Iran Daily

Beijing University hosts ceremony honoring Persian poet Hafez

'Shared voice of humanity in search of truth, love and beauty'

Arts & Culture Desk

Peking University on Friday held a ceremony marking the legacy of Hafez, Iran's celebrated 14th-century (8th century AH) poet, where Chinese scholars described him as a "shared voice of humanity in search of truth, love and beauty." The event was attended by Li Shujing, head of the School of Foreign Languages at Peking University, and Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli, Iran's ambassador to China, Chinese broadcaster CGTN reported.

"Hafez's poetry, with its sincere emotion, profound ideas and romantic imagination, has not only shaped the spirit of the Iranian nation but also inspired people around the world," Li said at the ceremony.

"China and Iran, two ancient civilizations, have long shared poetry, emotion, truth and wisdom. Honoring Hafez here is both a tribute to a literary genius and a symbol of dialogue between two timeless cultures."

Ambassador Rahmani Fazli highlighted the close cultural ties between the two nations, noting that Persian language and literature are taught in 14 Chinese universities. "The long-standing Persian program at Peking University, now nearly 70 years old, is a source of pride and reflects the depth of cultural connections between Iran and China," he said.

Peking University, one of China's oldest centers for Persian studies, plays an active role in introducing Persian literature to Chinese academia through annual cultural and literary events.

Later in the program, professors from several universities discussed the current state of Hafez studies in China. Students also contributed with a series of presentations highlighting key aspects of Hafez's life and poetic legacy.

To conclude the conference, the Iranian ambassador presented a curated collection of Persian poetry anthologies to the attending professors and students.

Chinese familiarity with Hafez dates back to the early 20th century, when scholars in Beijing and Shanghai first read his poems through Russian and English translations, viewing him as a symbol of Eastern wisdom comparable to Confucius and Laozi. By the 1980s, Hafez's poetry had become part of the Persian literature curriculum at universities in Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Xi'an and Guangzhou, where students often recite his verses in the original Persian. In recent years, Hafez has come to symbolize the literary and spiritual bond between Iran and China. Chinese scholars frequently compare him with poets such as Li Bai and Du Fu.

Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli (6th R), Iran's ambassador to China, attends China's Peking University for a ceremony marking the legacy of Hafez, Iran's celebrated 14th-century (8th century AH) poet, in Beijing on October 24, 2025.
● *IRNA*

Four Iranian animations to vie at Greece's ICONA Festival

Arts & Culture Desk

Four Iranian animated films produced by the Documentary and Experimental Film Center (DEFC) have been selected to compete at the ICONA 2025 Contemporary Animation Festival in Greece, the center announced on Saturday. The selected titles are "Bug" by Ali Masoumi, "Sorrow" by Niloofar Naderi Tehrani, "The Season of Flying" by Shahang Kiani Rashid, and "Dejkak" by Azad Maroufi. Organized by the Department of Audio and Visual Arts at the Ionian University, the ICONA Festival showcases cutting-edge animated works from around the world, fostering creativity, innovation, and global dialogue through visual storytelling.

The four films were submitted to the festival by the international division of DEFC. The seventh edition of the ICONA Festival will take place from November 13 to 16 at Ionian University, Greece.

Persian culture book released in Bosnia

Arts & Culture Desk

A new book titled "A World within a Border: The Persian Language, Literature and Culture" has been published in Bosnia and Herzegovina to introduce Iranian culture to local audiences.

The volume, written by Munir Drkic, professor of Persian language and literature at the University of Sarajevo, was jointly released by the Iranian Cultural Attaché's Office in Sarajevo and a Bosnian publishing house.

Divided into three thematic sections, the book explores contemporary Iranian culture, the global presence of the Persian language and literature, and the historical influence of Persian in the Balkans.

The work aims to present a comprehensive picture of Iran's linguistic and literary heritage. While it places special emphasis on classical Persian literature, it also delves into art, handicrafts and even aspects of Iran's economy.

Designed for general readers, the book requires no specialized background and is richly illustrated with photographs, maps and rare manuscripts.

Universities fighting off teaching challenges in AI era

INTERVIEW
EXCLUSIVE

As artificial intelligence continues to redefine industries and reshape human interaction, its growing influence on education has become impossible to ignore. Universities around the world are grappling with both the opportunities and challenges AI brings to classrooms, research, and academic ethics. In Iran, conversations about responsible innovation and the balance between technology and intellectual integrity are gaining new momentum.

To explore these issues, Iran Daily spoke with Davood Masoudi, the director of Smart Governance Think Tank, who shared his insights on how artificial intelligence – particularly tools like ChatGPT – is transforming higher education, re-shaping the student-teacher dynamics, and challenging universities to adapt while safeguarding academic values.

IRANDAILY: As the director of Smart Governance Think Tank, how do you view the role of artificial intelligence in higher education?

Davood Masoudi: Artificial intelligence (AI) represents a paradigm shift in the landscape of higher education. It holds the potential to personalize learning experiences, expand access to educational resources, and enhance teaching efficiency. However, its integration must be approached with care, particularly concerning ethical issues such as data privacy and algorithmic bias.

Do you believe tools like ChatGPT are more helpful to students, or do they risk fostering intellectual laziness?

These tools can greatly support students throughout their learning journey if used responsibly. Nonetheless, there is a valid concern that excessive reliance on such technologies could hinder deep learning and critical thinking. AI should be viewed as an enabler, not a substitute for intellectual engagement.

What strategies would you recommend for students to use ChatGPT effectively?

Students should approach ChatGPT as a supplementary learning aid. It can be useful for clarifying complex concepts, generating initial ideas, or identifying credible sources. When used alongside traditional study methods, it can strengthen comprehension and analytical abilities. The key is to remain actively engaged in the learning process.

Some students use ChatGPT to write entire assignments or theses. What are the academic implications of this trend?

Such practices undermine the integrity of academic work. They deprive students of the opportunity to develop essential research and writing skills and may lead to unoriginal or plagiarized content. Misuse of AI not only weakens individual learning outcomes but also erodes the credibility of academic institutions.

How can universities distinguish between legitimate educational use and misuse of AI tools?

Universities must establish clear policies defining acceptable uses of AI in academic settings. These policies should be supported by training programs that promote ethical use, critical thinking, and independent learning. Organizing workshops and expert-led seminars can also raise awareness and foster a culture of responsible innovation.

Are AI-detection and anti-plagiarism tools available and effective in Iran?

Yes, several AI-detection and anti-plagiarism tools are currently being developed and implemented in Iran. These technologies assist in identifying AI-generated content and assessing the originality of academic work. However, ongoing refinement and localization are essential to ensure their effectiveness across diverse academic contexts.

If a legal or ethical framework were to be established for student use of ChatGPT, what should be its core principle?

The cornerstone should be the promotion of independent learning and critical thinking. AI must serve as a supportive instrument, not a replacement for academic effort. The framework should also highlight the importance of academic integrity and the authenticity of scholarly contributions.

Given the rapid pace of technological change, how can universities stay current and benefit from AI advancements?

Universities should adopt a proactive, research-oriented approach. This includes introducing AI-focused courses, supporting interdisciplinary research, and fostering collaboration with technology companies. Establishing innovation hubs and AI laboratories within academic institutions can further accelerate knowledge transfer and capacity building.

Davood Masoudi