

Minab's silent farewell crowned News Photo of the Year

An aerial photograph capturing the funeral and burial of 168 students martyred during a US missile attack against an elementary school in Minab won the top prize in the News Photography category at the prestigious Golden Shot Photography Awards 2026. Morteza Akhondi, a photographer from Hormozgan Province, secured first place in the international competition with the powerful and compositionally striking image, which captivated the global jury, Press TV reported. The festival described the image as "the resting place of children whose only 'fault' was being children... Innocent, they were

silenced, and history will never forget the crime." In the final rankings, Akhondi from Iran took the gold, followed by Bartosz Matenko of Poland in second place and Mohammad Mohtaseb of Saudi Arabia in third. The achievement highlights the growing presence and high potential of Iranian visual artists on the international stage. The US-Israeli coalition bombed Minab's Shajareh Tayyebeh elementary school on February 28, the opening day of the aggression against Iran. The school was triple-tapped by three distinct strikes using Tomahawk missiles, produced



An aerial photograph capturing the funeral and burial of 168 students martyred during a US missile attack in southern city of Minab, Hormozgan Province, on February 28, 2026.

gspawards.com

by Raytheon in Tucson, Arizona. The roof of the two-story building, decorated with pink flowers and green leaves, collapsed onto students inside. At least 168 people were killed, including 26 female teachers, with over 95 injured. Many victims were girls and boys between seven and twelve years old.



Iran draws crowds at Mexico City's global cultural festival

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's pavilion has emerged as one of the busiest attractions at INTER 2026 Global Village in Mexico City, drawing large crowds of visitors, cultural figures and media representatives with displays of traditional arts, handicrafts, cultural heritage and Persian cuisine, according to organizers and reports from the event. From the opening days of the international festival, visitors gathered around the Iranian stand to explore the country's history, civilization and artistic traditions. Handwoven Persian carpets, intricate handicrafts and examples of traditional Iranian artistry became focal points of attention, with many attendees spending extended periods examining the craftsmanship and fine details of the exhibits. The event, staged as part of Mexico's cultural programming ahead of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, has brought together delegations from 48 countries, underscoring the growing intersection of cultural diplomacy and global sporting momentum in the host nation. "The artistic sophistication and cultural depth on display are remarkable," several visitors were quoted as saying while engaging with exhibitors and learning about Iran's heritage and tourism attractions. The pavilion also served as a venue for cultural dialogue. Mexican visitors ex-

pressed interest in gaining a deeper understanding of Iranian culture, art and everyday life, while discussing the country's long civilizational legacy. Cultural content creators, photographers and journalists documented the exhibits, highlighting them as reflections of Iran's historical identity and artistic traditions. Iranian cuisine proved another major draw. Traditional offerings including Sholezard (saffron rice pudding), samosa, saffron and flixweed drinks, cardamom beverages and traditional fruit snacks attracted strong demand. Organizers said all available supplies were sold out before the end of the festival's first day, underscoring the growing appeal of Persian culinary culture among international audiences. The pavilion also featured a humanitarian and cultural initiative linked to the children of Minab. Badges inspired by the "Minab backpack" project drew attention from visitors and opened conversations about the program's cultural message. The festival, which began on June 12 and runs through June 21 in Mexico City's Chapultepec area, is part of a broader wave of World Cup-linked cultural programming aimed at positioning the capital as a global hub of exchange. It will also host workshops on Iranian history and civilization, traditional Persian music and cultural heritage, further expanding Iran's cultural outreach in Latin America.

Vienna initiative recasts Iranian studies through books, new scholarship

Arts & Culture Desk

Austria's first specialized exhibition dedicated to Iranian studies opened in Vienna June 17, bringing together nearly 200 scholarly titles and leading academics in a bid to deepen research ties and stimulate fresh debate on the intellectual foundations of the field, organizers said. Hosted by Iran's Cultural Center in Austria at the House of Iranian Wisdom, the three-day event features a curated collection of major Iranian studies works, largely in German and bilingual German-Persian editions, spanning nine thematic categories, ILNA reported. The exhibition offers more than a survey of publications. It also serves as a forum for reassessing how Iran is studied in Europe, as scholars highlighted the need for stronger theoretical frameworks, wider interdisciplinary engagement and greater preservation of research resources. Nosratollah Rastegar, the renowned German translator of Ferdowsi's 'Shahnameh' and a prominent figure in Austrian Iranian studies, traced



