



# New Delhi Int'l Book Fair 2025 underway with Iran's presence

## Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's book and publishing industry is being featured at the 32nd New Delhi International Book Fair, which was inaugurated on February 1, 2025, by the President of India, Droupadi Murmu.

This year's fair, which is being held in celebration of 75 years of India as a republic, runs under the theme "We the People" and will continue until February 9, IRNA reported.

Yuvraj Malik, the Director of the National Book Trust of India, highlighted the significance of this year's event, noting that it provides a platform to explore the diverse facets of India through a wide range of literary works. He stated, "This year's focus on the 75 years of India as a republic showcases a nation's aspirations on the path to global progress."

With over 2,000 publishers and exhibitors, 1,000 speakers, and 600 cultural and literary stations, the fair aims to play a key role in promoting reading culture and literary engagement. Participants include writers and thinkers from more than 50 countries, including Iran, France, Qatar, Spain, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Colombia.

The Iranian Book and Literature House is making a significant presence at this year's event, collaborating with the Cul-



● IRNA

tural Center of the Islamic Republic of Iran in New Delhi to showcase over 500 titles in Persian, Urdu, English, and Hindi. The featured books span a variety of themes such as classical and contemporary literature, Iranology, arts, children's literature, Islamic Revolution literature, and religion.

In addition, publishers such as Nakhle Sabz and the Saba Literary Agency will

represent the Iranian publishing industry, engaging in discussions with international publishers present at the fair.

A variety of programs are lined up, including book launches, an Iranian cultural day, meetings with prominent Indian publishers, dialogues with foreign representatives, and presentations introducing the Tehran International Book Fair, along with discussions on the Iranian publish-

ing sector.

This edition of the fair has designated Russia as the guest country, further enriching the event, which is organized by the Ministry of Education and the National Book Trust. With thousands of attendees, authors, and publishers from around the globe, the fair is poised to be a significant cultural gathering.

This year's showcase also pays tribute to

Sergei Rachmaninoff, the renowned Russian composer, emphasizing the global influence of Russian classical music. A special part will feature the translation of Russian literary works into Hindi, featuring popular novels by Eugene Vodolazkin, which have gained considerable acclaim among Indian readers. This initiative is in collaboration with the Russian Writers and Publishers Association, focusing on the crucial role of translation in introducing Russian literature to a wider audience.

Noteworthy guest Mostafa Mastoor will also participate, with several events planned around his work, including book launches and meet-and-greet sessions. In addition to showcasing the latest publications, the fair's international events part will host diverse literary discussions. Among these is a session exploring the Indian character in Emirati literature, featuring the prominent Muhsin Suleiman, as well as a dialogue on literary interactions between Saudi and New Delhi novels, organized in partnership with the Saudi publishing and translation authority. Another highlight includes a panel titled "From Cooking to Art: Cultural Interaction," led by New Zealand High Commissioner Patrick John Rata, featuring writers from New Zealand and India.

## Turkey repatriates 55 smuggled Iranian artifacts

### Arts & Culture Desk

Turkey returned 55 ancient artifacts of Iranian origin that were illicitly transported into the country. The collection, which had been seized by Turkish authorities in the eastern city of Erzurum, was handed over to Iranian diplomatic representatives in June 2024.

Now, following coordination between Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the artifacts have been transported via a land route and delivered to the cultural authorities of West Azarbaijan Province, ILNA reported.

According to Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, the repatriation process was set in motion after Iran's Consulate General in Erzurum provided intelligence on a confiscated trove of cultural and historical objects. Images of the seized artifacts were promptly sent to the General Directorate of Museums for expert evaluation and

authentication. These relics, smuggled out of Iran through illicit channels, had been recovered in the Turkish provinces of Erzurum and Erzincan.

Once specialists confirmed that several of the items were undeniably linked to Iran's rich cultural heritage, Tehran formally requested their return under the 1970 UNESCO Convention. This demand was reinforced by a bilateral agreement between Turkey and Iran aimed at curbing the illegal trafficking of cultural assets. In line with this accord, a formal handover ceremony took place at the Erzurum Museum, where the artifacts were officially transferred to the Iranian Consulate by the Director-General of Cultural Heritage and Museums of Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey, alongside the Deputy Governor of Erzurum.

The repatriated collection consists of a sword believed to date back to the Sassanian era, animal figurines characteristic of the Iron and Bronze Ages, glass and metal bowls, a copper ewer, and 42 historical coins.



● ISNA



## Iran aims for 1,000 museums to promote cultural heritage: Deputy minister

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In a recent press conference, Ali Darabi, the Deputy Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, outlined the government's plan to increase the number of museums in Iran from 824 to 1,000 as part of the Seventh Development Plan. Held on Sunday, February 2, at the Fajr Hall of the ministry, the session highlighted various ongoing projects and initiatives within the cultural sector, IRNA reported.

Darabi announced that there are currently 26 museums under construction across the country, comprising 12 regional and 14 provincial museums. "Some of these museums have been in the pipeline for over three decades," he noted, emphasizing the ministry's commitment to expedite their completion as part of prioritized collaborative projects. As part of the ongoing efforts, the

deputy minister revealed that six new museums and exhibition halls are set to open during the celebrations to commemorate the anniversary of Islamic Revolution. He also mentioned the recent approval of a technical and executive regulation for historical buildings by the Cabinet, which he described as a significant step forward for engineering standards in heritage conservation. Plus, Darabi reported that a historical fabric mapping initiative has been successfully implemented in 197 cities, with only four cities remaining. "This is one of our major achievements in the heritage sector," he added. He also acknowledged the need for revisiting regulations regarding the preservation of historical sites.

On the issue of cultural heritage repatriation, Darabi stated that over 8,000 historical artifacts have been returned to Iran, with more than

nine additional cases currently in progress.

He highlighted the challenges faced by protection forces in Ilam, who have been threatened by smuggling groups. He emphasized the urgent need for better compensation for personnel, indicating that staff salaries have been historically low. "Following an agreement with the Planning and Budget Organization, we are committed to ensuring timely salary disbursements," he assured.

This year, from January 31 to February 10, 55 restoration projects will be inaugurated across 15 provinces. Alongside these developments, a series of cultural events will take place, including 69 exhibitions, 27 conferences, 15 training workshops, and 17 unveiling ceremonies focused on museums.

Reflecting on the progress made since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Darabi noted that the number of museums has grown from 35 to the current 824, alongside significant efforts in restoration and registration of historical artifacts. A budget of \$3.57 million has been allocated for restoration work, with \$238,000 available as cash reserves from the ministry, while the remainder will be funded by private benefactors. In line with ongoing registration efforts, Darabi revealed that the historical heritage of Rey is on the verge of global recognition, and an impressive album showcasing world-registered artifacts is in the works.

Addressing concerns over recently auctioned historical coins, Darabi clarified that those sold were counterfeit, underscoring the need for vigilance against exploitation in the cultural heritage sector.