

Doha Int'l Book Fair opens with Iran in attendance



Arts & Culture Desk

The 32nd edition of the Doha International Book Fair (DIBF) commenced on Monday, featuring the participation of Iran and extending a warm invitation to book enthusiasts until June 21.

Iran's House of Books and Literature, in its seventh presence at this exhibition, represents our country's publishing industry with a booth covering an area of 36 square meters.

The booth showcases and offers 800 titles from 60 publishers, spanning various subjects such as children and young adult literature, rare books, Persian language instruction, Qur'anic themes, interfaith dialogue, and more.

Additionally, the booth highlights Iran's publishing capacities in content production and children's book illustration, along with hosting a calligraphy workshop and other activities.

Some 505 publishers from 37 countries are participating in the book fair this year, which is being held under the slogan 'With Reading We Rise'. Saudi Arabia is the guest of honor at DIBF 2023.



DIBF 2023, which continues until June 21, aims to consolidate the status of culture in the country and confirm the pivotal role of knowledge in the renaissance of Qatari society. Launched back in 1972, the fair seeks to become a cultural and intellectual beacon in Qatar and the region.

The 32nd DIBF is the largest edition of the fair as hundreds of local, Arab and international publishing houses are taking part with about 180,000 titles and 750,000 books.

Saudi Arabia, the guest of honour, is participating with a special pavilion that includes a collection of different kinds of books, as well as contributions by poets and narrators who present different aspects of their country's culture.

The fair presents a rich and varied cultural programme, hosting 37 cultural, scientific, literary and social seminars; poetry evenings; and activities of the Cultural Salon with 116 events that include seminars, cultural sessions and the launch of new publications.

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Nurturing a love for book reading among children, overcoming challenges



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Mostafa Rahmandoost, a highly regarded author known for his work 'Zal and the Phoenix' shares valuable insights on acquainting children with the joy of reading and addressing the barriers that hinder this process. In a recent interview with ISNA, Rahmandoost underscores the significance of cultivating a reading culture among children and granting them access to books.

He has been working for children and young adults for over 30 years. He has so far published over 300 books, poetry and book translations.

His credits include over 150 stories and poem collections such as 'The Sky Also Smiled', 'I Like Children' and 'The Story of Five Fingers'.

Recognizing the economic hardships faced by many families and their limited time, Rahmandoost suggests that simply discussing the benefits of reading may not be effective. Instead, he proposes two key approaches to inspire children to read.

The first approach involves ac-

tively involving them in the act of reading to ignite their interest in books. The second approach revolves around ensuring that books are easily accessible to children.

Rahmandoost highlights the success of incorporating reading and storytelling into children's daily routines in many countries with the goal of boosting literacy rates. However, in our country, reading and storytelling have not yet become commonplace in everyday activities, except for places like intellectual development centers for children and adolescents, where families engage in reading and storytelling activities to a lesser extent.

Rahmandoost emphasizes that making books available to children can be achieved through two means. Firstly, by establishing numerous libraries dedicated to children, where they can visit and explore a variety of books. To some extent, our country already offers this opportunity. Secondly, by ensuring that books are present in homes and encouraging children to engage in the recreational activity of visiting bookstores, selecting books, and making purchases.

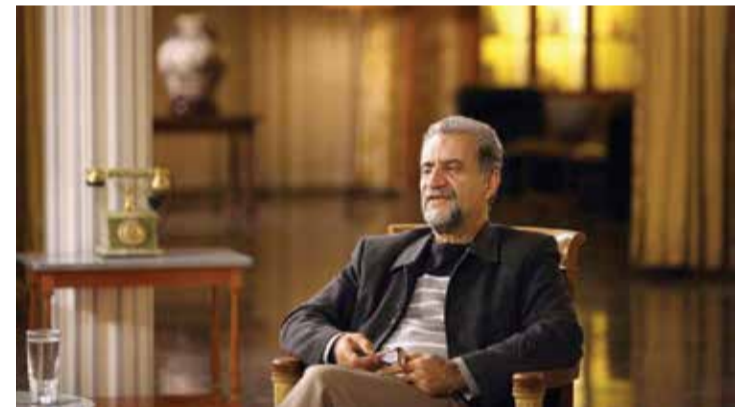
However, the second option poses challenges due to the high cost of books, limited book circulation, and economic constraints faced by families.

