

## Int'l confab pays tribute to Iran's Beyhaqi

IRNA – An international conference is currently underway to commemorate the Iranian historian Abulfazl Beyhaqi.

The two-day event began on Monday, October 23, a day nationally recognized in the Iranian calendar as a commemoration of Beyhaqi. The conference gathered the participation of writers, scholars, and researchers from a diverse range of countries, including Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Armenia, Iraq, and the Iraqi Kurdistan region, with attendees joining both in-person and virtually.

The conference, titled 'Revisiting the Relationship between Persian Prose and National Identity,' addresses the highly significant theme of "identity". Regrettably, this subject has faded into oblivion in contemporary times, and the progress and development of society, particularly among the younger generation, requires its revival.

Mahyar Alavi, the secretary of the 13th edition of this conference, emphasized the significance of connecting Persian literature, especially Persian prose, with national identity to promote cultural advancement within society. He remarked, "Fundamentally, the purpose of commemorating influential writers in the intellectual and cultural processes of society is to engage with the elements and concepts of the community's culture."

Abulfazl Beyhaqi (995-1077), is known as the father of Persian prose by experts and analysts, is renowned for his invaluable contribution to literature through his book, 'Tarikh-e Beyhaqi' (literally translated into 'The History of Beyhaqi'). His work is considered one of the richest in the field of Persian prose.

## Iran's local music pioneer Sharafi dies



ISNA – Ahmad Ali Sharafi, a pioneer in South Iranian music and a master of the *ney-anban* (a type of bagpipe which is popular in southern Iran), and *ney jofti* (an indigenous and one of the oldest instruments of the Hormuzgan Province and one of the bases of traditional music of Bandar Abbas) instruments, died at the age of 80.

Born in Bushehr, he was one of the well-known and melodious figures in South Iranian music, having participated in numerous national and international festivals, receiving acclaim on several occasions. The funeral of this prominent figure in regional music is set to take place today, in Bushehr, where he will be laid to rest.

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# Iranian animation 'Smart Kid' breaks box office records



● IRNA



### Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's animated film, 'Smart Kid,' created a significant impression in the world of cinema, earning over \$320,000 in just under a month since its release in Iranian cinemas.

The film's producer, Hamed Ja'fari, proudly underlines that this achievement marks a historic milestone. "For the first time, an animated film has drawn more than 430,000 viewers to theaters and appealed to both families and children with its narrative in such a short period," he said.

Ja'fari anticipated that 'Smart Kid' would excel in records set by its predecessors, 'The Princess of Rome' and 'The Elephant King,' eventually reaching the title of the most-watched animated film in Iranian cinema.

The film's storyline revolves around Mohsen, a young boy with a great love for superheroes. During a fateful journey to the cloud forest in Mazandaran, Iran, he crosses paths with a tiger escaping from illegal hunters. Mohsen's exceptional ability to communicate with animals fosters a unique connection with the tiger. As the tiger finds refuge in Tehran, Mohsen's life takes a thrilling turn, accompanied by a mission to restore the creature to its natural habitat.

In this animation, storytelling is of high significance, avoiding the misconception that, because the audience are children, the story can be illogical. 'Smart Kid' makes an effort to tell a coherent story that captures the interest of new-generation children right from the beginning. Given that children are constantly exposed to superhero characters created in Hollywood's Marvel and

comic book world through satellite networks, tablets, and mobile phones, this film takes advantage of their high interest in these characters. It starts with Mohsen's strong interest in superheroes and even his supernatural abilities, such as communicating with animals. However, he later uses these superhero qualities for the curious and noble cause of saving the forest.

The second part of the story shifts its focus to the serious issue of illegal hunting and the difficulty of endangered species in the forests. Mohsen's friendship with the critically endangered Mazandaran tiger species sheds light on the concept of endangerment and the tireless efforts of environmentalists, who stand as steadfast allies to these endangered creatures.

