

Iran adopts new tourism charter, casting guides as guardians of its global image



Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, Reza Salehi-Amiri, marked International Tourist Guide Day on February 21 by hailing tour guides as "architects of Iran's image abroad" and announcing a new tourism statute shifting the state's role from direct control to strategic stewardship. In his message, issued to coincide with the annual observance on February 21, Salehi-Amiri said guides bear responsibility for presenting Iran's culture and

civilization to foreign visitors, framing their work as central to the country's international standing, ILNA reported. He said power in contemporary international relations is no longer confined to hard assets, but rests increasingly on symbolic capital, credibility and the ability to produce authoritative narratives. Within that framework, he described tour guides as key actors in cultural and public diplomacy, shaping visitors' perceptions through documented, informed storytelling. Addressing what he termed distorted portrayals of Iran, the minister said the answer lies in rigorous, evidence-based narratives grounded in legal and historical fact, delivered by guides

equipped with interdisciplinary knowledge and modern communication skills. Salehi-Amiri said sustainable tourism hinges on skilled human capital and placed guides at the core of that strategy. He added that a newly adopted statute redefines the government's role as policymaker, regulator, supporter and supervisor, moving it away from direct operational control. The ministry is drafting measures to enhance targeted security provisions, establish stable insurance mechanisms and upgrade specialized training, he said, adding that tourism expansion without professional dignity and economic stability for guides would lack cohesion and durability.

A tour guide addresses a group of visitors during a guided walk at a historic site.
 ● ILNA

Iran to channel Nowruz travel beyond six provinces as 46% of trips cluster in key hubs

Arts & Culture Desk

More than 46 percent of Iran's domestic trips are concentrated in six provinces, Mostafa Fatemi, Director General for Domestic Tourism Development at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, said, announcing the designation of 114 "complementary cities" to ease congestion during the Nowruz holidays. Fatemi said the bulk of travel during previous Nowruz (March-April 2025) flowed to established hubs including Mashhad, Shiraz, Tehran, Isfahan and coastal centers in Hormozgan and Mazandaran provinces, placing acute pressure on transport networks, accommodation and urban services, IRNA reported. To rebalance demand for the upcoming Nowruz break, which runs from late March

to April 4, 2026, authorities have mapped 114 alternative destinations nationwide and begun promoting them through provincial tourism offices and digital booking platforms. In the east, the plan highlights Rafsanjan, Jiroft, Bam and Sirjan in Kerman PROVINCE; Konarak, Zarabad, Nikshahr, Hamun, Zabol and Zahak in Sistan and Baluchestan; Ardakan, Mehriz, Bafq and Abarkuh in Yazd; Ferdows, Birjand and Tabas in South Khorasan; Ardestan, Nain and Varzaneh in eastern Isfahan; Shahrud and Mahdishahr in Semnan; Samalqan and Shirvan in North Khorasan; and Quchan, Sabzevar, Neyshabur, Torbat-e Heydarieh, Gonabad, Khaf and Torbat-e Jam in Razavi Khorasan. Thirteen further cities have been earmarked in Fars and Hormozgan provinces to divert traffic from Shiraz and

the Persian Gulf islands. In Fars, Lar, Darab, Estahban, Neyriz, Fasa, Jahrom, Kazeroon and Eqlid are being marketed as substitutes. In Hormozgan, Minab, Sirik, Bastak, Parsian and Bandar Khamir have been added to official travel guides. Fatemi said a national travel facilitation headquarters has convened six coordination meetings with transport, police and local authorities to manage flows, curb road accidents and standardize services during the peak period. Search data show a recent surge in online queries for tours, accommodation and tickets ahead of the holiday, he added. Discounted packages are generally reserved for off-peak periods and coordinated with public-sector bodies for teachers and retirees, as Nowruz capacity in major destinations is typically fully booked well in advance.

