

Ayatollah Khamenei urges promotion of prayers among youths



IRNA - Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has stressed the pivotal role of prayers in the lives of the youth, calling on relevant authorities to promote the divine practice.

Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks on Saturday in a message addressed to the 30th nationwide summit on prayer.

He underscored the importance of extending this divine blessing and ensuring its rightful place in society. Ayatollah Khamenei urged those responsible for youth affairs to genuinely practice and instill the habit of prayer among the young generation.

"It (prayer) should be regarded as the soul for the human body or like air in comparison to other material needs," he noted.



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- Email: newspaper.irandaily.ir
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irandaily.ir | newspaper.irandaily.ir | IranDailyWeb

Vol. 7478 ● Sunday, Jan. 7, 2024 ● 100,000 rials ● 8 Pages

Minister: Regional music represents rich cultural diversity in Iran

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance highlighted the significance of regional music as an expression of the country's cultural diversity.

In a message to the 16th Iran's Regional Music Festival, Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaeili stated, "Culture and arts have long established an inseparable bond with the perspectives and beliefs of our people, and regional music is one of the apparent and rich aspects of cultural diversity."

"The essence of regional music, beginning from the eager narrators in the northernmost region of Iran and crossing the east, west, and central areas before concluding in the south, narrates the cultural history and geography of our nation through a spectrum of melodies. These expressions of authenticity and knowledge have been safeguarded by culturally conscious individuals, passed down through generations to present an opportunity for showcasing indigenous culture and arts with the participation of enthusiastic youths, continuing the legacy of pioneers through the course of history." The 16th Iran's Regional Music Festival, adopting a fresh approach, is taking place nationwide with the collaboration of all provinces and the presence of folk music artists.

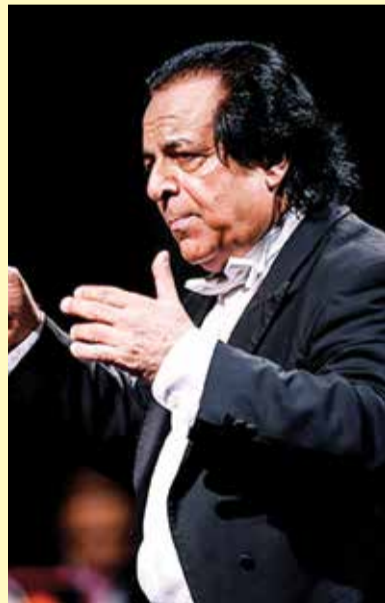
The national phase of the 16th Iran's Regional Music Festival, January 6-8, under the supervision of Mohammad-Ali Merati and organized by the Iranian Music Association, will be hosted at Tehran's Roudaki Hall. The nightly performances will showcase musicians from various regions of Iran in four sections.

The first part of the 16th Iran's Regional Music Festival, in a national scope took place regionally and non-competitively. It was held from June 27 to July 14, with Golestan, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, East Azarbaijan, Kermanshah, and Kerman provinces hosting the events.



ISNA

Ali Rahbari, Valery Gergiev to stage joint concert in Iran



Arts & Culture Desk

Valery Gergiev, a globally renowned conductor and the chief conductor of the Mariinsky Opera in St. Petersburg and the Bolshoi Opera Theater in Moscow, will be visiting Iran alongside Ali Rahbari, the guest conductor of the Tehran Symphony Orchestra.

Rahbari said, "Maestro Gergiev has agreed to come to Iran and perform along with me, and we plan to organize a concert with the Iranian Youth Symphony Orchestra at an appropriate time," according to IRNA.

He continued, "This project has been planned with Susan Taqipour, and we just need to choose a suitable date for it. In this concert, I will lead the first part with dotar (a folkloric plucked musical instrument with two strings) and the symphony orchestra, featuring the performance of Aidin Olyanasab

and Azin Rastegar. In the second part, Maestro Gergiev will be the conductor."

The orchestra conductor provided further details about the project, adding that "A year ago, Taqipour contacted me, stating that there is a considerable interest among the youth and professors to work with me in Iran. Therefore, they asked me to establish a new orchestra. As I have always wished for Iran to have a youth symphony orchestra like many advanced countries, I gladly accepted the proposal."

Speaking about Gergiev's friendly viewpoint towards Iran, Rahbari stated, "During a televised program last summer, when Gergiev appreciated my two years of collaboration with him, he concluded by saying, 'Hopefully, in Iran!' I knew that Gergiev loves Iran, so I took the opportunity to promise him that one day we would stage a program

together whose date has yet to be announced."

Speaking about the purpose of coming to Iran, Rahbari said that, "The primary goal of this project is to elevate the level of musical performance among students and even their professors in the orchestra. Gergiev's visit to Iran, not only motivates the youth but also has a global impact. Furthermore, if our youths can receive his positive feedback, the chances of inviting this orchestra to St. Petersburg and Moscow, where Gergiev is the artistic director, will increase."

Gergiev, winner of the Herbert von Karajan Conducting Competition in Berlin, has led numerous renowned orchestras and major operas worldwide. Rahbari, during the years 2014 to 2016, served as the artistic director and permanent conductor of the Tehran Symphony Orchestra.

Microsoft, OpenAI sued by book authors for copyright infringement

United States-based tech firm Microsoft and artificial intelligence (AI) research company OpenAI were sued by two non-fiction book authors for copyright infringement.

Authors Nicholas Basbanes and Nicholas Gage claimed in the lawsuit, filed in a Manhattan federal court on Friday, that their work has been "systematically pilfered" by Microsoft and OpenAI, The Sun

wrote.

The lawsuit, in addition, argued that OpenAI depends on "massive amounts of written material" that includes books written by the authors.

The move comes a week after The New York Times sued OpenAI for billions of dollars in damages for copyright infringement in a lawsuit filed in New York.

The newspaper argued that Microsoft

and OpenAI used its content to train the company's systems and help develop its AI model, since Chat-GPT analyses massive amounts of data online.

OpenAI also faces multiple lawsuits from pop culture figures, such as Game of Thrones author George R.R. Martin and comedian Sarah Silverman, who argue that their work has been used improperly for the company's AI training.

