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## Tehran to host exhibition on modernist women artists



Arts & Culture Desk

The Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art will open a major exhibition on July 23 spotlighting modernist Iranian women artists, featuring 121 works by 65 pioneers including Monir Farmanfarmaian, Iran Darroudi, and Behjat Sadr. Running through September 22, 'In Women's Words' draws exclusively from the museum's permanent collection, IRNA reported. According to museum director Reza Dabirinejad, the show is the most comprehensive survey of women's contributions to modern Iranian art ever mounted by the institution. The exhibition had originally been slated to follow last year's blockbuster Picasso retrospective but was postponed due to the outbreak of regional conflict. With the easing of tensions, Dabirinejad said the museum felt it was the right moment to "recenter the narrative" and highlight voices long underrepresented in Iran's official art history. "The story of Iranian modernism is incomplete without women," said Toka Maleki, one of the curators. "Their perspectives shaped abstraction, portraiture, and new media in ways that demand deeper critical attention." The show is divided into several thematic sections—from early abstract experiments to nature studies and social realism—featuring works in painting, sculpture, photography, and video art. Alongside household names like Parvaneh Ettemadi and Fereydoon Lashai, previously unseen pieces by lesser-known artists are also on display, some of them exhibited for the first time since entering the museum's vaults. The exhibition also kicks off a two-month cultural program that includes scholarly panels, film screenings, and the release of a bilingual exhibition catalogue. The museum plans to launch a digital platform to make the show accessible to a global audience. "Institutional history has often overlooked women," said Afsaneh Kamran, another curator and university lecturer. "We're not setting up a gendered binary. We're filling in critical gaps." According to Dabirinejad, the museum holds 270 works by women modernists in its archives. "This exhibition isn't just about inclusion," he said. "It's about recognition—and recalibrating how we archive and tell stories." The show's significance goes beyond its gallery walls. In a symbolic gesture, Maleki was appointed honorary director of the museum for the duration of the exhibition—the first time a woman has held any directorial role at the institution since its founding in 1977. Fourteen satellite exhibitions will also be staged in collaboration with twelve Tehran galleries over the coming weeks.

# Pezeshkian calls for localized, expert-led efforts to tackle water crisis

Social Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian on Sunday urged the development of comprehensive, science-driven solutions to address the country's worsening water shortages, stressing that "regional and root-level" strategies are key to long-term stability. Speaking at a high-level meeting with university leaders and cabinet ministers in Tehran, Pezeshkian said Iran must "strike a balance between water supply and consumption" to ensure sustainable development. The gathering, held at the presidential office, brought together key officials from the ministries of energy, agriculture, and science, as well as top scholars from major universities. Iran, which is reeling from its hottest summer on record and widespread drought, is confronting a decades-long water crisis worsened by aging infrastructure, and climate change. Calls for drastic cuts in consumption have already sparked frustration in some provinces, as dam reserves in Tehran hit a century-low. Pezeshkian warned that piecemeal fixes won't solve the issue. "This isn't a short-term project," he said. "It's a continuous process that demands engineering, education, legal enforcement, and constant monitoring." He called for specialized joint task forces between universities and govern-



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (L) attends a meeting on tackling the country's water crisis in Tehran, on July 20, 2025.  
● president.ir

ment bodies to draft tailored solutions for each region, based on local geography and needs. The president said the country's strategy must go beyond "top-down" directives. Localized task forces should be launched in every province under the supervision of governors and academic institutions to produce actionable plans. "One-size-fits-all policies won't hold water anymore," he said. According to a detailed report presented at the meeting, Iran's crisis stems from multiple overlapping factors: Rampant water waste in agriculture, unauthorized groundwater use, outdated distribution networks, and lack of data-driven planning. Pezeshkian also pressed for transparency and public engagement. He stressed the need for "broad awareness" among policymakers and the public alike, suggesting a mix of government and academic reports be made publicly accessible. "People need to understand what's at stake," he said, citing the vital role of state media and schools in shaping a conservation culture. As daily consumption in some households continues to exceed 200 liters—well above the national standard of



