



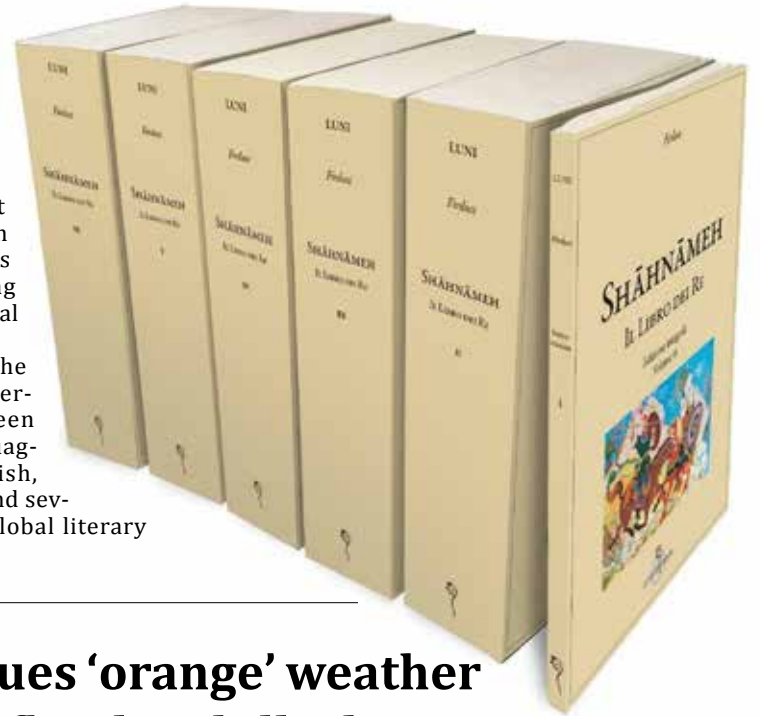
Shahnameh republished in complete Italian edition after century

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's epic poem the Shahnameh (Book of Kings) by Ferdowsi has been republished in Italy in a complete and unified Italian translation, nearly a century after its last full release. The new edition is presented as the first fully coherent and readable Italian publication of the Shahnameh, and is based on the historic translation by Italo Pizzi, an Italian scholar of Persian language and literature who produced the first and only complete translation of the work into a European language between 1886 and 1888, IRNA reported on Monday. Pizzi's translation gained prominence during Italy's Risorgimento, the 19th-century movement that led to national unification, when Ferdowsi's

narrative of warrior princes and state-building was seen by some Italian nationalist circles as aligning with their political ideals. The current edition has been released by Luni Editrice and revised by Simone Cristoforti, a professor at Ca' Foscari University of Venice, to ensure terminological consistency and conceptual fidelity while preserving the literary character of the 19th-century translation. Published in six volumes totaling 4,112 pages, the set is priced at 250 euros. The first volume includes a 16-page color supplement featuring reproductions of some of the oldest known miniatures illustrating scenes from the Shahnameh. The Shahnameh is Iran's national epic poem, written by the Persian poet Ferdowsi around the late 10th and early 11th century and completed

around 1010 CE. It consists of about 50,000 couplets and narrates the mythological, legendary, and historical past of Iran. The poem focuses on kings and heroes and plays a central role in preserving Persian language and cultural identity. The Shahnameh is one of the most important works of Persian literature and has been translated into many languages, including Arabic, English, French, German, Russian, and several others, reflecting its global literary significance.



National toy festival to kick off Wednesday in Tehran



Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults will open its 10th National Toy Festival in Tehran on Wednesday, aiming to promote domestically-made toys and support the country's toy industry. The festival will run until Janu-

ary 17 at the institute's Cultural and Artistic Creations Center, under the slogan "Play, the joy of life," the organizer said in a statement carried by IRNA on Monday. The event will feature several sections, including a marketplace for Iranian-made toys, the selection of top toys, scientific panel discussions, and a promotional exhibition focused on games and toys. Visiting hours for the sales section will be from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., while the promotional exhibition will be open from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. According to the organizer, the festival is intended to support domestic production, strengthen links between designers, manufacturers and investors, organize the toy industry and help establish an innovation system in the sector. The event is being held in cooperation with the Iranian Toy Association, the Toy Supervisory Council, the Cognitive Sciences

and Technologies Development Headquarters, Tehran Municipality and Soore University. The festival venue is located on Hijab Street in central Tehran and will be open to the public throughout the event. The toy manufacturing industry in Iran remains relatively small compared to global markets. Annually, the Iranian toy market has a turnover of between \$300 to 350 million, but only 40% of that comes from domestically made toys, while the rest is made up of imports and even smuggled goods. There are about 250 official toy producers in the country, and exports of Iranian-made toys reached about \$20 million in 2023, with main destinations including Iraq and neighboring countries. The industry faces persistent challenges such as heavy import competition, financing and investment limitations, and relatively low domestic market share.

Iran issues 'orange' weather alert as flooding kills three

Social Desk

Heavy rain and snow swept across much of Iran on Monday, prompting the national meteorological agency to issue an "orange" weather alert for 12 provinces and forcing authorities to put emergency services on full standby. The hardest hit regions were Fars, Bushehr, Hormozgan, Ilam, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, and Kurdistan provinces, while intense precipitation was also recorded in parts of West Azerbaijan, South Khorasan, Razavi Khorasan, Kerman and Khuzestan. Authorities warned of flooding, river overflows and flash floods, saying rainfall and falling temperatures were expected to continue for the next two days. The "orange" alert is one of Iran's official weather warning levels and indicates relatively severe and potentially hazardous conditions in the near term.



