

Persian miniature master laid to rest

Farshchian's path to inspire successors, says Pezeshkian

His works 'reflection of Iranian-Islamic identity': Minister



Arts & Culture Desk

The funeral ceremony of Mahmoud Farshchian, Iran's master of Persian

miniature painting who died August 9 at age 96, was held in Isfahan where thousands gathered to pay their final respects to the artist who bridged po-

etry and visual art. The funeral procession for the celebrated painter began from Isfahan's Fine Arts School, the same institution where Farshchian took his first artistic steps as a young man. President Masoud Pezeshkian issued a message at the funeral of Farshchian expressing hope that Farshchian's distinguished school of art endures through the efforts of artists and cultural figures. "The brilliant path opened by this unparalleled artist of Iran will find worthy successors and devoted students," Pezeshkian said, offering condolences to the artist's family, the nation's artistic community, and all admirers of Iranian culture. Farshchian's coffin was carried from the aircraft at Isfahan's Shahid Beheshti Airport amid tearful silence from students, fellow artists and admirers who had gathered since dawn. Culture and Islamic Guidance Minis-

ter Abbas Salehi, who met with artists and Farshchian's family at the Abbasi Hotel's Mirror Hall, called the painter "unique" and praised his lifelong dedication to creating lasting works. "Master Farshchian possessed a special skill in transforming poetry into visual art," Salehi said, describing the artist's work as "a reflection of Iranian-Islamic identity." The minister highlighted Isfahan's role as "Iran's art capital" and noted that Farshchian's development represented the city's historical and cultural capacity. He thanked provincial officials and the municipality for their cooperation in bringing the artist's body back to his birthplace. Former Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, who attended the gathering, recalled his multiple encounters with Farshchian in New York and Tehran. "Master Farshchian was a gem of Iranian and world art," Zarif said, add-

ing that "his love for Iran and humanity flows through all his works." Zarif recounted taking Farshchian's albums to Paris to gift French officials, allowing them to grasp "the greatness of Iranian art." He described the artist's presence in the art world as inspiring to all. The funeral route will wind from the Fine Arts School toward the Saeb Tabrizi Mausoleum, where Farshchian will be laid to rest according to his wishes. The burial site holds symbolic significance for many artists. Like the 17th-century poet Saeb Tabrizi, who captured the Iranian spirit through verse, Farshchian used brush and paint to portray the same cultural essence throughout his seven-decade career. Farshchian died August 9 in a New Jersey hospital after falling into a coma. Born in Isfahan in 1930, he became internationally recognized for modernizing Persian miniature painting while preserving its traditional roots.

Animated series 'Museum' picked for Chaniartoon festival in Greece

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian animated series 'Museum' was officially selected for the 9th Chaniartoon International Comic and Animation Festival, scheduled to take place from September 12 to 28, 2025, in Chania, Crete, Greece. The festival is renowned for showcasing short animated films from around the globe, encompassing both professional and student works, ILNA reported. Directed by Behrooz and Abtin Yaghmaian, 'Museum' is produced by the Saba Animation Center. Utilizing stop-motion

techniques, the series aims to introduce Iranian art history to young audiences. Each episode immerses viewers in the rich cultural and architectural heritage of Iran, offering a visual journey through its artistic legacy. The Chaniartoon festival is a significant event in the animation calendar, featuring a diverse program that includes film screenings, workshops, comic exhibitions, and immersive experiences in virtual and augmented reality. The festival serves as a platform for cultural exchange and artistic collaboration, bringing together creators



and audiences to celebrate the art of animation. The Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting's International Affairs Department is responsible for the international distribution of 'Museum,' facilitating its presence at global platforms like Chaniartoon.

Iran launches national health tourism platform to attract foreign patients

Social Desk

Iran officially launched a national health tourism platform aimed at streamlining the reception of international patients, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts announced. The system, which began as a pilot in Khorasan Razavi Province, is now operational in Tehran and Fars, with plans for nationwide implementation by the end of the Iranian month of Shahrivar (Septem-

ber 21). It integrates multiple stakeholders—including the ministries of tourism, health, and foreign affairs, as well as authorized medical centers, travel agencies, and translators—into a unified digital platform. The project aims to eliminate unauthorized intermediaries and enhance transparency in the sector. Deputy Tourism Minister Anoushirvan Mohseni Bandpey emphasized that the system is a "comprehensive, inter-agency platform" designed

to safeguard patient data and ensure regulatory compliance. He noted that the platform's security features are aligned with international standards, providing a secure environment for both patients and service providers. Sajad Razavi, Deputy Health Minister, highlighted the system's role in expediting the treatment process for foreign patients. He added that medical centers in Tehran and Fars are now required to process international patient requests

through the platform within 24 hours, aiming to "accelerate acceptance and treatment" while ensuring "transparency and legality." The health tourism sector has become a significant contributor to Iran's economy. In 2022, the country attracted approximately 1 million health tourists, generating €2 billion in revenue. The government is also establishing health tourism offices in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Oman, Qatar, and Kuwait to further promote the sector.

Iran plans to deport two million Afghans by year end: Minister

Border barriers cut illegal entries 70%

Social Desk

Iranian Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni announced Monday that his government plans to deport two million undocumented Afghan migrants by the end of the current Iranian calendar year, as part of a broader crackdown that has already sent 1.2 million people back across the border since March. The deportation drive reflects Iran's tougher stance on the estimated six million Afghan nationals living within its borders, many of whom fled to escape Taliban rule and Afghanistan's deepening humanitarian crisis, IRNA reported. More than 70% of those already deported left "voluntarily," Momeni told reporters upon arriving in the northeastern city of Mashhad, though the UN refugee agency disputes this characterization. Speaking from Iran's border region with Afghanistan, Momeni emphasized that the deportations follow legal procedures and maintain "human dignity." He rejected criticism that the policy amounts to anti-migrant sentiment, noting that all countries maintain specific regulations governing foreign nationals. The minister's visit to Mashhad coincided with his inspection of the Dogharoun border crossing, where authorities have constructed a 130-kilometer section of a planned 953-kilometer barrier wall along Iran's northeastern frontier. The four-meter-high concrete barrier, topped with fencing and equipped with electronic surveillance systems, has cut unauthorized border crossings by 70%, according to Iranian officials.

Border security has become a pressing concern for Tehran, which cites both illegal migration and drug trafficking as key challenges. Provincial officials noted that while traditional opium smuggling has declined, synthetic drug trafficking has surged in recent years. The deportation campaign gained momentum following Iran's conflict with Israel, with Iranian authorities expressing concerns about potential security risks. Many Afghan families have lived in Iran for years, with some children born on Iranian soil. UN officials warn that Afghanistan faces one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, with mass deportations from neighboring countries exacerbating unemployment and economic instability. The Taliban government has imposed severe restrictions on women's rights and civil liberties since regaining power in 2021. Iran's crackdown mirrors similar policies in Pakistan, which has also initiated large-scale deportations of Afghan migrants. Both countries hosted millions of Afghans who fled successive waves of conflict over recent decades. The Dogharoun crossing, operating for over a century, serves as a major transit point between the two nations. The border facility sits 18 kilometers southeast of Taybad city and handles significant commercial traffic alongside the growing stream of deportees. Momeni indicated that Iran would continue processing cases involving documented migrants through its National Migration Organization, though he stressed that all undocumented residents must eventually return to Afghanistan.

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