130—authorities have warned of steep fines and possible shut-offs. Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi said that pressure drops in several neighborhoods were necessary. "There's no way around it—we simply don't have the water," he said in a televised interview, apologizing to citizens while urging them to cooperate. Aliabadi promised continued outreach through regional water agencies, advising citizens to monitor usage and reach out for guidance. Repeat violators of rationing rules, he warned, would face "heavy financial penalties" followed by disconnection if the overuse persists. The government is also under pres-

sure to modernize water systems and fix distribution losses, which remain high due to decades-old pipelines and obsolete cooling systems. Pezeshkian challenged Iranian universities to rise to the occasion. "Like the third- and fourth-generation universities abroad, our institutions must move beyond theory and deliver real solutions," he said. The crisis has exposed structural gaps in governance, from inter-agency conflicts to politically motivated decisions made without scientific backing. Officials now face the urgent task of putting research to work and turning policy into practice before the situation spirals further.

## ISO renames Arabic transliteration standard to 'Perso-Arabic'



Arts & Culture Desk

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) has officially renamed its Arabic transliteration standard to include Persian, following an Iranian-led campaign to recognize the Persian script's distinct identity. The name change of ISO 233 to "Transliteration of Perso-Arabic characters into Latin characters" was approved earlier this month with 16 votes in favor and none against, according to the National Library and Archives of Iran (NLAI). The move marks a major step in Iran's years-long diplomatic and academic effort to cement the linguistic independence of Persian script in international documentation, IRNA reported.

The ISO 233 standard governs the transliteration of Perso-Arabic characters into Latin script and is widely used in the fields of information science, cataloging, and archiving. It provides a consistent method for converting Persian and Arabic letters into Latin equivalents to ensure accurate indexing and retrieval of multilingual data across global systems. For decades, ISO 233 was officially titled "Arabic characters," even though it encompassed Persian as well. Iranian representatives—backed by the Persian Language and Literature Academy and Iran's National Standards Organization—argued that the structural differences between the two scripts warranted formal recognition. "For the first

time, Persian is no longer subsumed under Arabic in this context," an NLAI official involved in the discussions said. The revised title, 'Information and documentation - Transliteration of Perso-Arabic characters into Latin characters,' reflects what Iranian experts say is a long-overdue correction. The change is expected to lay the groundwork for further standard-setting initiatives focused exclusively on Persian. The shift also underscores Iran's growing presence in international technical bodies. The local Secretariat of ISO's Technical Committee 46 in Tehran played a pivotal role—coordinating documentation, mobilizing votes, and maintaining pressure throughout the process. Officials described the result as "strategic," highlighting Iran's capacity to influence global norms through sustained engagement and specialized diplomacy. The NLAI praised the outcome as a win for both linguistic diversity and national prestige, noting that standard-setting is not merely technical but deeply symbolic.

## Iranian short film 'Dandelions Girl' selected for Greece's drama festival



Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian short film 'Dandelions Girl,' written and directed by Azadeh Masihzadeh, will compete in the children and youth section of the 48th Drama International Short Film Festival in Greece, ILNA reported. The Oscar-qualifying event, scheduled for September 8–14 in the northern Greek city of Drama, received 3,714 submissions this year. Only 151 films made the final cut across all sections, including 15 in the KIDDO 2025 competition where 'Dandelions Girl' will screen. The festival is one of Europe's most established platforms for short films. Produced by Razieh Gholami, 'Dandelions Girl' tells the story of a young girl who breaks into the world of football despite setbacks. Through a symbolic lens, it explores the clash between truth and deception and celebrates the resilience and honesty of the younger generation. "She throws the balance off just by standing her ground," the synopsis reads. Tara Soroush, Beniam Afrangheh, and Abdollah Bahadori star in the film. International distribution is handled by AtoZinema, led by Masihzadeh.