Three Iranian children honored at Japan's 2025 Kanagawa painting contest

Arts & Culture Desk

Three Iranian children, including 11-year-old Hana Mohammadi from Mahabad, won awards at the 2025 Kanagawa International Children's Painting Competition in Japan, a local cultural official said on Sunday. Afsaneh Baziyar, head of the Mahabad branch of the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, told IRNA that Mohammadi secured a trophy and prize in competition with more than 10,000 entries from 73 countries. Avin Ghahremanzadeh from Maku and Mahya Khanmohammadi from Urmia were also among this year's award recipients. Founded in 1979 in Kanagawa Prefecture, the annual contest promotes intercultural exchange among children worldwide. Spe-



cialist art juries evaluate the submissions, and selected works go on public display in Japan during the accompanying exhibition. The latest success follows further international recognition for Mahabad's young artists. At

the fourth 'Sun's Birthday' International Children's Painting Festival last month, Anita Balnour from Mahabad's Center No. 2 won gold, while Baran Abdollahzadeh from Center No. 1 claimed silver.

Tehran book fair dates approved for 2026 edition

Arts & Culture Desk

The 37th Tehran International Book Fair (TIBF) will run from May 13 to 23, its president Mohsen Javadi announced on Sunday after the event's second policy council meeting approved the dates, according to the Cultural Affairs Deputy of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance. The decision was finalized at a session held on February 22, 2026, in Tehran. Javadi, who also serves as deputy culture minister, said organizers aim to secure a strong turnout of foreign private publishers despite logistical constraints, IRNA reported.

Preparations for the Tehran Publishing Fellowship are under way and will expand on last year's edition, he added. Ebrahim Heidari, the fair's deputy head and chief executive of the Iran Book and Literature House, said correspondence had begun with the Islamic Culture and relations Organization (ICRO) to facilitate invitations for overseas guests. Consultations have also taken place with the Foreign Ministry to broaden international participation. Heidari said arrangements were in progress to procure foreign titles required by Iranian universities, while negotiations had advanced to ap-

point a sponsoring bank and commercial partners. A public call has been issued to select the fair's official slogan, with organizers seeking to finalize it shortly. Several candidates for guest of honor were proposed at the meeting, with a decision deferred to the next session. Plans for the virtual section and new program formats were also reviewed. The Tehran International Book Fair is the country's largest publishing event, drawing hundreds of domestic and international publishers each year and serving as a key marketplace for rights deals and academic sourcing.

Date: 1404/12/04 - No.:55/04/26922

AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES COMPANY

Second Announcement

The Agricultural Support Services Company, hereinafter will be referred as ASSC, affiliated to Ministry of Agriculture-Jihad of I.R of Iran, is considering the purchase of the below pesticide technical material, through renewal of one step international tender.

No	Name	PACKING	Quantity/kg
1	Glyphosate Isopropylamine Salt Technical 62% w/w	200 or 250 kg drum	80,000

All of the qualified and interested companies are invited to receive tender documents from **Sunday** dated **22/02/2026** until **Monday** dated **02/03/2026** (7 working days) from our purchasing committee (located at the 9th floor, no. 1, fourth alley, Gandhi St., Tehran, Iran).

The bidders are requested to submit their letters of introduction, along with remittance bill of IRI. Rials 1,200,000 to ASSC's account no. 4001039704005791 with SHEBA no. IR250100004001039704005791 at the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran through payment order of SATNA or PAYA with the 30-character identification code of 33903978226350065000000000000008.

The bidders are requested to submit their sealed and stamped envelopes containing offers latest on **Saturday** dated **04/04/2026** (during official working hours) to our security office located on the 8th floor. Meanwhile the meeting for the opening of the envelopes will be held on **Sunday** dated **05/04/2026** at 14:00 with the presence of bidder's representatives at our purchasing committee (9th floor, no. 1, Fourth Alley, Gandhi St., Tehran, Iran).

We would like to emphasize that the value of the bid bond amount must be only submitted by the bidders in bank guarantee as follows:

- **€ 19712 for Glyphosate Isopropylamine Salt Technical 62% w/w equivalent to Iranian Rials 31,919,861,056**
- The bid bond value should be in Euro or in equal value of any other foreign currencies, except US dollars, based on the exchange rate of Telegraphic Transfer on CBI's ETS website, www.fxmarketrate.cbi.ir, on 16/2/2026 in bank guarantee.
- The bidders are permitted to submit the bid bond in Iranian Rial.
- After approval of ASSC's Financial Manager, the bidders are permitted to use their previous and definite outstanding claims as the bid bond.

For more information, you may refer to our website www.assc.ir, and <http://lets.mporg.ir> or contact us by phone no. 00982188776325.

Public Relations and International Affairs of Agricultural Support Services Company