

Iran's Kalhor to stage concert in Germany



ISNA –Iranian musician Kayhan Kalhor, a virtuoso on kamancheh (Persian stringed instrument), is set to perform his latest concert in the city of Zurich, Germany.

The renowned artist will stage the 'Voice of Hope' concert on September 15. He will be accompanied by Kia Tabassian (tar player) and Behnam Samani (percussionist).

The 'Voice of Hope' concert, which features an instrumental ensemble of kamancheh, tar, and percussion, was previously held in the Netherlands in Khordad (May-June).

Tabassian has collaborated with Kalhor before, having performed improvisational pieces with the maestro in Vancouver.

Born in 1963 into a music-loving family in Kermanshah, Kalhor started his musical journey at the age of five. By the age of 12, he had already begun his professional music career and collaborated with the Kermanshah radio and television.

At 17, he moved to Italy and later pursued further studies in Canada, graduating in composition from Carleton University in Ottawa.

Iran to overtake Europe as top destination for Russian tourists



Arts & Culture Desk

Iran has become a preferred destination for Russian tourists, surpassing some European countries, thanks to an increase in demand for tours during the peak autumn season. The introduction of visa-free group travel has further attracted more Russians to explore the country. Dmitry Arutyunov, the General Manager of Art Tour Company, highlighted that Iran is now seen as an alternative to countries with visa requirements, particularly European countries.

Russian media outlets, as reported by IRNA, cited several reasons for the rising interest in Iran, including its rich historical and cultural heritage, affordable hotel prices, and flight tickets. The recent visa-free group travel announcement by the Ministry of Economic Development, scheduled to begin on August 1, has played a significant role in drawing more tourists than ever.

Intourist, a Russian tour operator, revealed that tour sales to Iran have surged by 15 to 20 percent compared to the previous year, with bookings extending well

into October. The demand for tours to Iran usually peaks during spring and autumn, with both individuals and organized groups of 30 to 40 people heading to the country.

Despite the increasing interest, experts point out the lack of an active advertising campaign in Russia to promote Iran as a tourist destination.

Arutyunov emphasized that many Russian tourists are unfamiliar with Iran's potential as a fascinating spot for spring and autumn trips. Notably, Iran's excellent skiing facilities have

also garnered interest from winter travelers seeking an alternative to the Alps as a ski resort.

Maria Novoikova, a manager at Star Tour Company, agrees with Arutyunov's assessment, stating that Iran has emerged as a replacement for European countries, offering lower travel prices.

In recent developments, Russian Minister of Economic Development, Maxim Reshetnikov, announced plans for the first visa-free trips to Iran and China starting August 1. Under this arrangement, tourists from

both countries can travel without visas in organized groups of five to 50 people for a duration of two weeks. Additionally, Iran and Russia signed a memorandum of understanding in May, aiming to strengthen and expand bilateral cooperation in the tourism sector. The objectives of the memorandum include promoting tourism as a crucial area of collaboration, increasing the number of tourists in both countries, and developing human resources in the travel and tourism industry. The two nations also highlighted their focus on exchanging experts in the

tourism sector, sharing experiences related to various types of tourism, and developing new maritime tourism routes.

Moreover, the memorandum encourages the participation of tourism sector representatives in international tourism events, fosters private sector cooperation in investment and tourism-related trade, and supports organizing familiarization tours for tour operators, travel agencies, journalists, and government officials from both countries to introduce tourism attractions and capacities.

Lost in translation:

The complex maze of Iranian poetry

Arts & Culture Desk

Ahmad Pouri, the renowned Iranian literary luminary and translator, has accomplished remarkable feats in bringing forth prominent works of literature from Spain, Russia, Turkey, Greece, America, and the Arab world, and rendering them into the Persian language.

To this day, he has diligently translated numerous works of poets from across the globe into Persian. Among these luminaries are Anna Akhmatova, the revered Russian poetess; Pablo Neruda, the Spanish poet; and Federico Garcia Lorca, the Spanish-speaking poet; Nazim Hikmet, the esteemed Turkish-origin poet; Nizar Qabbani, the gifted Syrian poet; Yannis Ritsos, the profound Greek poet; and Anne Sexton, the illustrious American poetess. Besides his mastery in poetry translation, Pouri also excels in both writing and translating novels.

