



Iran seeks national archive for its living history

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Reza Salehi-Amiri called for the country's oral histories, documents and historical productions to be consolidated into a comprehensive national reference, during talks with Islamic Revolution Document Center Head Mostafa Pourmohammadi in Tehran on Tuesday. The proposed collaboration could bring together scattered archives and narratives spanning Iran's cultural heritage and modern history, widening researchers' access to materials that Salehi-Amiri described as essential to tracing the roots of national identity and uncovering historical truth, CHTN reported. "An oral archive is the identity card of a nation and a tool for genealogy," Salehi-Amiri said, urging the preservation

and wider availability of historical resources. He proposed placing copies of oral-history collections and other cultural heritage records at the Islamic Revolution Document Center, allowing disparate materials to sit side by side and strengthen the country's historical record. "Everything acquires meaning in the context of time," he said, adding that historical documents become more valuable as the years pass. Salehi-Amiri also drew a sharp distinction between memoir-writing and research-based oral history, arguing that the discipline should go beyond simply recording recollections. "Oral history is not memoir-writing. Oral history is the discovery of truth," he said. "Memoirs are one channel for discovering truth. Documents and re-

search are others." Pourmohammadi said the center has published about 1,400 book titles and recorded more than 29,000 oral-history sessions, while holding a substantial body of documents and interviews that remain unpublished. He said cultural heritage had "an important and fundamental voice" in oral history, with a significant part of Iran's historical experience embedded in its cultural legacy. The Islamic Revolution Document Center has operated since 1981, collecting and preserving written, audio and visual records for historical research. Its official materials describe a vast and expanding archive, including millions of historical documents and digitized publications. Salehi-Amiri said the resources should be preserved with a comprehensive,



Iranian cultural officials meet at the Islamic Revolution Document Center in Tehran on September 8, 2026, to discuss expanding cooperation on oral history, historical documents and the preservation of the country's cultural heritage. ● CHTN

research-driven and forward-looking approach, ensuring that future generations can return to the record and find,

amid its many voices, a clearer path toward historical truth.

Paris screenplay award dedicated to Minab school students

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Iranian writer and filmmaker Ashkan Shapouri dedicated his Best Screenplay Award at the Paris Film Awards to the students killed at Shajareh Tayebbeh School in Minab, southern Iran. Shapouri received the award for "The Last Tango with Pari," a feature-film screenplay that the festival jury described as a powerful and

emotionally charged work and characterized as "a romantic epic." He dedicated the international honor to the victims in recognition of what he called the sacrifice and resilience of Minab residents. "This award is a modest drop compared with the sacrifice of those who gave their lives," Shapouri said, adding that the children were at the forefront of that sacrifice.

The recognition adds to Shapouri's recent run on the international festival circuit. In August, he was selected as a member of the main jury of the Love International Film Festival in California, where he is evaluating feature films, shorts, documentaries and animation focused on love, peace, friendship and human values. Shapouri has previously collected international honors, including Best Director at

the Milan Film Festival and Best Screenplay at the Athens International Film Festival, according to Iranian film reports. "The Last Tango with Pari" has also appeared at festivals in Los Angeles. The filmmaker is expected to move into production on his next feature, "White Snake," after completing his jury duties. The project is being produced jointly by Shapouri and filmmaker Ali Shah-Hatami.

Six Kiarostami films set for South Korea's Ulsan Ulju Mountain festival

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Six films by acclaimed Iranian filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami will screen at the 11th Ulsan Ulju Mountain Film Festival in South Korea from September 18 to 22, organizers said, bringing a cross-section of his cinema to an event centered on mountains, nature, adventure, the environment and human experience. The selection spans Kiarostami's early work through his later films, with three productions by Iran's Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, known as Kanoon, alongside three other works. The lineup includes "The Bread and Alley" (1981), "Orderly or Disorderly" (1981), "The Chorus" (1982), "Ten" (2002), "No" (2010) and "Take Me Home" (2016), ILNA reported. Festival programmers have framed the selection as a cinematic journey from "The Bread and Alley" to "Take Me Home," linking the alley, movement and the road, motifs that recur throughout Kiarostami's work. The progression traces a filmmaker whose deceptively simple images often turn ordinary spaces into medi-



tations on movement and human experience. "Take Me Home," Kiarostami's final short, follows a football as it rolls down stairways and through narrow lanes in southern Italy. Shot in stark black and white, the 16-minute film turns a seemingly mundane journey into a carefully composed visual poem. The festival, held in the mountainous Ulju county of Ulsan, will also feature international and Korean selections alongside its special screenings.

