



Arts & Culture Desk

Iran and Vietnam are set to commemorate a significant milestone in their bilateral relations as they come together to celebrate the 50th anniversary of diplomatic ties. This momentous occasion will be marked with the Vietnam Cultural Days, an event scheduled to take place from August 9 to 11 in Iran.

The Vietnam Cultural Days are meticulously organized under the auspices of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO), which aims to foster and strengthen cultural exchanges between the two nations. A delegation of 70 esteemed Vietnamese government and cultural officials will grace the occasion, adding prestige and significance to the celebrations. Among the notable attendees will be Vuong Dinh Hue, the esteemed National Assembly Chairman of Vietnam, who will be participating in the event.

Throughout the cultural extravaganza, Iran will have the privilege of witnessing a vibrant showcase of various aspects of Vietnamese culture. Visitors and participants alike will be treated to an array of cultural exhibits, including traditional handicrafts, captivating displays of traditional clothing that reflect Vietnam's rich cultural heritage, and enlightening collections of books and photographs that beautifully depict the country's tourist attractions, cultural legacy, and historical landmarks.

In addition to these fascinating exhibits, the Vietnam Cultural Days will also shine a spotlight on the captivating world of Vietnamese cinema. Attendees will have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the captivating stories brought to life on the silver screen through the screening of Vietnamese films. Among these, the highly acclaimed 'Story of Pao,' directed by the talented Ngo Quang Hai, promises to captivate audiences with its compelling narrative and artistic brilliance.

The event is expected to serve as a platform for cultural exchange, fostering deeper understanding, and strengthening the bonds between Iran and Vietnam. As attendees engage in the rich tapestry of Vietnamese culture and artistic expressions, they will gain valuable insights into the shared history, values, and traditions that unite these two nations.

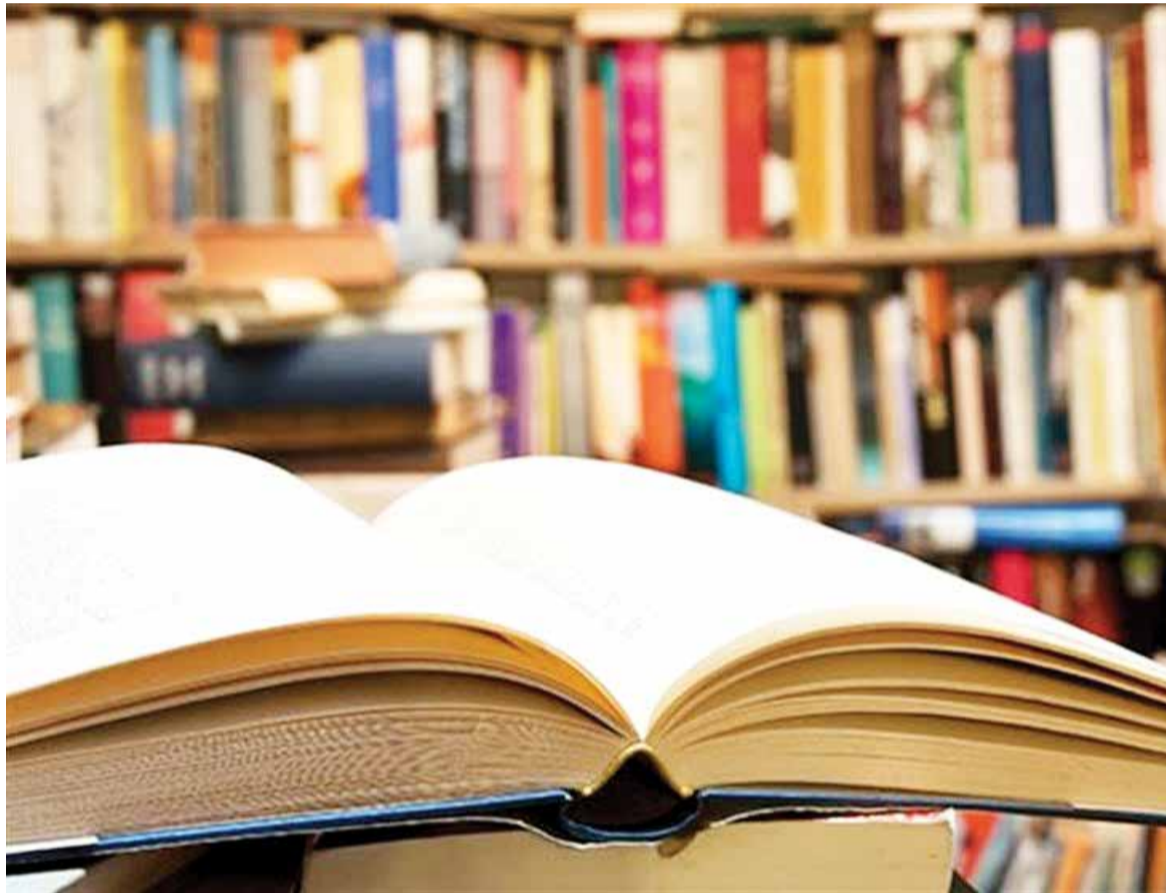
The Vietnam Cultural Days in Iran not only mark a moment of celebration and appreciation but also pave the way for a future filled with enhanced cultural cooperation and harmony between these two friendly nations. This event stands as a testament to the enduring power of cultural diplomacy and its potential to forge lasting friendships across borders.

