



# UNESCO adds Iranian philosopher Tabatabaei, mystic Bastami to global commemoration list



Bayazid Bastami



Allameh Muhammad Hossein Tabatabaei



The commemoration of Bastami's 1,150th death anniversary was backed by Armenia, Tajikistan and Turkey. Born around 803 CE in the north-central Iranian city of Bastam, he was revered as "King of Mystics."

Bastami's teachings, centered on humility, lifelong learning and harmony with nature, resonate strongly with UNESCO's advocacy of lifelong education and sustainable development.

Iran's commission said both figures embody "timeless values of knowledge, reason and coexistence." It plans a series of international academic conferences and exhibitions in their honor next year.

Tehran also played an active role in three other nominations approved for the 2026-2027 cycle, the 1,050th birth anniversary of Persian poet Rabia Balkhi (backed by Tajikistan and Afghanistan), the 50th anniversary of Iraqi philosopher Ayatollah Mohammad Baqir al-Sadr's 'Logical Foundations of Induction,' and the 500th birth anniversary of Turkish poet Baki. UNESCO's commemoration list, updated every two years, celebrates figures whose work promotes dialogue among cultures and advances peace, a mission that, for Iran, remains both philosophical and strategic.

## Arts & Culture Desk

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on November 1 approved the inclusion of two towering Iranian figures, philosopher Allameh Muhammad Hossein Tabatabaei and mystic Bayazid Bastami, in its 2026-2027 calendar of global commemorations, following a proposal by Iran's

National Commission for UNESCO.

By celebrating its philosophers, Iran recalls a legacy of Islamic thought and Sufi wisdom, projecting cultural influence abroad and reaffirming its place in the world's shared intellectual heritage, IRNA reported.

The decision was adopted during the 43rd session of UNESCO's General Conference, underway in the historic Silk

Road city of Samarkand from October 30 to November 13. The session was attended by Minister of Science, Research and Technology Hossein Simaei-Sarraf, who also heads the National Commission for UNESCO, and the body's Secretary-General Hassan Fartousi.

Tabatabaei's centennial of intellectual life will be marked with support from Azerbaijan, Iraq and Pakistan. His

groundbreaking work 'Principles of Philosophy and the Method of Realism' is credited with forging a dialogue between Islamic thought and Western rationalism.

UNESCO documents describe him as a "bridge-builder" between philosophical traditions, a scholar whose reasoning "transcended borders" in pursuit of mutual understanding.

## Iran achieves 96% domestic drug production amid Western sanctions

By Sadeq Dehqan  
Staff writer

### INTERVIEW

Iran now produces about 96% of its pharmaceuticals domestically despite decades of Western sanctions, lawmaker Fatemeh Mohammad Beigi said, describing the country's health-care sector as one that has "crossed the wall of sanctions" and joined the world's vaccine-making nations.

The member of Parliament's Health and Treatment Committee said Iran's scientific drive had turned restrictions into an "engine of innovation."

She warned that the humanitarian fallout from sanctions-related drug shortages rests squarely with the countries that imposed them, and revealed that parliament is preparing legal filings to hold the United States and European governments accountable for the impact on Iranian patients, particularly those

with rare and life-threatening illnesses.

"Our specialists stood on their own feet," she told Iran Daily, stressing that Iranian researchers and manufacturers had built "a self-reliant pharmaceutical system" capable of meeting nearly all domestic demand. "Only a small fraction of medicine for certain diseases still comes from abroad, and our knowledge-based firms are doing everything possible to fill even those gaps."

Mohammad Beigi said the growth of Iran's home-grown biotech companies had pushed the country into "the top ten vaccine-producing nations."

She pointed to the success of locally developed COVID-19 vaccines as proof of that progress. "During the pandemic, our scientists created vaccines when others tried to isolate us," she said. "That moment showed what Iranian talent can achieve."

Still, she acknowledged that the

pharmaceutical sector faces persistent headwinds. Shortages of raw materials and advanced laboratory equipment remain "the toughest challenge," she said, though Iranian engineers have begun building their own specialized machinery and production lines. "Step by step, we are closing those gaps too."