the development of the discipline in Austria and recalled efforts with the late Austrian scholar Bert Fragner to establish and expand the Institute of Iranian Studies at the Austrian Academy of Sciences. Rastegar described Austria's scholarly investment in Iranian studies as "remarkable," noting the field's long-standing place within the University of Vienna's Oriental Studies tradition. He also praised recent efforts that, in his words, have helped "light the lamp of Iranian studies once again." The event also marked the release of 'Fifty Outstanding Books on Iranian Studies,' a new reference volume compiled by Hassan Javaher that in-

troduces influential works in the discipline. Among the keynote speakers was Sibylle Wentker, a senior official at the Austrian Academy of Sciences and a noted Iranologist, who underscored the interdisciplinary nature of Iranian studies and stressed the urgent need to digitize scholarly resources. "Only a small portion of Iranian studies materials has been digitized so far," she said, calling for greater investment to preserve and broaden access to the field's intellectual heritage. The exhibition concluded with the unveiling of 'Iranian Studies: Foundations, Coordinates, Approaches, and Challenges' by Reza Gholami, an Iranian scholar and cultural researcher. Presenting the work, Gholami said the book seeks to answer a fundamental question: "What exactly is Iranian studies, and what gives it intellectual coherence?" He argued that Iran is best understood not as a collection of isolated subjects but as an integrated civilization whose political, cultural, religious and historical dimensions form a connected whole.

Iran displays 250 titles at Beijing book fair to expand publishing ties

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran has brought 250 titles spanning literature, cultural studies, children's books and Iranology to the 32nd Beijing International Book Fair, seeking to deepen publishing partnerships and expand the global reach of Persian-language works, according to Iran's Book House and Literature organization. The five-day event, running from June 17 to 21 at the China National Convention Center, has drawn more than 2,600 publishers and publishing institutions from over 100 countries and regions, making it one of Asia's largest gatherings for the global publishing industry. Iran's national pavilion serves as a platform to introduce Persian language, literature and cultural heritage while facilitating professional exchanges between Iranian and international publishers. Organizers said the country's participation is aimed at broadening translation opportunities, strengthening copyright



cooperation and increasing the presence of Iranian books in international markets. The Iranian collection on display includes children's and young adult literature, classical and contemporary Persian works, cultural and artistic studies, Iranology publications and titles related to the Sacred Defense. Published works and intellectual heritage associated with the martyred Leader of the Revolution are also featured among the selected volumes. Designed to reflect Iran's cultural identity and literary civilization, the pavilion carries the slogan "Iran, the Land of Unity and Solidarity." A spe-

cial visual section commemorates the child martyrs of Minab, while other displays highlight the country's literary and intellectual achievements. This year's Beijing fair places a strong focus on emerging publishing technologies, including artificial intelligence and digital publishing. A dedicated pavilion for online publishing and AI-driven technologies has been established alongside traditional exhibition halls. Among the event's notable additions is a new intellectual property licensing section that brings together more than 120 rights professionals, creating fresh opportunities for cooperation between publishers and cultural industries. Nearly 1,000 professional forums, cultural programs and copyright-related events are being held throughout the exhibition. Founded in 1986, the Beijing International Book Fair occupies 60,000 square meters this year and showcases more than 220,000 titles. The United Arab Emirates is the guest of honor for the 2026 edition.

'The Girl from Gaza' heads to three int'l film festivals



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Iranian short film "The Girl from Gaza," written and directed by Hossein Babaiean and produced by Alireza Pishahvar, has secured spots at three international film festivals in Italy, Spain and Nigeria, expanding its global festival run following the completion of pro-

duction. The film is set to compete at the 15th Tracce Cinematografiche Film Fest in Nettuno, Italy, from June 11-14, and at the sixth FICIMAD (Festival Internacional de Cine Independiente de Madrid) on June 19 in the Spanish capital. It has also been selected for a Nigerian festival event, according to the film's producers. "The Girl from Gaza" delivers a powerful anti-war message while exploring themes of compassion, sacrifice and human dignity. Set against the backdrop of conflict, the film portrays how humanity can endure even when people are thrust onto opposing sides of war. "Humanity, self-sacrifice and compassion remain alive," the filmmakers said in a project statement, emphasizing the value of every human life amid violence and upheaval. The cast includes Alireza Pishahvar, Mehrsa Moqim Bigli and Raha Moghaddam.