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Iran, Armenia expand media, anti-disinformation cooperation



Iran's Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) CEO Hossein Jaber-Ansari (C) and his delegation visit Armenian national television during a media cooperation trip on October 3, 2025.
● IRNA

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) and Armenia's state-run Armenpress agreed to deepen cooperation in media production, news exchange, and combating disinformation during high-level meetings in Yerevan. The agreements were reached during the visit of IRNA CEO Hossein Jaber-Ansari, who was invited by Armenpress Director Narine Nazaryan, IRNA reported. The visit began on Friday, October 3, with a meeting at Armenpress, Armenian national television and radio, where discussions focused on joint news production, video conferences, photographic exhibitions, and expert collaboration.

"One advantage of cooperation is that both media outlets can assist each other in preventing narrative-building and presenting an incomplete or misleading representation of developments by third parties," Jaber-Ansari said. The meetings also explored expanding IRNA's coverage in Armenian and collaboration in book publishing, translation, and research. On Saturday, October 4, the delegation visited the Orbeli Analytical-Research Centre, affiliated with Armenia's Prime Minister's Office. Jaber-Ansari and Director Gor Tsarukyan discussed countering disinformation targeting both nations. Tsarukyan outlined the Center's monitoring, analytical

work, cooperation with foreign think tanks, and annual regional and international events involving Iranian participation. He described the meetings as "very significant" for addressing topics of mutual interest and strengthening bilateral ties. Jaber-Ansari briefed the Armenian side on IRNA's operations, noting it produces news in Persian and 11 foreign languages, and runs a cultural center that publishes books and newspapers. He stressed that all prerequisites exist to expand cooperation, saying, "I think this is one of the areas in which we can cooperate with you." The delegation also participated in an expert session titled "Armenia-Iran Relations in the Context of Recent Regional Developments," joined by representatives from Armenia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Institute of Oriental Studies, and the National Academy of Sciences. Participants exchanged views on implementing joint steps to promote regional stability, circulate mutually beneficial initiatives, and enhance the role of information and expert communities.

First UNESCO anniversary Mehregan festival hailed as 'civilizational achievement': Minister

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Reza Salehi Amiri on Saturday praised the ancient festival of Mehregan as a "civilizational achievement and strategic message" for the world, marking the first anniversary of its inscription on UNESCO's heritage list through a joint bid by Iran and Tajikistan in December 2024. In a message released on the occasion, Salehi Amiri said Mehregan embodies a philosophy of "friendship, justice, balance and co-existence" that resonates well beyond Iran's borders. What began as a seasonal thanksgiving has, over centuries, become a universal symbol of shared values. The minister argued that the festival's recognition is both a cultural milestone and a call for nations to rebuild trust and solidarity

through heritage. Mehregan, traditionally celebrated from early October to early November, has its roots in Zoroastrian harvest rituals and remains widely observed in Iran, Tajikistan and parts of Central Asia. UNESCO added the festival to its Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity at its 19th session last year, citing its role in strengthening social cohesion across diverse communities. Salehi Amiri said the inscription was "not merely a nod to our historical depth, but a civilizational duty," stressing that the real task now is to safeguard, revitalize and transmit Mehregan's ethical legacy. He described it as a "festival of harmony between humanity and nature," linking its teachings to modern challenges such as environmental degradation, inequality and global



mistrust. Drawing attention to the coincidence of the Persian month of Mehr with the start of Iran's school year, he urged young Iranians to embrace their role as "cultural ambassadors," building a future where "knowledge, ethics, faith and mutual trust" serve as the foundation for peace and human development. "The world today, more than ever, needs to return to cultural wisdom," he

said, underscoring Mehregan's place as part of humanity's common heritage. The minister called on nations to turn to such traditions as guides for justice, dignity and solidarity in an era of mounting crises. Tehran will host a symposium later this month to review the UNESCO listing and expand cultural outreach around Mehregan, bringing together scholars and heritage officials from the region.

Iranian books on view at Sulaymaniyah Int'l Book Fair



Arts & Culture Desk

The 7th Sulaymaniyah International Book Fair opened on Friday with the participation of dozens of foreign and domestic publishers, including a national Iranian pavilion displaying more than 500 titles. Dedicated as the "President Mam Jalal Edition" in honor of the late Iraqi president and Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani, the 11-day fair runs until October 13 at the Sulaymaniyah Exhibition Hall.

