



38th Moscow Int'l Book Fair opens with Iran literary heritage on display

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran opened its pavilion at the 38th Moscow International Book Fair (MIBF) on Wednesday, presenting more than 320 titles spanning classical and contemporary literature, Iranology, Persian language instruction, Islamic studies, and non-fiction. The fair runs through September 7 at Pavilion 57 of the VDNH Exhibition Center, IRNA reported. The Iranian stand, organized by the Iran Book and Literature House with support from Iran's cultural center in Russia, occupies 27 square meters and serves as a hub for cultural di-

plomacy. It highlights Iran's literary heritage while promoting Persian language and fostering international collaboration in translation, copyright, and publishing. The display also commemorates the 1,500th anniversary of the birth of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), reinforcing Iran's cultural presence on the global stage. Interactive events are central to Iran's presentation. Author Marjan Fouladvand and illustrator Atefe Maleki Joo are hosting workshops on children's book illustration, storytelling, and Iranian mythology. The space also introduces the International Book of the Year

Award, and the Tehran International Book Fair, offering visitors a window into contemporary Iranian publishing and literary achievements. The MIBF hosts over 300 publishers and distributors from Russia, Iran, Belarus, China, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and North Korea. India is the guest of honor, showcasing more than 2,500 titles and organizing 50 events on modern technologies, literature, and cultural traditions. For the third year, the Moscow International Children's Book Fair runs concurrently, emphasizing youth literature, digital publishing, and interactive educational programs.



● IRNA

Shajarian's concert moved from Azadi Square to Azadi Stadium

Arts & Culture Desk

Tehran Mayor Alireza Zakani said on Wednesday that a free concert by acclaimed Iranian vocalist Homayoun Shajarian will be staged at Azadi Stadium on September 5 instead of Azadi Square, following a cabinet decision. The change of venue came after Shajarian announced on September 3 that his planned open-air performance in central Tehran had been canceled, Mehr News Agency reported. Zakani told reporters the gov-

ernment had reviewed the matter and voted to host the event in the 78,000-seat stadium, which he described as a safer and more "reliable" location. He stressed the municipality had "no role" in scrapping the earlier plan for Azadi Square. Government spokeswoman Fatemeh Mohajerani also weighed in, saying the administration's stance had been clear since granting Shajarian a permit. "Holding a concert with the presence of millions, strengthening national unity, that has been

our position," she wrote on X. She added that Iran had once witnessed "ten-kilometer celebrations" after the war, showing that such gatherings are possible when institutions work hand in hand. Shajarian, one of Iran's most popular classical and fusion singers, received his permit in July for what would have been his first major outdoor performance in years. His concerts often draw huge crowds, and officials have promoted the September 5 show as a cultural highlight in the capital.

8th international travel, ecotourism fair gets underway in Tehran

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran opened the 8th international travel and ecotourism fair aka Oca Fair at the Shahr-e Aftab International Exhibition Center in southern Tehran on September 3. The event was inaugurated by Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Reza Salehi-Amiri. The exhibition is scheduled to run from September 3 to 7, IRNA reported. Spanning over 13,000 square meters, the fair is divided into four main halls, each dedicated to a specific as-

pect of adventure and nature tourism. Exhibitors are showcasing a range of products and services, including camping gear, off-road vehicles, and ecotourism equipment. The event aims to promote responsible travel and environmental awareness, aligning with the ministry's goal to encourage domestic tourism and reduce foreign currency outflow. The exhibition also features a booth by the Iranian Touring and Automobile Club, offering services such as international driving permits,



Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Reza Salehi-Amiri cuts the ribbon to open the 8th international travel and ecotourism fair aka Oca Fair in Tehran on September 3, 2025. ● IRNA

vehicle assistance, and car rentals in Dubai.

