


4,600-Year-Old Game Offers Glimpse of Leisure at Shahr-e Sukhteh



TEHRAN -- At Shahr-e Sukhteh, one of Iran's most important archaeological sites, a 4,600-year-old game, a carved bone comb and remarkably preserved traces of eggs, textiles and leather are bringing new dimensions of an ancient city to light.

The discoveries were made during the 21st season of archaeological excavation at the site, where researchers have been investigating both its residential quarters and cemetery. Together, they offer a more intimate picture of life in the third millennium BC: not only how the inhabitants worked and were buried, but how they adorned themselves, entertained themselves and participated in the everyday rhythms of urban life.

Known as the 'Burnt City', Shahr-e Sukhteh lies 56 kilometers south of Zabol in Sistan. Covering some 273 hectares, the city was occupied from the late fourth millennium through the third millennium BC, across four cultural periods, and formed the center of the Helmand civilization.

The latest excavations have added nuance to our understanding of how its inhabitants used the city. In the north-eastern part of the residential area, archaeologists identified two architectural phases alongside animal remains, tools, stone-working debris, simple and decorated animal figurines, and

hearths.

The evidence suggests that this was not simply an industrial quarter. Alongside craft activities, the area appears to have accommodated the ordinary business of living.

The cemetery has yielded some of the season's most revealing material. Among plain, decorated and brightly colored pottery are previously unrecorded forms of burial, as well as organic remains whose survival is particularly unusual in an archaeological context.

Egg remains, textiles and leather have all been recovered. Such materials are ordinarily among the first traces of past societies to disappear, making their preservation an especially valuable opportunity to examine aspects of technology, economy, consumption and daily life more directly.

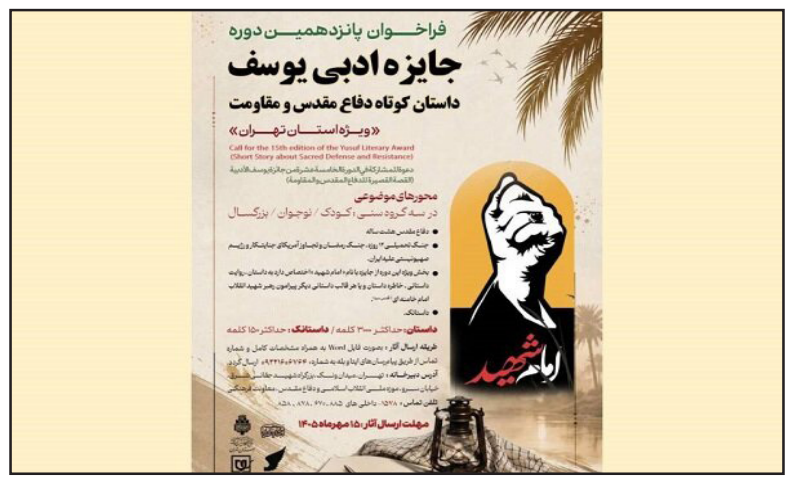
Perhaps the most evocative discovery is a distinctive form of a 4,600-year-old game. Its presence offers a glimpse of leisure and social interaction in a society that is often understood principally through the evidence of production, subsistence and trade.

The game suggests another dimension to Shahr-e Sukhteh: a city in which people also made time for play.

Another remarkable object is a carved bone comb, for which no comparable example has so far been

(Continued on Page 7)

15th Yusof Literary Award Opens for Short Stories



TEHRAN -- The call for entries for the 15th Yusof Literary Award, dedicated to short stories on the Iran-Iraq War and resistance, has been announced for Tehran Province.

According to the organizers, writers may submit works in three age categories—children, young adults, and adults—across the following themes:

The eight-year Iran-Iraq War

The 12-day war, the Ramadan War, and the attacks on Iran by the United States and Israel

Flash fiction

The Martyred Imam," this year's special category, devoted to stories, fictional narratives, story-based memoirs, and other nar-

rative forms concerning martyred Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei

The deadline for submissions is October 7, 2026.

Entries should be submitted as Word files, accompanied by the author's full contact information and telephone number. Submissions can be sent through the Iranian messaging platforms Eitaa and Baleh to 09221606764.

The Tehran provincial secretariat is located at the National Museum of the Islamic Revolution and Sacred Defense, Shahid Haghani Expressway, end of Sarv Street, Vank Square, Tehran, within the Cultural Deputy's office.

For further information, applicants can contact 1578, extensions 855, 858, 878, and 670.

Tehran Celebrates UNESCO Resolution Recognizing Cyrus Cylinder

TEHRAN -- A UNESCO resolution adopted in November 2025 has placed the Cyrus Cylinder at the center of an international conversation about cultural heritage, tolerance and the relationship between national history and the shared inheritance of humanity.

The resolution was celebrated at a ceremony in Tehran on Tuesday, organized by the Cultural Works and Luminaries Society. Historians, cultural figures and heritage specialists gathered to discuss the significance of the cylinder and the process through which it received international recognition.

The Cyrus Cylinder occupies an unusual place in the history of Iran and in the modern imagination of ancient civilization. At the Tehran gathering, speakers approached it not simply as an archaeological object, but as a document through which questions of cultural continuity, political authority, diversity and the responsibilities of heritage can be considered.

