

Tehran book fair provides platform for Iran-India literary exchange



Arts & Culture Desk

The 35th Tehran International Book Fair offers a significant opportunity for cultural exchange between Iran and India, said Yaser Ahmadvand, head of the event. Ahmadvand expressed eagerness to engage with Iran's cultural community, aiming for greater recognition of contemporary Indian literature among Iranians, *ketab.ir* wrote. During a meeting with Shri Rudra Gaurav Shresth, the Indian Ambassador to Iran, officials discussed enhancing

cultural ties. Ahmadvand highlighted the fair's potential to facilitate familiarity with authors' works and foster connections between the literary communities of both nations. Ahmadvand mentioned ongoing discussions regarding translations of Iranian and Indian works and expressed hope for Indian publishers' participation in the fair's international section. He stressed Iranians' interest in Indian publications, positioning India as a gateway for global literary exchange. Ahmadvand, in reference to India's featured pavilion,

emphasized the East's hospitality tradition and pledged efforts to ensure a prominent presence for India at the fair. Shresth underscored the enduring cultural ties between Iran and India, citing their influence on various aspects of Indian culture. He highlighted the need to engage young generations through book fairs, fostering future cultural bonds. Proposals for joint activities between Iran and India during the Delhi International Book Fair were discussed, including showcasing classic and contemporary literature, signing agreements, and fa-

ilitating author interactions. Shresth expressed optimism about the positive impact of Iran and India's participation in each other's book fairs, hoping for increased mutual interest in literature. The 35th Tehran International Book Fair is scheduled to take place from May 8 to 18, both in-person and virtually, at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Mosalla.

Head of the 35th Tehran International Book Fair Yaser Ahmadvand (R) and Indian Ambassador to Tehran Shri Rudra Gaurav Shresth discuss literary cooperation during a recent meeting held in Tehran. ketab.ir

Ayatollah Khamenei exalts great Persian poet on Saadi Day



Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei praised renowned 13th-century poet Saadi as "one of the pillars of the solid foundation of Persian literature". Saadi is widely recognized as one of the greatest poets of the classical literary tradition, earning him the nickname "The Master of Speech" through 'Gulestan', a landmark of Persian literature and the most influential work of prose. His other magnum opus is the *Bustan*, a book of poetry, *Press TV* wrote. "Saadi is definitely one of the pillars of the solid foundation of Persian literature, a product of

poetry and prose, and the constituent of one of the most graceful organs of the glorious body of our current culture," the Leader said in his message to a congress commemorating Saadi on Saturday. "Saadi's aphorism, which is derived from the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith, has always been a golden seal on the memory of learners, and his eloquent and explicit language has been the revealer of the treasures of meanings for the searching and eager hearts," the Leader said. His message came as Iranians marked the National Commemoration Day of

This file photo shows Ayatollah Khamenei visiting the grave of renowned Persian poet Saadi in Shiraz, southern Iran.

Saadi Shirazi. "The celebration of Saadi is the celebration of not only eloquent poetry and prose, but also morals, wisdom and knowledge," Ayatollah Khamenei said. "In this era when the blessed Islamic Revolution has made the life of our people the realm of Islamic values, and put wisdom and knowledge in its worthy place, it is appropriate that the beautiful mention of Saadi be repeated and emphasized," he added.

Iranian woman wins BIWFF in Lebanon

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian director-cum-actress Sahra Assadollahi won the Best Actress Award at the Beirut International Women Film Festival for her role in the short film 'Spasm.' The closing ceremony of the festival was held in Lebanon's capital on April 19, IRNA wrote. Assadollahi has previously been nominated for best actress at the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival.

'Spasm,' directed by Assadollahi and produced by Zahed Barzegar, has also been featured at several international festivals in Vancouver, Seoul, Rabat, and the United States. The film stars Sahra Assadollahi, Tino Salehi, Nima Mazaheri, and Kaveh Souiri. The Beirut International Women Film Festival highlights women's leadership roles in societies worldwide and is organized by the Beirut Film Society.

Iranian play to be staged in Russia

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Iran's international theatrical project 'Quiet,' directed by Esmaeel Shafiee will be performed at the 28th International Theater Festival "Russkaya Klassika" in Moscow, from May 21 to 20. The project, featuring actors from Iran, Azerbaijan, and Russia, involves two Iranian actors, one Azerbaijani actor, and six actors from the hosting country, *ILNA* wrote. 'Quiet' debuted at last year's Harlequin festival in eastern Russia, featuring



actors from Omsk and Irkutsk, and this time, actors from Moscow are part of the cast. Shafiee conducts the actors' rehearsals online, aiming to explore a new experience of international

collaboration in theater. Parviz Arjmand, Reza Mahdizadeh, Afsaneh Qolizadeh, and Golnaz Golshan are respectively responsible for composing, stage design, makeup design, and costume design for this project. This year, the participation of the Chayka Theater Group in four international festivals has been confirmed. The theatrical project 'Quiet' won a special prize at last year's Harlequin festival - Russian National Award and Festival of Theatre Art for Children.

Palestinian journalists, writers unite: Boycotts in solidarity with Gaza

The Palestinian journalists are calling for a boycott of the White House Correspondents' Association's annual dinner in solidarity with Gaza. Meanwhile, writers are withdrawing from PEN America's literary awards to protest the organization's perceived failure to protect Palestinian writers in Gaza. The call for a boycott was made on Wednesday in an open letter signed by more than two dozen Palestinian reporters, writers and multimedia journalists who are

located both in Gaza and elsewhere, including Bisan Owda, Ali Jadallah, Hosam Salem, and Mohammed Zaanoun. "As Palestinian journalists, we urgently appeal to you, our colleagues globally, with a demand for immediate and unwavering action against the Biden administration's ongoing complicity in the systematic slaughter and persecution of journalists in Gaza," they wrote. "We insist you publicly boycott the upcoming White House Correspondents' Dinner on



April 27 as an act of solidarity with us - your fellow journalists - as well as with the millions of Palestinians currently being starved in Gaza due to the Biden administration's continued political, financial, and military backing of Israel and cut-off of funding for live-saving humanitarian aid". "For journalists to fraternize at an event with President Biden and Vice President Harris would be to normalize, sanitize, and whitewash the administration's role in geno-

cide," they said. In addition, thirty-one authors and translators have recently withdrawn their work from consideration for or declined PEN America's 2024 literary awards over the organization's "failure to protect" Palestinian writers in Gaza. While nearly 50 PEN centres signed PEN International's call for a ceasefire in late October, PEN America did not join the call until 20 March, which many protesting writers considered too late.