

A specialist of the Turkmen-French archaeological expedition trained students of the Culture Institute in preserving ancient artifacts

In 1994, during the visit of French President Francois Mitterrand to Turkmenistan, an agreement was reached between the National Center for Scientific Research of France (CNRS) and the Academy of Sciences of Turkmenistan on the establishment of an archaeological mission.

Within the framework of this cooperation, the Turkmen-French Archaeological Mission (MAFTur), has been conducting excavations in the town of Ulugdepe, located east of Ashgabat, in the vicinity of Kaka, since 2001. The mission conducts conservation and restoration works and research on the cultural layers of this archaeological shrine.

This ancient settlement, dating back to the mid-5th millennium BC, has yielded remarkable finds that shed light on a long-lost civilization. To ensure the proper care of these unearthed treasures, the Turkmen State Institute of Culture established a Department of Restoration in 2006.

Since April 2024, this department has hosted a series of masterclasses on the topic "Conservation of archaeological ceramics" led by Ms. Estelle Ottenwelter, a leading expert from the Czech Academy of Sciences.

A specialist of the Turkmen-French archaeological expedition trained students of the Culture Institute in preserving ancient artifacts



Ms. Ottenwelter has been participating in the restoration of archaeological finds of Ulugdepe as part of the Turkmen-French expedition for more than 20 years.

The masterclasses culminated in a special ceremony where students received certificates in recognition of their achievements.

The ceremony was attended by Ambassador of France to Turkmenistan Philippe Merlin, who presented certificates to teachers and students.

A specialist of the Turkmen-French archaeological expedition trained students of the Culture Institute in preserving ancient artifacts



Ms. Ottenwelter also presented a summary of the program and the students' restoration work.

This initiative holds immense significance. The newly-trained specialists have acquired invaluable restoration skills that will be instrumental in their future careers. Museums across Turkmenistan are already showcasing artifacts restored by these students, and the newly opened Museum of History and Local Lore in Arkadag displays around 100 Ulugdepe exhibits.

nCa