As to the reasons behind the relatively limited translations of Iranian poets' works into foreign languages, he expounds that this matter is multifaceted. One aspect revolves around the structure of Persian poetry itself, which poses formidable challenges to translators due to its linguistic intricacies and literary devices. Some poems, with their linguistic artistry, become nearly impervious to translation, while others, focusing on imagination and concepts, prove relatively more amenable.

In the realm of poetry and artistic creations, poems can be classified into "elusive" and "attainable" poetry. Elusive poems are often more intricate in linguistic nature, whereas attainable poems emphasize imagination and ideas, making their translation more feasible. Among ancient Iranian poets, Omar Khayyam's poems, owing to their attainability, have enjoyed wider translations and recognition in overseas, whereas the situation differs for poets like Khaqani and certain works of Hafez. Consequently, in some countries, the works of many Iranian poets remain largely unnoticed. Nevertheless, this is not the sole reason but holds significant weight.

When inquired about how more Iranian poetry can be translated and introduced to the world, Pouri maintains that publishing translated works from Persian into other languages can be likened to finding your way through a complex maze, exceedingly difficult to surmount. Presenting a Persian poetry book independently in foreign countries is no easy feat, unless the government allocates a budget for it and engages in agreements with foreign publishers to release such works. However, due to the subjective preferences of governments in selecting works, this approach may not be a reliable solution. Another avenue is the extensive participation of poets in international festivals. Undoubtedly, Persian poetry holds abundant



potential to be read and appreciated worldwide. Pouri firmly believes that a poetry translator must be a native speaker of the target language and well-versed in all aspects and nuances of the destination language. He suggests waiting and hoping for translators from other languages to become proficient in Persian and translate Persian artistic works; otherwise, as an Iranian, he cannot present an exceptional translation of a Persian poem, for instance, to English speakers. Regarding the notion of "indigenizing" translated poetry and re-creating it, Pouri holds a different view. He opposes the idea of imbuing the poems of foreign poets with Persian expressions during translation, as he believes that each poem should authentically express the living culture of the

poet's homeland. Employing Iranian terms in translating foreign poems would be incongruous with the culture and language of the original country where the poem was composed. However, he wholeheartedly agrees with the concept of re-creation. According to his perspective, when translating a poem anew, it must be composed afresh, as poetry is not a mundane, emotionless text that can be mechanically rendered. The primary goal is to relish reading poetry. The poet's intention assumes a secondary position, and the foremost principle is to savor the experience of reading. To effectively convey emotions, Pouri maintains that re-creating poetry is indispensable, employing the most fitting words, a process that naturally adheres to multiple principles.

Pakistan to host D-8 ministerial meeting on tourism

The group of Developing Eight (D8) Islamic countries will meet in Pakistan's mountain resort city of Murree next week to discuss strengthening tourism cooperation among the member states. The two-day meeting on August 4-5 seeks to identify potential pathways to enhance intra-D8 tourism in line with the objectives and goals of the group, Press TV reported.

It will bring together tourism experts of member states to strengthen their capacities and develop effective strategies for the post COVID-19 tourism era.

This meeting, organized by the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), marks the first time such a high-level gathering is being held in Pakistan.

Participants hope it will provide a platform for member states to exchange knowledge and best practices to facilitate cooperation opportunities, and to explore possibilities to promote bilateral tourism.

The D8 group is an economic organization for developing cooperation among member states, namely, Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Egypt and Nigeria. Established in 1997, it represents about one billion people, or 14 percent of the world's population.

Muslim countries are scattered in Asia and Africa and have their own characteristics, with significant natural wealth and historical sites and pristine nature which can be a source of significant income for them.

If the political environment is reshaped in such a way that Muslims establish "Islamic tourism", the tourism industry in the world will take a different form and major transitions will take place. Today, the tourism industry has become the third most profitable industry, after the oil and auto industries.