



# Tajikistan eyes new chapter in cultural ties with Iran

## Arts & Culture Desk

Tajikistan's Minister of Culture said on Saturday the country is "ready" to open a new chapter in cultural and artistic cooperation with Iran, signaling growing enthusiasm for deeper ties between the two Persian-speaking neighbors. Speaking at the opening ceremony of the International Festival of Professional Theaters in Dushanbe, Minister Matluba Sattoriyon welcomed the Iranian delegation and highlighted the "many common grounds" shared by the two countries in culture and the arts, IRNA reported. "We have already worked together on joint productions in theater and music," Sattoriyon said, adding that these efforts have "introduced our cultures to wider audiences." Sattoriyon stressed that recent high-level visits, including a trip by Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian, have "kicked off" a new phase of collaboration, with cultural and artistic activities taking center stage. "I believe these partnerships should grow in different forms," she said. "My colleagues and I are ready to start a new season of cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran."



*Iran's Deputy Minister of Culture for Artistic Affairs, Nadereh Rezaei (3rd L) and Tajikistan Culture Minister Matluba Sattoriyon (2nd R) discuss cultural ties in a meeting held in Dushanbe on May 3, 2025.*  
● IRNA

Iran's Deputy Minister of Culture for Artistic Affairs, Nadereh Rezaei, echoed the sentiment, expressing hope for "fresh breakthroughs" in joint projects. "We will plan for Tajik artists to take part in next year's Fajr festivals in Iran," Rezaei said, referring to one of Iran's most prominent cultural events. Rezaei also announced that Iranian musicians have prepared two full repertoires of poetry by Rudaki, a revered Persian poet born in what is now Tajikistan. "Our artists are ready to perform these works in Tajikistan," she said, noting the strong ties between the two nations' artistic communities. The festival, running from May 1 to May 7, features 'Fox Hunting Manners,' a play from Iran's North Khorasan province, among other international entries. The Iranian cast paid tribute to victims of a recent explosion in Iran by wearing black at the opening. Diplomatic and cultural exchanges between Iran and Tajikistan have picked



up in recent months, with artists from both countries appearing in each other's

films and TV series. "This path can pave the way for even more joint activ-

ities," said Iran's ambassador to Tajikistan, Alireza Haghighian.

## Iran to modernize national census with digital, registry-based approach

### Social Desk

Iran's Statistical Center is set to revolutionize the nation's census process in the next Persian calendar year, moving away from traditional door-to-door surveys in favor of a digital, registry-based method. This marks a significant shift from previous censuses, which involved direct visits from enumerators. In an interview with state news agency IRNA, the head of the center, Gholamreza Goudarzi, explained that the

census will rely heavily on data from government databases, minimizing the need for physical interactions. "This approach will rely more on information from official agencies, reducing field visits significantly," Goudarzi said. Scheduled for next Persian calendar year, the national population and housing census will be carried out in line with a presidential directive to adopt a "registry-based" model. Under this system, data from various government bodies, including the Ministry of Education, the Ministry

of Welfare, and the Civil Registration Organization, will be used to compile the census information. This, Goudarzi noted, will help ensure faster and more accurate data collection. The process will be split into three stages: Design and studies, pilot tests, and the main execution. Pilot testing will begin in the early months of the current Persian calendar year, using data from these agencies in a small-scale format. The main census will occur in October or November 2026. Goudarzi emphasized that this meth-

od would not only cut costs but also safeguard citizens' privacy. "Only anonymized data will be used, and no personal information will be shared with other agencies or individuals," he assured. This revamped approach aims to improve the quality of statistical data, critical for government policy-making in sectors like education, agriculture, and employment. "The data will serve as the backbone for long-term national planning and development," Goudarzi added.



## Iran, China launch joint documentary film week to strengthen cultural ties



### Arts & Culture Desk

Iran and China have kicked off a joint documentary film week to foster cultural diplomacy and deepen mutual understanding. The event, which began on May 1, will run until May 5. Organized in collaboration with Iran's Documentary Channel and China's Guangdong GRT Network, the fes-

tival aims to bridge the two ancient civilizations through cinema. The festival features four documentaries, two from each country, focusing on history, architecture, and daily life, ILNA reported. Iran's documentaries, 'Guardians of History' and 'Our Home,' will be broadcast on Iran's Documentary Channel. 'Guardians of History' high-

lights Iran's cultural heritage, including mosques, Zoroastrian monuments, and traditional handicrafts. 'Our Home' provides a window into Iranian family life, traditions, hospitality, and child-rearing practices. Chinese films will showcase the rich 5,000-year-old history, stunning landscapes, and culinary culture of China. This event reflects the growing non-political collaboration between the two nations. As both countries boast rich and diverse histories, using documentary cinema as a tool for public education and empathy serves as an effective step in strengthening international ties. Moreover, the festival provides an opportunity for the younger generation of both countries to explore and appreciate each other's cultures. This event is not just a cultural exchange but also a symbol of innovative co-operation in the digital age, offering a glimpse into the shared beauty of human history, art, and culture.

## Six Iranian children win honors at Bulgaria's Nova Zagora art exhibition



### Arts & Culture Desk

Six young Iranian artists picked up "diplomas of honor" at Bulgaria's 26th International Youth Art Exhibition in Nova Zagora, organizers said on Saturday. The event, held annually in the Bulgarian art hub of Nova Zagora, drew in more than 3,000 entries from 33 countries in 2024, IRNA reported. Fifteen members of Iran's Institute for Intellectual Development of Children

and Young Adults, known as Kanoon, sent in their works under the "free theme" category. The awardees—aged between nine and fifteen—hail from diverse Iranian provinces. Zahra Mozaffari, 9, from Bushehr; Amirsam Hassani, 10, from Zanjan; Parnaz Goudarzi, 10, from Kerman-shah; Bahar Nassiriani, 10, and Parnian Lolo, 11, from Khuzestan; and Nourai Mokammeli, 15, from Golestan, were all named as recipients. The Nova Zagora exhibition is widely regarded as a "center for artists from different countries" and has become a platform for young talent to shine on the world stage. According to the organizers, the contest aims to "bring together" creative youth and encourage "unique artistic expression." Iran's Kanoon has a long track record of nurturing young artists. Its members have repeatedly made their mark at international competitions, reflecting the country's growing reputation in the visual arts.