Mahmoud Shaloui, head of the Cultural Works and Luminaries Society, opened the event by recalling the writings of the scholar and philosopher Allameh Seyyed Muhammad Hussein Tabatabaei. In his interpretation of the Quranic account of Dhul-Qarnayn in Al-Mizan, Allameh Tabatabaei regarded the identification of Dhul-Qarnayn with Cyrus, proposed by the Indian



scholar Abul Kalam Azad, as closer to the truth in light of the available evidence.

For Shaloui, the importance of Allameh Tabatabaei lay in his willingness to reach historical conclusions through research and argument rather than prejudice. His remarks placed the discussion of Cyrus within a longer Iranian intellectual tradition, in which historical figures and inherited cultural narratives are examined through scholarship as well as memory.

The international dimension of the Cyrus Cylinder was addressed by Ahmad Pakatchi, Iran's ambassador and permanent representative to UNESCO. Presenting his remarks not as an expert in ancient Iran but as an account of the resolution's passage through UNESCO, Pakatchi described the diplomatic

process that led to its adoption.

According to Pakatchi, the resolution was approved with 194 votes in favor, no votes against and no amendments. Fourteen countries spoke in support of it during the process.

The significance of the decision, he stressed, goes beyond a conventional inscription on a UNESCO heritage list. The resolution is an independent and dedicated text concerning the Cyrus Cylinder, recognizing its importance as one of the earliest documents associated with human rights, intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity.

Among its provisions is an invitation to UNESCO member states to introduce the Cyrus Cylinder in educational and school programs and to develop initiatives that draw upon its content in the contempo-

rary world. The emphasis, therefore, is not solely on preserving or commemorating an ancient object, but on considering how its message might continue to be interpreted and used today.

Pakatchi also argued for understanding Cyrus within a longer historical and cultural continuum rather than treating him or the cylinder as an isolated episode. Ancient and contemporary Iran, in this view, represent not two disconnected cultures but a continuing tradition that has produced works and ideas of significance beyond its geographical boundaries.

Historian Rouzbeh Zarinkoub placed Cyrus within the political landscape of the sixth century BC. Following the conquest of Babylon in 539 BC, he said, Cyrus adopted a manner of rule that differed from the violence and destruction commonly associated with conquest in the ancient world.

For Zarinkoub, this historical context is essential to understanding the enduring significance attributed to Cyrus. His rule over a vast territory inhabited by different peoples, languages and religions represented, in the historian's account, an early example of governing a culturally diverse realm through an approach associated with accommodation and respect.

(Continued on Page 7)

Biruni Day: Iran Honors Enduring Legacy of Prominent Polymath

TEHRAN -- Iran on Wednesday marked Biruni Day with a virtual commemoration of Abu Rayhan al-Biruni, the philosopher, astronomer and mathematician whose extraordinary range made him one of the defining intellectual figures of the Islamic world.

Organized by the Cultural Works and Luminaries Society, the event brought together prominent Iranian scholars and researchers to reflect on a legacy that has remained remarkably alive more than a millennium after his birth.

Manouchehr Sedghi-Saha, professor and researcher of Islamic philosophy, described Biruni as a foremost polymath of Islamic civilization and "a sea with no visible shore"—a figure whose knowledge extended across so many fields that even a focused discussion can scarcely encompass him.

Sedghi-Saha spoke of his own work on two of Biruni's important texts, Tahqiq ma li-l-Hind (The Book of the Verification of What Is in India) and Patanjali. He translated the first volume of Tahqiq ma li-l-Hind into Persian in 1356 in the Iranian calendar, with the encouragement of scholar Baha al-Din Khorramshahi.

Published later by the Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies, the translation went through several editions. Sedghi-Saha emphasized that the work remains, even after a thousand years, a major text in the study of India for both Muslim scholars and Western Indologists.

His second project was a new critical edition of Biruni's Patanjali, building on an earlier edition by the German Orientalist Hellmut Ritter. Sedghi-Saha highlighted the work's particular importance for understanding its influence on discussions

of Sufism.

Mahmoud Shaloui, president of the Association, emphasized Biruni's breadth of learning and his reliance on experience and reasoning. With more than one hundred works attributed to him, Biruni produced important studies of astronomy, geography, mathematics, anthropology and literature.

Shaloui described him as a possible pioneer of the experimental method in science and stressed his intellectual independence.

Gholamreza A'vani, a member of the Academy of Sciences, placed Biruni alongside Avicenna among the outstanding scholars of the fourth and fifth Islamic centuries. Born in 362 AH,



eight years before Avicenna, Biruni lived until 440 AH. His writings extended beyond India studies into history, natural philosophy, mineralogy, gemology,

botany and pharmacology. Gholamhussein Rahimi examined Biruni's intellectual exchange with Avicenna, particularly

(Continued on Page 7)

Picture of the Day



A view of Qazvin's Cantor Church, one of Iran's smallest Orthodox churches, built during the Allied occupation of the country in 1941 as a legacy of the Russian presence in Iran.

Photo by ISNA