



# Minister flags cultural diversity as key to nat'l progress

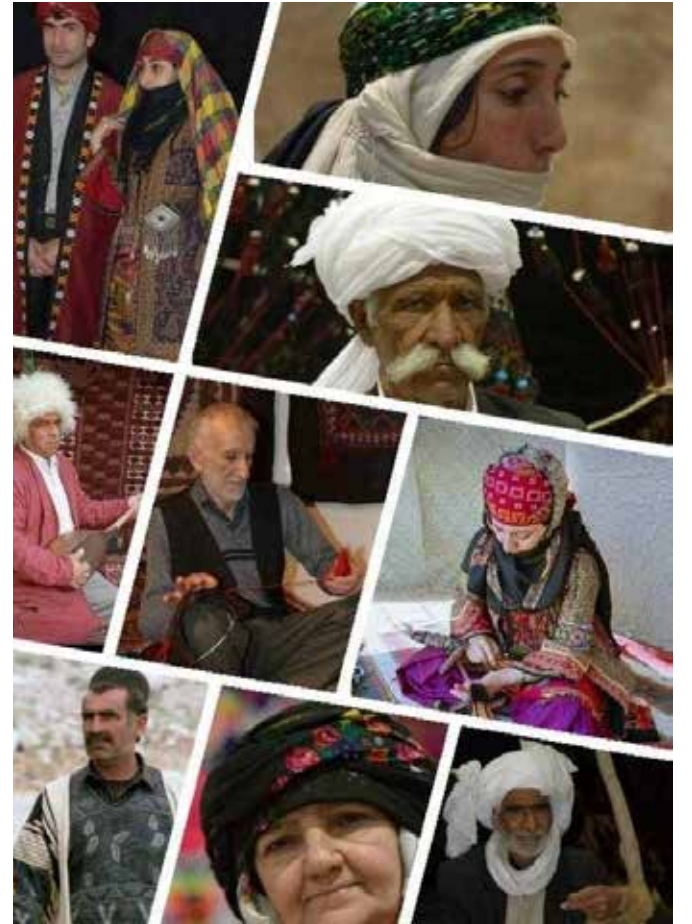
## Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's diverse ethnic and cultural communities are seen as key drivers for the country's economic and social development, Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Reza Salehi-Amiri said on Monday at the 24th Strategic Council meeting of his ministry. Speaking at the ministry's headquarters, Salehi-Amiri reviewed past management experiences in heritage, tourism and handicrafts and stressed the need for "targeted and sustained" engagement between

the ministry and provincial administrations, IRNA reported. Iran's ministry is aiming to institutionalize a more coherent system of planning and oversight for provincial projects, seeking to tie cultural preservation and tourism development directly to measurable economic outcomes. Officials must engage directly with local communities, schedule visits and projects with precision, and ensure managerial accountability to realize sustainable development. Salehi-Amiri said sitting in offices without active provincial

interaction yields limited results. "Planning, targeted trips, and responsive management are conditions for national development success," he said. He highlighted the role of governors and local managers in reinforcing the central-provincial link, ensuring projects deliver tangible and lasting benefits. The minister further underscored the importance of ethnic and cultural identity in Iran. "Iran is a diverse society, and all ethnicities and cultures are officially recognized," Salehi-Amiri said.

He stressed that nothing should hinder the preservation and promotion of local languages, literature, traditions, and customs. Young Iranians remain deeply connected to their national culture and the country's historical civilization. Salehi-Amiri noted, "Iran is home to all ethnic groups. Respecting local language, culture and identity is part of national development and an invaluable cultural wealth. This diversity is a major asset for the country's cultural, social and economic advancement."



## Shiraz selected as preferred venue for Fajr Int'l Film Festival

### Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Fajr International Film Festival (FIF) is set to return this year, with Shiraz being chosen as the preferred city to host the international section. Authorities announced the plan on November 3, framing Shiraz as a suitable and culturally rich option, though no permanent decision has been made to hold future editions there.

The international section of FIFF has been suspended for several years, undermining its credibility and raising concerns among filmmakers and cultural observers. By selecting Shiraz, officials aim to revive the festival while signaling the potential for a more consistent and professional framework, provided that future editions maintain continuity and clear planning, ILNA reported.

Film critic and cultural analyst Jalil Akbari Sehat said that Shiraz "is a city of high cultural and

tourist potential" and could host the festival permanently if the right conditions are met. He cautioned that "the hiatus in holding festivals injures their reputation" and stressed that stability is essential to safeguard the festival's credibility and long-term impact on Iranian cinema. Producer Mehdi Azimi Mirabadi described the choice of Shiraz as "a wise and intelligent decision", noting the city's international cultural recognition. He added that the festival must not become "a private or ineffective gathering for Iran's cinema" and called for a structured manifesto to guide programming, awards, and organization, ensuring the festival remains a meaningful platform rather than a ceremonial event. Azimi Mirabadi also reflected on past interruptions, noting that the international section "lost its independent identity" in recent years and functioned mainly as an adjunct to the na-

tional festival. He warned that if each edition "starts from scratch", the festival will yield little benefit for films, filmmakers, or the country's cultural reputation. Despite economic constraints, Akbari Sehat emphasized that festivals remain vital for sustaining the creative ecosystem. "Cinema cannot be dynamic if festivals are absent," he said. Authorities see FIFF as important not only for screening films but also for maintaining cultural momentum and motivating filmmakers amid limited production resources. The 2025 edition in Shiraz will be overseen by Rouhollah Hosseini, whose international experience is expected to strengthen management and global outreach. Officials noted that Shiraz's poetic heritage and tourist landmarks, including Persepolis, provide a symbolic backdrop aligning the festival with Iran's cultural identity.

