

Mexican war prints go on show at TMOCA

Arts & Culture Desk

The Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMOCA) opened an exhibition of works by Mexican printmakers on May 23, as the latest instalment of its 'Art & War' series turns to Latin America's visual narratives of conflict and nationhood.

The exhibition, titled 'Eleven Artworks by Mexican Printmakers,' features 11 pieces drawn from the museum's collection and will run until May 30 in the museum's main hall in the Iranian capital, Mehr News Agency reported.

At the heart of the showcase are two rare prints dating back to the 1920s by acclaimed Mexican artists David Alfaro Siqueiros and José Clemente Orozco, whose politically charged works chronicled the struggles and upheav-



als of the Mexican people during a turbulent period in the country's history. The exhibition also brings together nine contemporary Mexican prints exploring themes of independence, collective memory and social iden-

ity, extending the museum's broader curatorial focus on the cultural imprint of war and resistance.

The program marks the third chapter of TMOCA's ongoing 'Art & War' initiative, which previously

spotlighted American pop art from April 22 to May 10 and Spanish art from May 11 to 19, drawing attention to how artists across continents have grappled with conflict through visual expression.

Tehran Virtual Book Fair extended as reader demand surges across Iran

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Iran's Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance has extended the seventh Tehran Virtual Book Fair by two days until May 25 after a wave of nationwide demand and mounting publisher requests, Deputy Culture Minister Mohsen Javadi said in Tehran on Saturday.

The online fair, which opened on May 16 and had initially been due to close on May 23, drew strong participation from readers across the country, triggering a sharp rise in book orders and prompting organizers to keep the digital marketplace running longer.

Javadi, who also heads the Tehran International Book Fair, said cultural institutions, publishers and readers had pressed for the extension as trans-



actions accelerated in the closing days of the event. He described the virtual fair as a significant step towards broadening public access to books, saying the data generated during this edition would help shape future planning for both digital and physical publishing platforms. The extension offers readers more time to browse titles with greater care,

Javadi added, while urging buyers not to leave purchases until the final hours in order to avoid heavy traffic on the platform as payment gateways close.

The annual online fair has increasingly evolved into a nationwide cultural showcase, widening access to publishers beyond Iran's major urban centers.

Iran seeks permanent home for guardians of its civilization



Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Reza Salehi-Amiri on Saturday called for the establishment of a "museum of luminaries of Iran's cultural heritage and civilization" in Tehran, urging authorities to preserve the statues, biographies and oral histories of the country's leading cultural custodians as part of a broader drive to reinforce national identity and safeguard war-damaged historical sites.

Speaking at a conference on the restoration and reconstruction of buildings damaged during the recent conflict, Salehi-Amiri described veteran heritage scholars and conservators as Iran's "repositories of civilizational gold", arguing that the nation's true wealth lay not in oil, gas or trade, but in generations who had devoted their lives to protecting Iranian culture and identity, CHTN reported.

He said the proposed muse-

um would help younger generations grasp the scale of Iran's historical legacy and reconnect with their cultural roots at a time of widening social and generational fractures.

"Iran's identity card is embedded in its cultural heritage," Salehi-Amiri said, citing Persepolis, Alamut, Jiroft and Susa among the pillars of the country's civilizational memory. He warned against what he called the "strategic error" of equating development solely with industry and natural resources, saying sustainable progress depended on culturally grounded and educated societies.

The minister portrayed Iran as a land "layered with mysteries and civilizational codes", pointing to millions of historical artifacts, tens of thousands of nationally registered monuments and 29 UNESCO-listed sites.

He said the endurance of the Persian language, Nowruz and centuries-old national traditions reflected the resil-

ience of Iranian civilization despite repeated invasions throughout history. Referring to damage inflicted on some historical sites during the recent war, Salehi-Amiri said attacks on heritage structures had deepened public attachment to the nation and strengthened national cohesion.

"Iran returned to the embrace of its people," he said, describing the national flag as an enduring symbol of unity during the crisis. He also instructed the ministry's cultural heritage deputy to convene a national conference on restoring damaged historical monuments, with participation from conservation experts, veteran restorers and academics.

Salehi-Amiri said the initiative should produce actionable restoration policies while drawing on international institutions, expatriate Iranians, private-sector financing and corporate social responsibility programs. The minister further called for the expansion of apprenticeship-based restoration schools across the provinces, arguing that conservation skills must be transmitted through hands-on mentorship rather than purely academic training.

UN agencies urge stronger global cooperation to safeguard Iran's biodiversity

Social Desk

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) representative Ayshanie Medagangoda-Labé on Saturday hailed Iran's scientific and ecological capacities in biodiversity protection and called for broader international cooperation and stronger community engagement during an International Day for Biological Diversity gathering in the northern city of Sari, Mazandaran Province.

Speaking at the event attended by environmental researchers, academics, civil society groups and government officials, the UNDP envoy highlighted the ecological significance of the ancient Hyrcanian forests stretching across northern Iran and said the region's natural heritage required sustained protection after enduring centuries of environmental pressure.

She noted that Iran was among the founding members of the Convention on Biological Diversity and had accumulated valuable experience in preserving internationally recognized ecosystems, including UNESCO-listed reserves. Labe also pointed to ongoing joint programs between UNDP, Iranian institutions and local partners aimed at tackling environmental stress and dust storms in several provinces.



United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) representative Ayshanie Medagangoda-Labé speaks during an event marking the International Day for Biological Diversity in the northern city of Sari, Mazandaran Province on May 23, 2026.

Biodiversity tied to national security

Shina Ansari, head of Iran's Department of Environment (DoE), described biodiversity as a pillar of the country's biological, economic and cultural security, saying environmental protection must remain central to sustainable development policies. Addressing the conference beside the lush Hyrcanian woodlands, Ansari said more than 19 million hectares of protected land were currently managed by the Department of Environment. She added that upgrading conservation infrastructure, improving ranger training and expanding modern monitoring systems ranked among the administration's priorities. Ansari also said more than 1.34 million hectares of wetland territory had recently received official state ownership documentation under the DoE, calling the

move a major step towards stronger wetland preservation.

She warned that habitat degradation, unsustainable land conversion and forest destruction remained among the gravest threats facing Iran's ecosystems. DoE chief added that environmental authorities were also documenting damage inflicted on coastal and wetland ecosystems during recent regional conflicts for possible international follow-up.

UNESCO stresses education, awareness

Hojjatollah Fartousi, secretary-general of Iran's National Commission for UNESCO, said the accelerating biodiversity crisis had become a defining global challenge threatening food security, public health, economies and even international peace. He argued that protecting nature required

more than physical conservation measures and depended equally on public awareness, environmental education and social participation. Fartousi described biosphere reserves as "living laboratories of sustainable development" where conservation, scientific research and responsible tourism could coexist.

He also pointed to the registration of the Dalankou biosphere reserve as a significant step towards linking environmental stewardship with national and regional development strategies.

Civil society, FAO warn of mounting pressures

Mohammad Alamouti, secretary of Iran's network of environmental NGOs, warned that northern Iran faced mounting ecological strain from excessive consumption of natural resources and unchecked land-use changes. Meanwhile, FAO representative Farrukh Toirov called Mazandaran Province a globally significant ecological zone and urged deeper collaboration between local specialists and international institutions to prevent irreversible environmental degradation and preserve biodiversity for future generations.