

# VP urges leveraging cultural dominance for national prosperity

## Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian Vice President Mohammadreza Aref emphasized the crucial role of arts and culture in shaping a prosperous nation during the first Cinema Council meeting held at Cinema Museum of Iran on January 25.

He called for a cultural renaissance, asserting that "the dominance of arts and culture" is essential for national development and should not be viewed through a security lens, according to the official website of the official.

Aref advocated for cultural diplomacy as a means to address the country's challenges, suggesting that resolving cultural issues can lead to political solutions.

He also urged government support to elevate the international presence of Iranian filmmakers, particularly in regions rich in cultural heritage, given the country's membership in regional organizations such as Eurasia.

He remarked on the genuine unity emerging from recent elections, stating, "The unity in the country is not fabricated; it is a cultural achievement that reflects our inherent nature as a people who value harmony."

Aref lamented that despite Iran's rich cultural legacy, many young people today feel disconnected from their historical identity, urging societal efforts to

ensure they do not experience a sense of alienation.

During his visit to the Cinema Museum of Iran, Aref expressed pride in the accomplishments of Iranian filmmakers, reinforcing the need to nurture this cultural capital.

He called for artists and intellectuals to increase their resilience, suggesting that despite prevailing challenges, they must persevere to foster a space conducive to cultural and artistic growth.

Stressing that arts should lead national unity, Aref stated, "The advancement of these elements cannot progress without coordination and cohesion."

He posited that in today's world, unity cannot be achieved through fragmentation or prioritizing one aspect over another.

Aref described cinema as a powerful medium to address social issues, urging filmmakers to produce more socially relevant content.

He noted that while entertainment is essential, it is equally important for films to convey meaningful messages to audiences.

The meeting, attended by key figures including the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Abbas Salehi and the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting Peyman Jebeli, concluded with several resolutions.

The ministry was also tasked with es-



establishing cinema councils in provinces, particularly in cities with populations exceeding 100,000 that currently lack cinema facilities. Plans were initiated to ensure the construction of cinemas in these cities, with a focus on underserved areas.

Further decisions included upgrading

110 youth cinema association offices, producing a minimum of three documentaries on national projects, providing housing assistance to filmmakers, and reforming taxation on cinema activities. The establishment of a specialized working group within the Cinema Council was also discussed, alongside

Iranian Vice President Mohammadreza Aref speaks at the first Cinema Council meeting held at the Cinema Museum of Iran on January 25, 2025.  
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the distribution of bonuses to 8,500 members of the House of Cinema.

## Top-tier world musicians to attend fajr music festival despite sanctions



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In a recent press conference, the organizers of the 40th International Fajr Music Festival announced an exciting lineup of world-class musicians from countries including Turkey, the Netherlands, Spain, Tunisia, and Armenia, despite ongoing sanctions.

The conference was held at the Vahdat Hall with prominent figures in attendance, including Ahmad Sadri, head of the Music Office at the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, festival secretary Reza Mahdavi, and executive secretary Mohammad Ali Mer'ati, Mehr News Agency reported.

Mer'ati discussed the festival's international section, stating, "We are in a pecu-

liar situation due to sanctions; however, we have successfully established connections with many artists."

He expressed optimism about the participation of top-tier musicians, noting, "Fortunately, everyone we reached out to had no issues attending."

Regarding ticket pricing, Mer'ati revealed that the festival's total budget has increased by 40% from the previous year, amounting to approximately \$217,000. "The final ticket prices will reflect the quality of the performances and will be announced by next week," he added.

During the conference, Ahmad Sadri reflected on the significance of the festival's 40th anniversary, describing the number as emblematic of abundance

and excellence.

He expressed gratitude towards the presidents of the previous editions and emphasized the importance of continual improvement: "Despite many ups and downs over the years, the festival has matured, and we hope to advance its legacy."

Sadri aimed to elevate the festival's artistic quality, focusing on more serious musical presentations this year. He stated, "We want to concentrate on serious music as much as possible, inviting the relevant artists."

Mahdavi emphasized the goal of enhancing the global presence of Iranian music. "The festival is recognized worldwide, and we hope to host the best international talents in the coming years," he remarked, also noting the revival of sections dedicated to children, youth, and women in the festival.

Mahdavi talked about the potential inclusion of protest music, specifically rap, into the festival.

He articulated a desire to maintain artistic integrity while allowing for expression, stating, "While we want to engage with the youth's passion, we will only accept those who align with Iranian culture."

The festival will also see the removal of the choral section to avoid redundancy in programming, as well as plans to establish a permanent secretariat to streamline operations in future events.

The culmination of the 40th International Fajr Music Festival will be celebrated with a closing ceremony on February 17 at the Vahdat Hall.

## Iranian artist Mirmola Soraya's 'Destiny' in Paris



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Latest work of Iranian contemporary artist Mirmola Soraya titled 'Destiny,' went on display at the Maison & Objet 2025 exhibition in Paris. The event, held from January 16 to 20, serves as a platform for the design community, drawing designers, manufacturers, retailers, and industry professionals from around the globe.

Maison & Objet is renowned for showcasing innovations in interior design, decor, and lifestyle products. This year, the exhibition emphasized sustainable design practices and environmentally friendly products, reflecting the industry's commitment to addressing ecological responsibilities. Participants presented creative solutions aimed at reducing negative impacts on the environment, with a diverse array of sections dedicated to interior design, decor, and lifestyle trends, ISNA re-

ported.

Soraya's 'Destiny,' a remarkable piece in the realm of carpet art, captures the essence of his artistic vision. In his statement about the work, he described it as "a wordless ode," where "each knot resonates with a silence that emerges from history, and its weave speaks with both delicacy and strength of our roots."

The intricate designs and colors that traverse the boundaries of light and shadow invite viewers to reflect on the passage of time and the complexities of life. Soraya's artistry transcends geographical and temporal borders, weaving narratives that resonate universally.

Mirmola Soraya, an innovative painter and carpet designer, has gained recognition for his work exhibited worldwide. He specializes in crafting intricate patterns for carpets and felt, showcasing his unique approach to traditional art forms while addressing contemporary themes.