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# Iranian children shine in painting competition in China

## Arts & Culture Desk

Thirteen Iranian children and adolescents were awarded honorary diplomas at the International Painting Competition held in China. The competition, themed "The Silk Road in Children's Eyes," was organized by the Friendship and Cooperation Commission of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), IRNA reported. The Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults submitted 39 artworks to this year's competition. Among 1,700 entries from 21 countries, 10 participants from the institute's cultural and artistic centers, along with three independent entrants, received honorary diplomas. The awarded participants are: 16-year-old Mohaddeseh Dadkani from the Khash center in Sistan and Baluchestan, 8-year-old Kian Qaini

from Bojnourd in North Khorasan, 16-year-old Masoumeh Sobhaninia and 14-year-old Diana Qalyani from the Mahabad center in West Azarbaijan, 7-year-old Elnaz Kazemi from the Parsabad center in Ardabil, 11-year-old Mohammad Hassan Hashemi Nejad from the Kerman center, 11-year-old Mehrana Toloo from the Tehran center, 13-year-old Mahshid Qasemi from the Kahrizsang center in Isfahan, 13-year-old Abbas Shahbazi from the Bileh Savar center in Ardabil, 7-year-old Zahra Javadinia from Semnan, and 11-year-old Hadis Salimi, an independent participant from Ardabil. In addition, China awarded honorary diplomas to 10-year-old Parsa and Dorsa Nikbayan, independent participants from Khuzestan province, in recognition of their collaboration in the closing ceremony of the event.



## Iranian film 'Like Deliberately' to compete at India's Frames Film Festival



The short film 'Like Deliberately', directed by Farzin Azizi, was selected for the 22nd edition of the Frames Film Festival in India. The film, which narrates the suspicious death of Mr. Shahkarmi, is set to compete with other films from January 8 to 10 in New Bombay, India, IRNA reported. The cast of 'Like Deliberately' includes Amir Khanzadeh, Mehdi Janabi, Zeynab Izadpanah, Shayan Azizi, Ghazaleh Amiri, Sadi Khezri, Amir Mohammadi,

and the young actor Arshia Aminiyan. The film will be screened internationally by First Screen. The Frames Film Festival is one of the largest film festivals in India, receiving entries not only from prestigious colleges and institutions across the country but also from various international locations such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Italy, Iran, and others. The festival has become a platform for nurturing new filmmaking talent.

## Armenians in Iran celebrate Christmas

Each year, Armenians in Iran commemorate Christmas on January 6, a celebration deeply rooted in their cultural and religious traditions for over 1,700 years. This date coincides with the Feast of the Epiphany, marking the visit of three wise men, to the newborn Jesus. Some historians suggest that these wise men may have had Iranian origins, further intertwining the rich heritage of Armenia with that of Iran.

The Armenian community observes this festive occasion with a period of fasting leading up to the celebration, followed by joyous feasts featuring traditional dishes such as rice, nuts, desserts, and sweets. The festivities not only honor the birth of Jesus Christ but also the significance of baptism, as the Armenian Apostolic Church celebrates both events on the same day. Historically, the presence of Armenians in the region dates back to 3,500 years before Christ, with archaeological evidence supporting their existence since the Stone Age. Following centuries of foreign rule, including governance by Pompey in the 2nd century AD and the establishment of



the Arshakuni dynasty, Armenia embraced Christianity as its state religion in 301 AD, becoming the first nation to do so. Unlike other Christian denominations that celebrate Christmas on December 25, Armenians have maintained their tradition of celebrating on January 6. This divergence stems from the early Christians in Armenia choosing to honor the birth and baptism of Christ together, rather than aligning their celebrations with the Roman festival of Sol Invictus. On the morning of January 6, Divine

Liturgy is held in Armenian Apostolic churches across the globe. Following the service, a ceremonial Water Blessing takes place, symbolizing Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River. The liturgist blesses the water, which is then taken home by the faithful as a sacred blessing and healing remedy. As Armenians in Iran and around the world come together to celebrate this significant occasion, they not only honor their faith but also preserve the unique cultural identity that has sustained their community through centuries of change.

## Strengthening nat'l media ...

However, our approach will be soft, and we will respond appropriately to these media initiatives. **Page 1 >** It is clear that those who create Persian-language networks are monitoring developments in Iran and are subsequently looking to exert influence in this arena. Therefore, we, in the Parliament, Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) Supervisory Council, and the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, will examine these matters and consider specific measures. It is also important to note the changing landscape of media competition. Previ-

ously, our media rivals were foreign opposition networks in the satellite realm, but today, these networks have lost their competitive edge. Our primary competitors now include domestic reference groups that have gained prominence through IRIB. These are well-known individuals and personalities whose online presence has become a platform for criticizing IRIB. As the saying goes, these individuals have bitten the hand that fed them. Regarding foreign Persian-language television networks, we must ensure that they cannot impose Western standards

on our nation through their cultural influence. Some of these networks promote not only cultural infiltration but also divisive and subversive narratives against Iran. In reality, we do not face issues like separatism or coups in Iran. Our people and the various pillars of our country and system are committed, devoted, and passionate about Islam, the Qur'an, and their nation. While it is true that we currently face several challenges, including economic hardships, the different branches of government—executive, legislative, and judicial—are united and determined

to resolve these issues. Furthermore, I would like to highlight the recent message from the Leader of Islamic Revolution Seyyed Ali Khamenei regarding the transformation of national media. In this message, he emphasized the importance of accurate storytelling, message management, and its impact on public opinion. The Leader consistently stays ahead of other officials, often suggesting to various organizations the advice they should be providing him. Ultimately, IRIB and our other media outlets must act cohesively and powerfully to counter the malicious intentions of ad-

versaries. Therefore, a budget has been allocated for media countermeasures against hostile media campaigns. Our people deserve to receive first-hand narratives about events in Iran and around the world from the national media. The national media should not operate in a way that compels the public to seek news and programming from foreign outlets, allowing them to disseminate misinformation. As members of IRIB Supervisory Council, we are committed to strengthening national media, and if necessary, we will intervene to highlight any issues that require attention.