As this animated masterpiece continues to appeal to audiences, experts discuss the factors behind its unprecedented success. Saeed Sheikhzadeh, the director of dubbing for the animation project, attributes a significant part of its success to voice acting. With an ensemble cast of actors like Hooman Haji Abdollahi, Javad Pezeshkian, George Petrosi, Mina Qiasipour, Maryam Radpour and others, 'Smart Kid' delivers a level of professionalism that sets it apart in the animation world.

He explained that since 'Smart Kid' is a cinematic work, international standards must be adhered to, and it requires coordination with the director. Therefore, before the animation was created, the dubbing team performed the roles. After gradually achieving the desired results in terms of character emotions, actions, and performances, the animation

production began. This approach enhanced the professionalism of the animation in terms of character delivery, actions, and performances.

Some other experts attribute the success of the story to its use of religious themes. Given that the cloud forest is situated on the way from Tehran to Mashhad, in reality, this forest has a special protector referred to as the "Heart of the Forest," who is miraculously healed by the eighth Imam of Shia Muslims, Imam Reza (PBUH), and the animals hold particular respect for him.

This aspect of the story even aids the narrative in bringing wrongdoers to justice by the end, allowing them to become aware of their mistakes. It's a conclusion more acceptable for children and teenagers. Nevertheless, some critics may find that addressing religious themes directly could have an impact on the range of audiences who wish to watch the film.

While the precise factors behind the animation's success may be subject to debate, there is no denying that the film could claim the title of the most-watched animated film in the history of Iranian cinema. However, it is evident that Iran's animation industry still possesses untapped potential, and there is a promising journey ahead toward realizing its full capacities.

*For the first time in Iran's history of cinema, 'Smart Kid' drew more than 430,000 viewers to theaters and appealed to both families and children with its narrative in less than a month.*

## Notre Dame treasures shine at Louvre Museum exhibition

Four years after a devastating fire destroyed much of Notre Dame, Paris's Louvre Museum is holding an unprecedented exhibition of the treasures of the famed 12th-century cathedral. As restoration efforts for the Notre Dame de Paris near their final stages, the Musée du Louvre is hosting a remarkable exhibition dedicated to the treasures of the cathedral. This treasury encompasses a wide array of religious and sacred objects, vestments used in worship, relics, manuscript books, and various precious artefacts, wionnews.com reported. According to the Louvre museum's website, after the exhibition, the priceless treasures will return to the

cathedral's neo-Gothic sacristy, which was originally designed by the architects Jean Baptiste Lassus and Eugène Viollet-le-Duc between 1845 and 1850. Following the fire, the sacristy — a place for sacred objects has been meticulously renovated in anticipation of the cathedral's grand reopening in 2024. The exhibition, which includes over 120 selected works, "provides a condensed history of the treasury". It will be up till January 29, 2024. These exhibits provide a unique opportunity to understand the treasury's rich heritage, tracing its origins back to the Middle Ages and its remarkable revival in the 19th century.



## Sistan and Baluchestan handicraft on display in Mexico

### Arts & Culture Desk

The first-ever Sistan and Baluchestan Province handicraft exhibition, which showcased the exquisite art of needlework, took place at the Los Pinós Museum in Mexico City, from October 20 to 22.

The exhibition's opening day was attended by Iran's Ambassador to Mexico City Alireza Qezili, alongside representatives from the Mexican Ministry of Cul-

ture and other prominent cultural figures.

Sistan and Baluchestan Governor Mehdi Karami, who couldn't attend in person, extended his invitation to the people of Mexico through a video message.

He highlighted the economic potential of the region, particularly in mining, agriculture, and maritime industries, and encouraged Mexican tourists to explore the province's tourist attractions, with a special em-

phasis on Shahr-e Sukhte (Burnt City).

For three days, the exhibition featured an impressive display of Sistan and Baluchestan needlework, including various tablecloths, earrings, bracelets, anklets, belts, leather needlework, bags, and both men's and women's clothing. It provided a unique opportunity for arts and culture enthusiasts in Mexico to witness the rich heritage and artistic craftsmanship of Iran.

