

# Iran participates in 67th Int'l Belgrade Book Fair

## Arts & Culture Desk

The 67th International Belgrade Book Fair kicked off in Serbia, with the Islamic Republic of Iran participating in the event. The book fair, which runs from October 19 to October 27, is being held at the Belgrade Fair Exhibition Center.

This year's book fair, organized under the slogan "The Word is Free", has brought together 418 publishers from Serbia and abroad, including Iran. Cuba is the guest of honor at this year's event, IRNA reported.

The opening ceremony was attended by Serbian Minister of Culture Nikola Selaković, and Cuban counterpart Alpidio Alonso Grau, ambassadors and cultural representatives of various countries, including Iran's Ambassador to Serbia, Rashid Hassanpour, and Iran's Cultural Attaché, Amir Pourpezeshk.

According to Pourpezeshk, "Iran has good cultural and historical ties with the Balkan region,

which dates back to the Ottoman Empire's presence in the region. For 500 years, the Ottomans ruled the Balkans and had connections with Greater Iran, resulting in cultural and historical ties between Iran and Serbia."

Until a few years ago, the Persian language was taught in most schools and educational institutions in the Balkans, and books such as the 'Gulestan', 'Bustan', and 'Mathnawi' were part of the curriculum, he added. "Currently, there are 50 Persian-speaking poets in the Balkans, and over 1,500 Persian words are used in the Serbian language, which is an important aspect of our cultural ties with Serbia." Pourpezeshk noted.

Miguel Barnet, a renowned Cuban poet, writer, and anthropologist, who was present at the ceremony, said: "As a Cuban writer and intellectual, it is a great honor for me to give the opening speech on behalf of the Cuban delegation. This event is one of the oldest and most im-

portant literary spaces in Europe."

Barnet also praised Serbian culture, saying it has been a reference point for writers in Latin America and the world since the Middle Ages.

He specifically mentioned the Miroslav Gospel and the epic songs that are performed with traditional music.

During the opening ceremony, Selaković and Alonso Grau visited the Iranian pavilion, where they were welcomed by Hassanpour and Pourpezeshk.

The International Belgrade Book Fair features publishers from several countries, including Cuba, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece, Italy, Congo, Morocco, Germany, Romania, Russia, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, Croatia, Montenegro, and Iran. In addition to the exhibition, visitors can attend over 500 events on the sidelines of the fair.

The Iranian cultural center in Serbia, with the support of the Iranian Book and Literature



House, is participating in the fair with a 24-square-meter pavilion, showcasing Iranian publications in Persian, English, and Serbian. Four new books

published, with the support of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, will be introduced and unveiled during a special ceremony. These books

include 'Divan-e Hafez', and a magazine featuring success of Iranian women published in the Serbian Literary Association magazine.

## Iran's 'deep-rooted heritage' fosters cultural bonds: *Syrian official*



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In a meeting between the Iranian Cultural Attaché to Syria, Hamidreza Mokhtas Abadi, and the Syrian President's Political and Media Adviser, Bouthaina Shaaban, both sides emphasized the importance of strengthening cultural and artistic cooperation between the two nations. Shaaban stated that Syria's relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, which is one of the deeply-rooted nations in the world's history and has a long-standing, brilliant civilization and great achievements, are distinct and privileged, and we must strive to expand and promote the level

of these relations and strengthen and deepen bilateral interactions.

"We must work together to expand and deepen our relations," Shaaban said, highlighting the unique and privileged nature of the Syria-Iran relationship. "Our people and government will never forget Iran's support during the difficult days of the Daesh terrorist attacks and the sacrifices of our Iranian brothers alongside our Syrian brothers in the fight against darkness."

Describing the relationship between Syria and Iran as "completely strategic", Shaaban proposed several initiatives to

consolidate cultural, artistic, and media relations, including the implementation of cultural and artistic agreements with Syrian institutions, the formation of joint committees, and the organization of regular meetings to operationalize these agreements.

Mokhtas Abadi, for his part, described the Iran-Syria relationship as "strategic, robust, and deeply rooted". "Without a doubt, one of the deepest, most strategic and strongest foreign relationships of Iran is with Syria, a bond that has been strengthened by the blood shed during the recent events in Syria."

Highlighting the extensive co-

operation between the two countries in various fields, including politics, economy, society, culture, tourism, science, and technology, Mokhtas Abadi expressed his optimism about the future of bilateral relations. "Both countries have a strong foundation for cooperation in education and research, and we need to coordinate more closely between our relevant institutions."

The two sides also discussed ways to promote cultural exchange, including organizing various activities to introduce Iranian culture and civilization, as well as enhancing scientific cooperation.

## Iran's 'September 21' receives Best Director Award in Algeria

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Iranian short film 'September 21', directed by Rahman Burhani, won the Best Director Award at the Digital Gate International Film Festival (DGIFF) in Algeria.

In an interview with IRNA on Monday, the film's media advisor, Mehdi



Mansour, said: "The Digital Gate International Film Festival, with the aim of promoting global peace and solidarity, showcases numerous films from around the world every year and awards its winners with valuable prizes."

Mansour stated that the film 'September 21' explores the impact of war on the spirit, body, and future of children and has caught the attention of the judges. Burhani has presented an emotional and insightful portrayal of the lives of children affected by war through this film, ILNA wrote.

According to Mansour, the film features performances by Hossein Nasseri, Amin Tarfi Jalali, Adnan Nasseri, Seyyed Mohammad Saeidi, Sina Tarfi Nejad, Mohammad Halichi, Seyyed Mohammad Mousavi, Jahad Nasseri, Jassem Tarfi, and Maram Nasseri.

## 'Whales' premiere in Tehran celebrates Afghan-Iranian friendship

The premiere and opening screening of Iran-Afghanistan cinematic work 'Whales', written and directed by Afghan filmmaker Gholamreza Jafari and produced by Mohammad Ahmadi, took place on October 20, at the Charsouf Cinema, hosted by the Art & Experience cinema. The event was attended by the film's creators, a number of artists, and media representatives, ILNA reported.

According to ILNA, at the beginning of the ceremony, Mohammad Ahmadi, the film's producer, thanked the investor and the film's crew, saying,

"Considering the current situation and the circumstances of film screenings, it's worth thanking the Art & Experience cinema group for making such films visible and screened."

Jafari, for his part, referred to the hospitality of the Iranian people, saying, "The reality is that my father's generation has been living in Iran for over four decades, and a generation of Afghan immigrants has been born and raised in Iran, who love Iran very much. For 45 years, Afghan immigrants have been in Iran, and Iranian friends have been hospita-

ble for these 45 years. I really appreciate this hospitality on behalf of myself." Jafari added, referring to the story of 'Whales', "I have tried to be fair in my criticism. I repeat this issue several times, and I don't stutter in saying it.

The fact that the Art & Experience cinema has given me the opportunity to screen a film by an Afghan filmmaker shows this hospitality. I thank them and hope that the two nations can be friends and love each other even more."