It signals that weather conditions could cause serious disruption to daily activities, transport, agriculture and infrastructure, and that preventive measures are required. Three people were reported dead in Kohgiluyeh county after a river flooded the village of Sarpari. Emergency services said one victim drowned while attempting to cross the river by car, and two others died while trying to rescue him. Rescue teams have recovered two bodies so far. Snow and rain have blocked some roads, and authorities

urged residents to avoid stopping near rivers or climbing mountainous areas. Drivers were advised to travel only if necessary. Separately, the National Iranian Gas Co. (NIGC) called on households to conserve energy to ensure stable gas supplies during the cold spell. In Iran, about 75% of natural gas is consumed by households, commercial users and small businesses. The NIGC urged citizens to set indoor temperatures at 20 degrees Celsius and avoid heating unused rooms.

Iraqi government, popular ...

However, other assessments suggest that the United States is seeking to step up intelligence collection on Iran's latent capabilities and missile power in preparation for a new strike against Iran. Intense US pressure on the government of Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' al-Sudani to disarm the Popular Mobilization Forces and other popular Iraqi forces indicates that Washington is looking toward a new adventure against the Axis of Resistance. Two distinct approaches exist in Iraq. The first is the official stance of the government, which seeks, through diplomatic channels, to prevent an escalation of tensions between Iran and the United States. The Iraqi government believes the United States should not use Iraqi territory against its neighbors, but Washington views Iraq as part of its regional sphere of influence. The presence of thousands of US troops in Iraq has limited Baghdad's ability to take a firm stand against American adventurism, whether against Iran or the Axis of Resistance. The second approach is that of Iraq's

popular armed forces, which strongly condemn any US action against Iran or the Axis of Resistance. Leaders of these movements believe that Iran stood by the Iraqi government and people during the country's most difficult times and sacrificed hundreds of martyrs in the fight against terrorist groups. The cowardly assassination of General Qassem Soleimani, the former commander of the Quds Force, by the United States—while he was an official guest of the Iraqi government—is seen as a blatant violation of Iraq's national sovereignty. That painful assassination showed that the United States had a role in strengthening terrorist groups in Iraq, as General Soleimani played a decisive role in confronting those groups and preventing terrorists from advancing toward Baghdad. Therefore, the presence of arms in the hands of the Popular Mobilization Forces is entirely defensive and legal and has nothing to do with US forces in Iraq. Naturally, Iran carefully and intelligently monitors any suspicious US movements in the region, especially in Iraq, and has repeatedly conveyed its concerns over such activities to the

Iraqi side. Nevertheless, should the United States seek to act against Iran from Iraqi territory, it will undoubtedly trigger a response from Iran, while Iraq's popular forces will also not allow their country's soil to turn into a hub for US adventurism against Iran.

Al-Sadeq has also underlined Iran's support for resistance groups, saying Tehran respects the decisions of the Iraqi government and engages positively with anything that preserves the rights of the resistance and the sovereignty of the state. How should Iran's support for Iraqi resistance groups be analyzed within the framework of Iran-Iraq bilateral relations, and what impact does this support have on Iraq's internal balance of power?

Iran's policy of supporting the Axis of Resistance falls within the legitimate right of self-defense, because the conduct of resistance forces in Iraq, Lebanon, and Yemen is not offensive but purely defensive. Over the past two decades, especially after the fall of the Baath regime in 2003, Iraq has faced a massive influx of terrorist groups,

which led to the formation of popular forces to defend the Iraqi people. Iran also played a role in the establishment of these popular defense forces, as no country, including US forces, took effective action to confront terrorist groups. Iraqi governments, due to the dissolution of the country's army, regarded the popular forces as part of Iraq's military, security, and defense capacity and worked to strengthen them. Therefore, the existence of these forces is entirely rooted in domestic needs. Iran and Iraq also have bilateral security agreements, and the Iraqi government is obligated to safeguard the security of the shared borders with Iran. Since Iraq's popular forces are committed to maintaining the security of these borders, responsibility for any insecurity along the Iran-Iraq frontier would rest with the Baghdad government.

To what extent can Baghdad's efforts to facilitate dialogue between Tehran and Washington be considered realistic and achievable?

The Iraqi government believes that reducing regional tensions, particularly

easing tensions between Tehran and Washington, could create a favorable environment for interaction among countries in the region. Given Iran's broad popular base in Iraq, stemming from the shared religious and cultural ties between the two nations, any tension between Iran and the United States would have a negative impact on Iraqi society. It is therefore in the interest of Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' al-Sudani's government to create conditions that allow Iran and the United States to resolve their problems through direct negotiations. In the past, Iraq has made fruitful efforts to bring together the views of Iran and several regional and global actors, including the United States. Now, given the extensive relations between Washington and the Iraqi government, it is natural that Baghdad could use these ties to mediate between Tehran and Washington, and such an outcome appears plausible. Iran will certainly consider the Iraqi government's proposal, provided that the American side also demonstrates goodwill and a readiness to enter a series of respectful negotiations with Iran.