

'Minab Eyes' installation unveiled in Tehran to honor schoolchildren

Arts & Culture Desk

The visual installation 'Minab Eyes' was unveiled in Tehran's Tajrish Square to honor schoolchildren from the Shajareh Tayebah school in Minab, Hormozgan Province, in a public art project reported by IRNA on Sunday and commissioned by the Tehran Beautification Organization. The installation, developed in cooperation with the Soureh Omid art and media institute and created by artist Reza Golpayegani, trans-

forms a busy urban space into a commemorative site through large-scale depictions of children's eyes intended to prompt reflection among passersby. The students being commemorated were killed on February 28 in Minab, southern Iran, in an incident that drew local mourning and public remembrance. Organizers said the project seeks to preserve their memory in the urban fabric and highlight themes of innocence and loss through contemporary visual lan-

guage. Golpayegani said the focus on the eye as "the window of the soul" was intended to convey "silent emotion" and human vulnerability, particularly that of children. "The aim is not only artistic expression but collective remembrance," he said. Installed in one of Tehran's busiest northern squares, the work invites pedestrians to pause amid daily movement and engage with the imagery, which features enlarged, close-up portraits of children's eyes.



Iran turns to villages, cultural ties as post-crisis social unity deepens

Social Desk

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Reza Salehi-Amiri said Sunday that recent national challenges had ultimately strengthened social unity, as authorities move to channel that unity into a cultural and community-driven recovery focused on villages, handicrafts and local tourism, according to IRNA. Speaking at a meeting with state-affiliated foundations, banks and economic bodies in Tehran, Salehi-Amiri described the recent crisis as a defining national moment that ultimately consolidated unity across society, according to IRNA. The war, he said, carried layered social, economic and security dimensions but culminated in a "dignified" outcome shaped by public resilience and coordinated governance. He framed the period as a test of collective resolve, saying at-

tempts to trigger instability and widen social divides were neutralized by broad-based participation and a shared sense of purpose. The result, he added, was a reaffirmation of social solidarity that now underpins the country's cultural and developmental trajectory. Officials are now channeling that unity into a culturally driven recovery, with villages positioned at the heart of both identity and sustainability. Salehi-Amiri said rural communities serve as living repositories of tradition and social continuity, warning that unchecked migration to cities risks weakening cultural foundations. A notable shift during the recent Nowruz holidays saw millions gravitate toward rural destinations, signaling renewed public interest in local heritage and community-centered travel. Authorities say this trend could help reshape tourism patterns while reinforcing social bonds formed

during the wartime period. Handicrafts were highlighted as a bridge between economy and culture, with more than 530,000 people employed in the sector. Salehi-Amiri described it as a family-based, "homegrown" industry capable of preserving identity while fostering inclusion, particularly among women in rural areas. Despite wartime pressures, officials said essential services and supply chains remained stable, allowing daily life to continue and social rhythms to endure. The revival of tens of thousands of small workshops during the conflict was cited as evidence of grassroots resilience and community-driven recovery. Deputy Tourism Minister Anoushirvan Mohseni Bandpey said eco-lodges had played a role beyond tourism, supporting decentralized living and acting as a form of "passive defense" by sustaining rural presence during the crisis.

Iran confirms 3,375 dead in war, including children, foreign nationals

857 schools damaged in war as student death toll mounts

Social Desk

Iran's Legal Medicine Organization has identified 3,375 people killed in the recent "Ramadan War," its chief said Sunday, while lawmakers reported widespread damage to schools and mounting student casualties following attacks blamed on US and Israeli forces. Abbas Masjedi, head of the state forensic body, said the victims were identified using "scientific" methods through April 10, including 2,875 men and 496 women. The organization is the sole official authority for such figures, he said, ISNA reported. Masjedi said children were among the dead, including seven infants under one-year-old, 255 aged between one and 12, and 121 aged 13 to 18. Most victims fell in the 19-40 age bracket, followed by those aged 41-60.