When children lack easy access to books and there is a scarcity of children's libraries, coupled with financial burdens preventing families from visiting libraries or reading to their children, the likelihood of children becoming enthusiastic readers diminishes significantly. Rahmandoost stresses the importance of allowing children to express their individual interests when embarking on the journey of reading. By giving children the freedom to choose their own books and exposing them to diverse collections in libraries and bookstores, they can explore various genres and subjects, gravitating towards those that capture their interest. This process enables observers to gradually comprehend children's preferenc-

ments that the primary objective should be to provide children with abundant opportunities to explore books, experiment with different options, and express their interests to those around them.

Rahmandoost highlights low rate of book reading per capita in our country and suggests that even if children read books of minimal complexity, that will be useful for their reading habits. Prescribing specific books or suggesting where to begin is challenging, as each child possesses their own unique world, which they can uncover through reading.

In conclusion, Rahmandoost suggests that at the very least, families can take their children to libraries whenever possible and spend time in and around libraries, allowing children to immerse themselves in the world of books. This activity can serve as a recreational opportunity for children to become acquainted with books



es and identify the types of books they find appealing.

The author asserts that the initial focus should be on cultivating a love for reading, rather than prescribing specific content or subjects for children. Similar to relishing a delicious meal, reading should be a pleasurable experience. Only after fostering this passion for reading should considerations of educational content and subject matter come into play. Therefore, Rahmandoost recom-

and develop their interests. Rahmandoost refrains from providing specific book recommendations, as each child has their own distinct preferences, which they can discover through reading.

By following Rahmandoost's advice and highlighting the importance of reading as an enjoyable experience, families can effectively introduce their children to the world of books, overcome challenges, and nurture a lifelong love for reading.



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Iran's Deputy Tourism Minister, Maryam Jalali, announced ongoing endeavors to register five dossiers of Iranian handicrafts on the prestigious UNESCO

Five Iranian dossiers closer to global registration

World Heritage List.

During a visit to Astara on Monday, Jalali revealed that four cases related to artifacts from Rasht in Gilan Province, Dashti in Bushehr, Dezful in Khuzestan, and Kashan in Isfahan have already undergone review. Additionally, the necessary documentation for the Vardasht region in Isfahan province has been completed, though it is yet to be submitted, IRNA wrote.

Jalali emphasized the utmost dedication to generating export incentives for handicrafts, stating, "Our primary aim is to create

financial and export incentives for the handicraft sector, while simultaneously attracting significant investment to this domain." She further explained that such investments would yield substantial returns and added value, as the target customers for Iranian handicrafts extend beyond national borders.

Highlighting the world's genuine appreciation for the authenticity of Iranian art and the global demand for it, Jalali stressed the need to formulate plans that connect this art to the literature of development. She also drew attention to

Iran Craft Week, reminding that June 10 is World Handicrafts Day. According to the implemented agenda, each day of this week has been assigned a specific theme and slogan. Jalali expressed, "We have made considerable efforts to demonstrate that handicrafts can foster cultural interactions between countries, cities, and people." She went on to add that every Iranian household has the potential to be a handicraft workshop. Consequently, joint planning was carried out in collaboration with Saad Hani Al-Qaddumi, the President

of the World Crafts Council. As part of this effort, a visit was organized from Ardebil's Anbaran to the Anbaran neighborhood in Astara, which has been designated as the national city of gelim (a type of flat-woven carpet). This showcased the pivotal role that handicrafts can play in cultural, social, economic, and political domains.

Jalali further remarked that Anbaran represents culture, art, history, taste, and historical intelligence, particularly emphasizing the invaluable role of women and their contributions to the family.