Around 150 publishing houses and institutions are taking part, including 70 foreign publishers from 16 countries such as Iran, Egypt, the United Kingdom, Germany, the UAE, Lebanon, Turkey, Palestine and Jordan. More than 250,000 books spanning literature, history, politics, children's works and philosophy are on show. The opening ceremony was attended by senior officials including Kurdistan Regional Government Minister of

Culture and Youth Mohammed Saeed and Sulaymaniyah Governor Haval Abubakir. Hassan Rahim, the head of the fair committee, described this year's edition as "different from past years" with broader participation and improved organization, adding that the aim was to "provide better access" and a stronger platform for publishers. Iran's Book and Literature House has set up a national stand in cooperation with the Iranian Cultural House in Sulaymaniyah. More than 60 Iranian publishers are represented, offering a wide range of works in classic and modern literature, children's and young adult books, religion, Iranology, Persian language learning and tourism. Independent publishers such as Cheshmeh, Ehsan, Ravayat-e Fath and Kurdistan are also showcasing their collections. Alongside the book displays, the fair is hosting author talks, cultural debates and panel sessions in Kurdish, Arabic, Persian and other languages.

Iranian short films to light up Ottawa screen

Arts & Culture Desk

Carleton University in Canada's capital will host "Iranian Cinema Night" on Wednesday evening with the screening of seven short films from Iranian directors. The event, beginning at 6 p.m. at the university's St. Patrick's Building, is open to the public free of charge, Mehr News Agency reported. The one-night showcase, curated by Mohammad Hamzei and managed by filmmaker Foad Asadi, aims to introduce "fresh achievements" of Iran's short cinema and build a bridge between local audiences and Iranian storytellers. By subtitled all works in English, organizers seek to draw in both international and Persian-speaking communities. Among the films to be shown are 'Unjustified' by Mohammad Reza Khavari, 'Lost Swan' by Ehsan Abbasi, 'Dragon's Tail' by Saeed Keshavarz, 'Adjustment' by Mehrdad Hasani, 'Dreamless Sleep' by Foad Asadi, 'Sillage: Portrait of An Onlooker'



by Farhad Delaram and 'Dabur' by Saeed Nejadi. Carleton University has teamed up with the Ottawa-based Pand Institute to bring the program to life.

World Space Week: Iran simulates lunar soil for first time

Social Desk

Iranian researchers at the Iran University of Science and Technology unveiled on Saturday their first domestic simulation of lunar soil, based on the composition of samples from NASA's Apollo 14 mission. The announcement came during the opening ceremony of World Space Week in Tehran on October 4, attended by Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Minister, Sattar Hashemi and Head of the Iranian Space Agency (ISA) Hassan Salarieh, ISNA reported. In a departure from past events that focused on achievements, this year's opening zeroed in on "Life in Space." Researchers led by Mehdi Nasiri Sarvi said they began by mimicking the Moon's regolith and have moved on to experiments in agriculture, mining and settlement design under

simulated lunar conditions. Nasiri Sarvi, an assistant professor in satellite technology engineering, explained that the soil simulant was crafted by analyzing mineral compositions of Iranian rocks and blending them to match curves recorded in Apollo 11, 14, 15 and 16 mission reports. He said the new sample is "very close" in elemental proportions to the real lunar material. He noted that in moon environments, the absence of atmosphere means no carbon dioxide or oxygen. To mimic a life-support cycle, the team planted two base plant species in sealed chambers. One absorbs CO₂ and produces O₂, the other does the reverse — the process driven by an initial oxygen capsule. He said this could pave the way for a self-sustaining gas cycle in lunar habitats. Their broader strategy includes extracting oxygen and hydrogen, recovering metals, and

harvesting helium-3, a rare and clean fusion fuel thought to exist in Moon soil. Salarieh underlined the aim, "We want to shift from symbolic space presence to resource-driven missions." Among design proposals is an "origami" shelter — a telescoping, foldable paper-inspired shell that expands on deployment, lightweight yet radiation-shielding when clad with processed lunar regolith. The researchers have built a one-meter prototype and are exploring use of lunar-derived cement to block heat and radiation. They also hope to deploy 3D printers on the Moon, using in-situ materials to build modular habitations. Site selection — between poles, equatorial regions, shadows or elevated terrain — depends on sunlight, temperature swings and radiation. Nasiri Sarvi warned that equatorial surfac-

es can exceed 100 °C during lunar daytime, while shadowed regions behave drastically differently. Their mineral analysis shows that silicon and magnesium dominate lunar soil — in line with prior international studies. The team conducted spectroscopic comparisons, meteorite studies, and cross-validation with Apollo data. He emphasized that mining and resource extraction underpin renewed global interest in the Moon. "This is not about prestige anymore," he said. "It's about economics." The minister remarked that Iran must "catch up" in lunar science to avoid falling behind. For now, the project remains in university laboratories, but Nasiri Sarvi called for a national lunar research center with support from the Space Agency and research institutions.



World Space Week (October 4–10), themed "Living in Space," is being marked globally and focuses this year on the engineering, biology and environmental aspects of making off-Earth habitats real.