Iran, UNICEF launch joint projects to support vulnerable children, women

Social Desk

State Welfare Organization of Iran (SWO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) unveiled two collaborative projects aimed at assisting vulnerable children and empowering female-headed households. These initiatives were announced during a meeting between Javad Hosseini, head of Iran's State Welfare Organization of Iran, and Dorina Andreev-Jitaru, UNICEF Representative in Iran, on Wednesday. The first project focuses on providing support to orphaned, abandoned, and disabled children, particularly those affected by natural disasters and migration. The second aims to empower women who are the primary breadwinners of their families. Hosseini highlighted that SWO currently offers over 170 services, reaching approximately 8 million individuals nationwide. These services include vision and hearing screenings, genetic counseling,



Head of Iran's State Welfare Organization Javad Hosseini (c) and UNICEF Representative in Iran Dorina Andreev-Jitaru (l) attend a meeting in Tehran on September 3, 2025, to discuss joint initiatives supporting vulnerable children and empowering women. ● IRNA

and support for individuals with disabilities. The organization operates with a workforce of 19,000 full-time employees and 23,000 licensed non-governmental centers. The collaboration with UNICEF has also extended to humanitarian efforts, such as providing relief packages to earthquake survivors in Khoy and distributing 1,600

tablets to underserved areas. The partners plan to organize sports events for children under SCO's care, conduct empowerment workshops for women in cities like Kerman, Zahedan, and Ahvaz, and implement a mentorship program for young adults transitioning out of care. Hosseini emphasized the importance of continued support for these individuals beyond the age of 18, stating, "We believe that support should continue beyond the age of 18. UNICEF can assist in this regard." He also noted that Iran's experience in community-based rehabilitation and disaster response could serve as a model for other countries. Andreev-Jitaru praised SWO's comprehensive approach, stating, "I doubt any organization exists that reaches its target population as extensively as this one." She expressed UNICEF's commitment to supporting Iran's efforts to protect and empower vulnerable children and families.

Disarming Hezbollah would ...

The American envoy to Beirut, Tom Barrack, has proposed that disarmament be executed by the Lebanese army, with a clear timeline for implementation. Yet, all indications suggest the army is reluctant to resort to force. Military leaders are wary of being dragged into an armed confrontation with Hezbollah, knowing that compulsory disarmament would be futile without the group's consent. Given the army's own sectarian composition — which includes Shia, Sunni, and supporters of the resistance axis — pressing it into forced disarmament risks sparking internal tensions and undermining the army itself. Senior officers appear well aware that the issue is being dictated from abroad and that armed action would push Lebanon to the brink of chaos. For this reason, many Lebanese are seeking a negotiated settlement rather than coercion, which would never

result in the complete disarmament of Hezbollah. Lebanese political elders argue that the starting point must be a national defense strategy, enabling the country to secure its borders and territorial integrity. Such a plan would require coordination between the army and the resistance to guard the southern frontier. Weakening Hezbollah's military presence there would, they warn, open the door for Israel to advance as far as Beirut. Equally crucial are binding guarantees from all parties that, if Hezbollah were to lay down arms, Israel would refrain from attacking Lebanon. History has shown, however, that the US has failed to provide such assurances or rein in Israel. In sum, disarming Hezbollah would place the security of Lebanon — and indeed the wider region — in jeopardy. Forced disarmament through military action is bound to fail. Unless Hezbollah itself agrees, no faction inside

Lebanon has the capacity to compel it to give up its weapons. Talks between Hezbollah, the government, and the army command are ongoing in search of compromise. Yet Lebanese leaders are acutely aware of the dangers: a reckless move could set the country on an irreversible path toward civil war. For external actors such as the US, Israel, and Saudi Arabia, only their own interests matter. Lebanon's internal security, and the potential toll of a new civil conflict on its people, is of little concern to them. Resistance forces in Lebanon remain firmly opposed to any coercive disarmament. The current negotiations appear aimed at identifying peaceful solutions that preserve the balance of power and safeguard Lebanon's national security. Above all, avoiding civil war is the overriding concern for Lebanon's political, military, and intellectual elite as they try to weather this intricate situation.