A smaller share was over 61. He said most victims were Iranian nationals, though some held citizenship from Afghanistan, Syria, Turkey, Pakistan, China, Iraq and Lebanon. The highest tolls were recorded in Tehran, Hormozgan and Isfahan provinces. From the outset of the attacks, the organization mobilized nationwide, running autopsy halls at full capacity and deploying round-the-clock, multi-layered shifts to process remains. Identification relied on DNA profiling, tissue sampling and cross-matching with relatives, with strict protocols to prevent "any error," Masjedi said. Separately, Mohammad Molavi, deputy head of parliament's education commission, said 857 schools were damaged during what he called the "third imposed

war," describing the strikes as a "clear violation" of educational rights. Molavi said 277 students were killed, including 157 boys and 113 girls, along with young children. He added that 344 teachers and 67 education staff also died in the attacks. He pointed to a strike on a primary school in Minab as evidence of "war crimes," and said 154 academic sites, including laboratories, libraries and dormitories, were hit. Such attacks contravene international law, he said, citing provisions of the Rome Statute. It is said that service delivery continued throughout the conflict, with authorities streamlining coordination among medical, municipal and military institutions to ensure swift identification and handover of victims to families.

Fortress of Iran ...

Axis of Resistance post-ceasefire

A ceasefire between Iran and the US/Zionist regime will have immediate ripples across the Levant and the Arabian Peninsula. Critics argue that a ceasefire might signal a retreat; however, specialized analysis suggests the opposite. Tehran is likely to use the diplomatic lull to formalize its presence in Iraq and Yemen. By shifting from "hot conflict" to "hybrid influence," Iran aims to transform its non-state allies into legitimate political and military pillars within their respective states, mirroring the Hezbollah model in Lebanon.

US-Iran dynamic beyond truce

For the United States, a ceasefire in mid-2026 is a tool for damage control. With global oil prices volatile and the risk of a broader war looming, Washington is seeking an "exit with honor." However, the future of the Islamic Republic will be defined by its ability to

resist the "decoupling" strategy—the Western attempt to isolate Iran from global financial systems even during peace. The Iranian leadership is now acutely aware that "paper guarantees" (like the JCPOA) are insufficient. Future negotiations will likely demand "irreversible sanctions relief" and "security guarantees" that involve third-party guarantors, specifically China and Russia, to ensure that the US cannot unilaterally pivot back to a "maximum pressure" campaign.

Challenges: internal pulse

While the leadership transition has been smooth at the top, the future stability of the Islamic Republic depends on its ability to address the "social contract." The post-war reconstruction phase must provide tangible economic benefits to the youth and middle class. If the 2026 ceasefire leads to a period of economic growth and reduced social restrictions, the new leadership will find a path to-

ward long-term stability. If, however, the ceasefire is used only for military re-armament at the expense of social welfare, the internal pressure could become a significant variable. The Islamic Republic of Iran in 2026 is no longer the state it was in the previous decade. It has emerged from a direct military confrontation with its leadership intact and its regional architecture tested. The future of the Islamic Republic is shifting toward a "fortress Iran"—a state that is diplomatically engaged but militarily and economically autonomous. The ceasefire of 2026 is the gateway to this new reality. Whether it leads to a "grand bargain" or remains a "cold peace," Iran has proven that its system is capable of surviving extreme shocks. The coming years will reveal if the Islamic Republic can translate this military and political resilience into a sustainable model of 21st-century governance that balances revolutionary ideals with the pragmatic needs of a global power.

Street theater honors Spain's stance as Iran marks Islamic Revolution Art Week

Arts & Culture Desk

Nine street performances took to major squares across the Iranian capital on Saturday as part of Islamic Revolution Art Week, organizers said, dedicating the productions to the Spanish government and people for declaring recent military actions against Iran "illegal." The coordinated shows, staged by the Soureh Art Center under the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization, unfolded in nine locations across Tehran on the third day of the April 9-16 observance, drawing crowds amid ongoing public gatherings. Parallel performances were also held in Mashhad, Lahijan, and



Varamin, IRNA reported. Works including 'We Are Iran' in Tajrish Square and 'Arash' from the 'Mosht o Meydan' series in Punak Square dramatized themes of unity, resistance, and national identity. Other productions such as 'Bell of Heaven' and 'The Path' were staged along Enghelab Street, while 'Rostam' and 'Flag' brought epic and patriotic narratives to southern districts of the capital.

The dedication reflects appreciation for Spain's "principled" position and its condemnation of silence in the face of what it described as an unjust war. The performances, mounted in open urban spaces, aim to bring revolutionary art directly to the public and reinforce cultural cohesion during a sensitive period. The weeklong observance commemorates Morteza Avini, a pioneering Iranian documentary filmmaker and theorist of Islamic cinema born on September 13, 1947, who was martyred on April 9, 1993, in Fakkeh after a landmine explosion. His legacy continues to shape the intellectual foundations of revolutionary art in Iran.