Mohammad Beigi said Parliament was pressing international organizations to recognize medical sanctions as a breach of humanitarian law. "Many of our patients lost access to vital drugs because of banking restrictions and blocked trade channels," she said. "The moral and legal responsibility lies with the sanctioning states."

To reduce exposure to such pressures, Tehran is expanding regional partnerships and currency-swap frameworks.

Mohammad Beigi cited Iran's entry into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and BRICS as moves that "dilute Western leverage."

"We've started pharmaceutical exchanges with friendly countries that share mutual interests," she said, describing those deals as lifelines for the health sector.

Parliament, she added, is drafting a plan to shift medicine trade away from the dollar. "Relying on one currency means relying on those who weaponize it," she said. "Our aim is to settle transactions in national currencies so that no patient's treatment depends on political pressure."

The lawmaker lashed out at Washington's sanctions policy, arguing that the United States "inflicts suffering on nations" and will not escape the repercussions at home. "There are growing protests and inequalities even inside America," she said, linking them to what she called "the same unfair policies" that have hurt access to healthcare worldwide. She also pointed to domestic eco-



Fatemeh Mohammad Beigi

nomics caused by the removal of Iran's preferential exchange rate and limited access to foreign currency, which have made importing inputs more costly. "Sanctions turned every dollar into a bottleneck," she said. "But our start-ups and researchers refused to surrender. They are producing high-tech

medicines and giving new hope to patients."

Mohammad Beigi said that Iran's experience has proved that scientific capacity can outlast isolation. "Sanctions tried to paralyze us," she said, "but instead they pushed us to build. Today, Iran stands among the nations that make their own medicine and their own vaccines."

## German Hans Zimmer to stage film-concert in Tehran



### Arts & Culture Desk

A special film-concert program devoted to the renowned German-born composer Hans Zimmer will take place on November 24, at the royal auditorium of the Spinaz Palace in Tehran, featuring live performance by the

"Daris" Symphony Orchestra and a choral ensemble.

The production, organized by Fidibo, will showcase some of Zimmer's most evocative and memorable film scores, IRNA reported.

Highlights will include music from the Christopher Nolan-directed 'Inception' and his Batman trilogy; Ridley Scott's 'Gladiator'; Ron Howard's 'The Da Vinci Code' and 'Angels & Demons'; Guy Ritchie's 'Sherlock Holmes'; Gore Verbinski's and Rob Marshall's 'Pirates of the Caribbean 2 & 4'; Edward Zwick's 'The Last Samurai'; and Joseph Kosinski's forthcoming 'F1', all accompanied by film plan and

sequence projections.

Zimmer's accolades include five Grammy Awards, one British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) prize and two Academy (AKA "Oscars") Awards, and in 2007 the British daily The Telegraph listed him among the world's living geniuses.

The concert will mark Fidibo's latest venture; after earlier film-concert runs devoted to the 'Harry Potter' and 'The Lord of the Rings' franchises, staged over ten nights for twenty performances this year, it now transcends the conventional concert-cinema format for Tehran audiences.

## 50 Iranologists from 21 countries to convene in Tehran

### Arts & Culture Desk

Fifty leading Iranologists from 21 countries are set to gather in Tehran for the International Iranology Summit, organizers announced, underlining the central role of tourism in Iranological studies.

The three-day event, scheduled from November 15 to 17 at the University of Science and Culture, will feature a dedicated session exploring the intersection of tourism and Iranology, organizers said, Mehr News Agency reported.

"Tourism is always at the heart of Iranology," noted Saeed Hashemi, dean of the university's Faculty of Tourism, during a press briefing on Sunday.

The summit will assemble eight prominent Iranologists from Iraq, Lebanon, Armenia, Turkey, Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia, many specializing in cultural heritage and literary tourism. They will join Iranian academics in discussions aimed at broadening public awareness of Iranological research. Hashemi highlighted the growing collaboration between universities and the summit, describing the integration of academic institutions as "a major step in scientificizing" the field and communicating Iran's cultural landscape to global audiences. Each participating university will act as a supporting arm for the summit, contributing expertise and facilitating scholarly exchange.