

Iraq celebrates Babylon UNESCO decision



Baghdad, July 5 (RHC)-- Iraq on Friday celebrated the UNESCO World Heritage Committee's decision to name the historic city of Babylon a World Heritage Site in a vote held in Azerbaijan's capital, years after Baghdad began campaigning for the site to be added to the list.

The city on the Euphrates River is about 85 kilometers (55 miles) south of Baghdad and once was a main tourist attraction before Iraq suffered one war after another in the past four decades.

The 4,300-year-old Babylon -- now mainly an archaeological ruin and two important museums -- is where dynasties have risen and fallen since the earliest days of settled human civilization.

King Hammurabi wrote his famous code of laws in Babylon, while Nebuchadnezzar sent his vast army from the city to Jerusalem to put down an uprising and bring the Jews back as slaves.

Some say Alexander the Great, who led his army out of Macedonia to conquer most of the known world, died here in 332 B.C.



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