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Iran-UNESCO mark Zoroastrian culture



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Teheran, Dec 11 - Iran, in cooperation with UNESCO, held on Thursday a congress in Teheran for honouring 3000 years of Zoroastrian culture in Iran and the world.

The ceremony was attended by one thousand Iranian Zoroastrians as well as officials of the Iranian government, including Parliament Speaker Mehdi Karrubi, who stressed that Iranian Zoroastrians are part of the Iranian nation and their religion acknowledged and respected in the country.

As a religious minority like Armenians and Jews, more than 20,000 Zoroastrians live in Iran, mainly in Yazd, central Iran, and are allowed to speak their own language, use their ancient alphabet and practise their religion.

Similar congresses were also held or are to be held in other countries with Zoroastrian population such as India, Tajikistan, Australia and New Zealand.

Founded by the prophet Zoroaster in the 6th century B.C., Zoroastrianism believes in a supreme God, Ahura Mazda, who is manifested in eternal fire and light.

Some of the Zoroastrian rituals are also still followed by Iranian Muslims such as bonfire at the end of the Iranian year (March) where evil is cast into fire and good received for the new year.

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