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Iran's Book Capital nominees announced



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The selected cities for the final stage of Iran's 8th edition of Book Capital were revealed. During a press conference at-

tended by Iran's Deputy Culture Minister Yaser Ahmadvand and Ismail Janalipour, director general of the Office of Assemblies, Guilds, and Cultural Activities of the

Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, the 12 cities were disclosed. The nominated cities include Oz and Sadra (Fars Province), Semnan (Semnan Province), Qazvin

(Qazvin Province), Karaj (Alborz Province), Shahin Shahr and Meymeh (Isfahan Province), Rabor (Kerman Province), Fuman (Gilan Province), Sabzevar (Khorasan Razavi Province), Amol (Mazandaran Province), and Urmia (West Azarbaijan Province).

Janalipour highlighted that Iran's Book Capital has undergone some changes in this edition and noted that 105 cities participated in the competition, with the final 12 reaching the final stage after evaluation by judges. Prior to the event, efforts were made to revitalize the network of book-loving cities and extend its reach to other urban and rural areas. In this edition, cities and villages were categorized based on their level of development, ensuring a fair selection process considering their capacities and future plans.

Ahmadvand said that more than a hundred cities took part in the competition, with 76 completing the registration process. The widespread interest from 24 provinces demonstrates the significance of books across

the nation. The closing ceremony is scheduled to take place on August 15 at Azadi Tower. This edition places a strong emphasis on diverse programs and facilities planned by official bodies, as well as the active participation of the public. The goal is to foster a new wave of enthusiasm for books in these cities, enabling them to implement their proposed plans to their full potential.

The chosen cities will receive special facilities and support, including priority in program implementation, educational and cultural courses, library upgrades, author support, and book festivals, courtesy of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance.

Ahmadvand stressed that selected cities must prove themselves worthy of the Book Capital title in this competitive event, demonstrating a strong dedication to promoting reading. While the ministry aims to provide maximum support, the true potential of these cities lies in their capacities, a source of pride for all involved.

Journalism in journalists' words

Similar to many media outlets worldwide, the political leanings of media owners can significantly impact the perspectives of journalists and their ability to freely express their thoughts and insights. This phenomenon often leads to a situation where news reporting might be influenced or biased based on the agendas of those who run the media. This can raise concerns about the objectivity and impartiality of the information presented to the public.

Zohreh Qanadi - National Desk

Social media platforms, where users can share their own photos and footage of a newsworthy incident, are posing a major threat to professional journalism. While this phenomenon has its own pros as it gives leeway to people for sharing their firsthand opinions and breaks the monopoly of media giants, the cons could spell disaster for journalists, potentially

pushing many of them out of work. Adding to the issue, the rapid emergence of artificial intelligence is also rendering many media people useless.

Mostafa Shirmohammadi - Editor-in-chief

In Iran, journalists face several challenges, including the lack of media literacy, leading to the spread of fake news and a loss of credibility. The absence of a well-defined media system allows unqualified individuals to enter the field, hindering proper training and understanding of journalism. Moreover, the lack of a unified media system and strong regulation poses risks to the essence of journalism. Addressing these issues requires prioritizing media literacy, improving training programs, and establishing a strong regulatory framework to maintain the profession's integrity and vital role in society.

Hamideh Hosseini - Arts & Culture Desk

When the esteemed Iranian journalist and famous constitutionalist Mirza Jahan-gir Khan - a.k.a. Jahan-gir Khan-e Sur-e Esrafil - was brutally murdered in the presence of the then king of Iran in June 1908, the dangerous nature of the profession was there for all to see. Although the incident dates back to more than 100 years, the recent savage killing of the Saudi Arabian journalist Jamal Khashoggi with knives and axes in October 2018 inside the kingdom's consulate in Istanbul, Turkey, reiterates the solemnity of the dangers facing journalists everywhere. It all reminds me of a line by the revered 12th century Iranian poet Attar of Nishapur: "The man of the field must walk through pools of blood." In 2022, Reporters Without Borders reported that between 2003-2022, around 1700 journalists worldwide were killed. If you add to this already horrific number those journalists who are in prison all over the world,

the hardships of the job will be evident even more. All in all, journalism is a passion melded with never-ending excitement. The uttermost need of journalists is to provide them with safety.

Ebrahim Beheshti - Staff writer

It's been almost a decade that I've been working in print media - although it's only a little more than a year that I'm a journalist *per se*. What urged me to pursue this career path was, first and foremost, my love for the written word and the power it holds in enlightening the mind and propagating knowledge. What civilization we humans have - at least for now - depends heavily on the written words of thinkers, researchers and investigators who did not settle for commonly accepted versions of truth, and,

therefore, further expanded the boundaries of human understanding.

Ali Amiri - Social Desk

It takes two tolls, being a news reporter. There's the obvious troll under the bridge, demanding you to listen to and recount a never-ending list of tragedies and misfortunes just to give you a "safe" passage into the next day. And then, there's a subtle toll you must pay for traveling with a companion who reminds you of all the times you crossed the

bridge on a loop that gets longer the more you stay in the business. Sometimes you just want to yell at your companion, "Yes, I know I've heard the same story before. Yes, I know little was done to fix it. And yes, I know I'll probably hear it again someday. Would you get desensitized so I can keep working?" For those who ask, that's how we get by. We get desensitized but still report the story with the same level of care and urgency so you, who are not hopefully bogged down by such metaphorical characters, won't get desensitized.

Amir Mollae Mozaffari - International Desk

