

Iranian Ethnology

Most Iranians are thought to be of Aryan ancestry, descending from Asiatic peoples who migrated to the region in the first millennium BC. These Aryan groups, who make up the majority of Iran's population today, include Persians, Kurds, Lors, Baluchs, Gilakis and Mazandarans. Over time, Turks and Arabs integrated with the population.

The most substantial minority group in Iran is the Azarbaijanis, Iran-yellow pages reported.

Aryan peoples originate from the Indo-European ethnic and linguistic group. They are believed to be the ancestors of the people of present-day Europe, India and Iran. Their language was closely related to the ancient

Indian language Sanskrit that was derived from the Indo-European family of languages.

Iran's official language Persian (also known as Farsi) is also a derivative of the Indo-European linguistic family. Persian and Persian dialects are the major lingua franca of contemporary Iran. Kurdish, Lori, Baluch, Turkish, Arabic and Azeri are also spoken.

»Brief History

Archeological findings have placed knowledge of Iranian prehistory at middle Paleolithic times.

The earliest sedentary cultures date from 18,000 to 14,000 years ago. By the sixth millennium BC, a fairly sophisticated agricultural society and proto-urban population had emerged. As part of the third wave of migration from Europe, Aryan tribes traveled across the Caspian Sea and settled the area of Iran around 1500 BC.



After centuries of inhabitation and peaceful coexistence with the indigenous population, two major civilizations emerged out of these peoples, namely the Persian and the Medes.

By 6th century BC, the two ancient civilizations were united under Cyrus the Great. Cyrus toppled the neighboring kingdoms of Babylonia, Palestine, Syria and Asia Minor, and consolidated all the territories into the great Persian Empire. The following dynasty that ensued was called the Achaemenian Dynasty, in deference to Cyrus' respect for his ancestors.

Ceremony to Approve Genuine Handicraft

Iran will host a special ceremony to bestow seals of approval on handicraft produced in the Middle East region.

Hossein Hatefi, ICHHTO deputy head said the meeting will be held in 2011, Fars News Agency reported.

He pointed out that the handicrafts should express the cultural, national and traditional identity of the country they represent.

"The handicrafts should show creativity of artists in both design and production process," Hatefi added.

He pointed out that friendly relationship with nature, meeting the rights of workers and standardization of production venue, availability in international arenas and making use of best raw material and technology by artists in creating a work of art are among other criteria for choosing the work.

"A total of six Iranian handicrafts have received genuine seal last year," Hatefi added.

He enumerated the privileges of receiving the international award as having the opportunity to join UNESCO website and electronic sale market, supporting the products registered in World Intellectual Property Organization, participating in trade exhibitions and receiving international certificates.



In Case You Missed

Plan for Protecting Ancient Cypress

Abarkooh governor said comprehensive plan for protecting the 4500-year-old cypress of Abarkooh will be implemented by Yazd's Department of Environment.

Addressing a gathering of Isfahan Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization, Mohammad Hossein Emami noted that the plan is aimed at



preventing possible damage to the ancient tree.

Meanwhile, head of Isfahan cultural heritage administration, Azizollah Seifi noted that a national seminar will be held to provide the society with more information regarding the ancient cypress, reported IRNA.

"The seminar will be held next year either on the occasion of Natural Resources Week or Nature and Tourism Week. Last year some 750,000 cultural documents were published for introducing provincial tourism attractions and the tree was enlisted as one of the largest living creatures of the planet," he pointed out.

The cypress is 25 meters high. Its trunk is 11.5 meters wide and the perimeter is 18 meters.

Isfahan Mosque is Architecture Museum

Head of Isfahan Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization said that Isfahan's Grand Mosque is a museum of Iranian-Islamic architecture.

Addressing a seminar themed 'A Glance at Architecture of Isfahan's Grand Mosque', Ahmad Aminpour noted the huge museum of Iranian-Islamic architecture has been hidden from public, IRNA reported.

Stressing that the mosque dates back to the Buyids era, he noted that despite the antiquity of the mosque,



most tourists tend to visit Chehelsotoon Museum and Menar Jonban. The people who visit the mosque are either local residents or foreign admirers of works of architecture.

Meanwhile, the provincial deputy head of ICHHTO, Abdol Hamid Akouchekiyani recalled that Iranians typically do not bother to study the philosophy of historic sites.

"The bad omen is that our museums have become warehouses for local tourists who visit them without even contemplating and asking questions from museum staffers," he noted.

The official emphasized that people from all walks of life, especially students, must be taught how to visit historic sites and monuments.