## 'Unit 13' from Iran takes top prize at Spanish festival



### Arts & Culture Desk

The Iranian short film 'Unit 13', written and directed by Deniz Ghorbani, won the Best Short Film Award at the annual Samhain Baucogna International Film Festival in Spain. According to the film's media advisor, the accolade was presented during its third worldwide screening.

In the film, a married couple enters into seemingly clandestine relationships with lonely young women in order to carry out a fraud. The narrative takes an unexpected turn when one of the victims becomes pregnant, upending their scheme and altering the course of events.

The cast includes Sepideh Saeidinia, Mahsan Yahyaipour and Amirhossein Fahadan, with Fahadan also acting as the film's international distributor.

## US seeks talks ...

Third, the US wants to wrap up Middle East tensions quickly and shift its focus back to East Asia, where China remains its strategic concern. Fourth, with Russia refusing to engage in peace talks over Ukraine, Washington may feel compelled to continue backing Kyiv alongside Europe. Finally, domestic pressure is mounting and US public opinion has little appetite left for Trump's confrontational foreign policy.

Altogether, these factors might have led Trump to conclude that it's time to take a more constructive line on Iran. Therefore, it's quite possible that the new message carries a different tone from the one sent two months before the war. On the Iranian side, things have also evolved: first, Iran endured the 12-day war without collapsing. Second, contrary to some expectations, the public didn't rise up against the Establishment, but instead, they largely closed ranks around it. Third, Iran's missile strikes against Israel were forceful, fourth, the country quickly rebuilt parts of its military capability, finally, resistance groups previously thought to be crippled are reorganized.

All of this suggests that the pressure campaign failed to produce the outcome Washington had hoped for. Hence, the US might now believe it's better to approach Iran from another angle, avoiding a scenario in which Tehran moves deeper into the orbit of China or Russia.

**Given Iran's insistence on its previous positions, how do you see the prospects for a new round of talks between Tehran and Washington? How likely is success this time?**

Iran has shown flexibility in the past and could display it again within the same parameters. True, it was the US and Israel that upended the table by attacking Iranian targets, but Tehran may still show signs of openness in certain areas.

That's because both sides need an honorable way back to the table. If Washington tries to dictate terms, Tehran will reject them outright; and if Iran's demands go beyond reasonable expectations, the US will walk away.

In essence, compromise only comes when both players hit a dead end and scale back their demands. Negotiations can only move forward if there's genuine political will and good faith. Otherwise, it's just "talks for the sake of talks."

**If talks do resume, will Oman continue to act as a mediator?**

Most likely, yes. Both Iran and the United States prefer that, if direct negotiations don't take place, Oman remains the venue and facilitator.

**Should Tehran and Washington resume dialogue, how do you think Israel would respond? Is there a chance Tel Aviv could resort to military or covert action to derail the process?**

Israel's moves are entirely in line with US policy. Over the past couple of years, no Israeli operation has been carried out without American coordination. Whether it's attacks on Iran, airstrikes in Gaza, or actions in Qatar, all are greenlit by Washington and CENTCOM in the Persian Gulf. So, if the US gives Israel a green light, it will act; if it shows a red one, Israel won't lift a finger.

## Iran, Algeria voice support for Palestinian self-determination at Tehran ceremony



### Social Desk

Iran and Algeria reaffirmed their support for the Palestinians' right to freedom and self-determination during a ceremony in Tehran on Sunday marking the 71st anniversary of the Algerian Revolution and Algeria's National Day. Speaking at the event, Algerian ambassador to Iran

Ali Arrouj said the Algerian Revolution was a revolution "sustained by the patience of a people steadfastly attached to freedom and dignity." Arrouj said the new Algeria would continue its quest to "entrench the values of social justice" by investing in renewable energies, human capital and technological innovation to ensure prosperity for future generations.

He added that Algeria remained steadfast in the principles of its foreign policy including "active non-alignment, the peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in the internal affairs of other states, and unwavering sup-

port for the right of peoples to self-determination including the wounded Palestine." The ambassador noted that Algeria and Iran "enjoyed comprehensive relations," which had witnessed "encouraging momentum" in recent years. "My country remains committed to deepening this partnership and exploring new horizons for cooperation in line with our shared interests and the aspirations of our two peoples." Iran's Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi, who also addressed the ceremony, describing Algeria's National Day as "a vivid reminder of the historic

struggle and the courageous resistance" of a nation for independence. He hailed Algeria for setting an "inspiring example of dignity and freedom" for the Islamic world and all independent nations. The minister noted that relations between Iran and Algeria were "deeply rooted in shared values such as independence, justice, and mutual respect." He further pointed to the all-out support given by the two nations to people of Palestine. "Iran and Algeria have always stood with the Palestinian people and supported their legitimate right to freedom and self-determi-

nation — a principled position that remains firm." Aliabadi said Iran, stood ready to enhance cooperation with Algeria in areas such as industry, energy, vocational training, agriculture, health, banking, and the oil and gas sectors. He noted that both countries possessed rich resources and valuable experiences in the energy and oil and gas industries, and that collaboration in exploration, production, technology transfer, energy efficiency, and the development of renewable energies could serve the interests of both nations and further strengthen South-South cooperation.