Actress Roya Nonahali to return to Baghdad stage with 'Like Water for Chocolate'

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Iranian actress Roya Nonahali will return to the international stage with 'Like Water for the Chocolate,' directed and written by Ebrahim Poshtkouhi, at the Baghdad International Theatre Festival. The production is an adaptation of Mexican author Laura Esquivel's acclaimed novel, first staged in Iran in 2013 with Nonahali in the cast. It

was later revived in 2016 and 2018, with Nonahali reprising her role, IRNA reported. Poshtkouhi is returning to Baghdad with the production for a third time, extending a long-running international trajectory that has taken his work to festivals and stages in Moscow, Munich, St. Petersburg, Baku, Yerevan and Budapest. His theatrical language often draws on the traditions, music and folklore of southern Iran,

weaving local cultural textures into contemporary adaptations. His previous Baghdad appearances have brought major recognition. 'Macbeth Zar' won the top prize at the fourth Baghdad International Theatre Festival, while 'Chaos Particles' later won the festival's Grand Prize and its Best Actress award. 'Like Water for Chocolate' follows Tita, the youngest daughter in a family bound by tra-

dition, whose forbidden love and emotional world unfold through food, memory and magical realism. Esquivel's novel, first published in 1989, has become a landmark of Latin American magical realism. For Poshtkouhi, the Baghdad return places a distinctly Iranian theatrical voice once again on a regional stage, with southern Iranian cultural motifs meeting a globally recognized literary work.

Alternative oil routes ...

Can the project be considered a solution to the current Strait of Hormuz crisis?
No — not as a short-term solution.

Page 1 > A project that is still undergoing feasibility studies and would require around four years to develop cannot address an immediate disruption in Hormuz. The current situation requires existing infrastructure: alternative pipelines, storage facilities, tanker-fleet flexibility, ship-to-ship operations where feasible, and adjustments in crude destinations and loading patterns. But that does not make Kirkuk-Baniyas strategically unimportant. The disruption has demonstrated the cost of excessive dependence on a single export corridor. Baghdad's continued pursuit of Syrian routes therefore makes sense as a longer-term policy objective.

The pipeline is "not a solution to today's crisis; it is an investment against the next crisis."

Could alternative routes eventually reduce the geopolitical importance of Hormuz?

Alternative routes can reduce the concentration of risk around Hormuz, but they cannot make the Strait irrelevant. The scale difference is fundamental. According to the US Energy Information Administration, oil flows through Hormuz averaged 20.9 million barrels per day in the first half of 2025, equivalent to about 20% of global petroleum-liquids consumption and roughly one-quarter of global maritime oil trade. Against that scale, even a 2-million-barrel-per-day Kirkuk-Baniyas pipeline would be a diversification mechanism,

not a replacement for the Persian Gulf maritime export system. More importantly, Hormuz should not be viewed merely as a geographic chokepoint. It is an integral component of the "energy architecture of the Persian Gulf," connecting the region's producing states to the global maritime energy system. Its strategic importance therefore cannot be measured only by the volume that might theoretically be diverted through pipelines. This is why claims that Hormuz could lose most of its strategic value within two years should be treated cautiously. Reducing dependence on Hormuz is fundamentally different from eliminating its strategic importance. Oil has more transportation alternatives than LNG, but available pipeline alternatives collectively remain far below normal Hormuz volumes. The Strait also

carries LNG and other maritime trade for which equivalent land-based alternatives are much harder to establish. There is also a broader geographic reality. Iraq, Saudi Arabia and the UAE can build additional export corridors, but these routes primarily "redistribute risk; they do not eliminate the underlying geography of the Persian Gulf." They also create their own security, political, financial and infrastructure risks. For Iran, this distinction is particularly important. Iran's position along the northern shore of the Strait is a structural geographic fact, not a variable that can simply be engineered away. Alternative pipelines can diversify routes and reduce exposure to a chokepoint, but "infrastructure can diversify routes; it cannot relocate geography." From an Iranian energy perspective, there-

fore, the debate should not be framed as "Hormuz versus alternative routes." The more realistic outcome is a diversified regional energy system in which Hormuz — and Iran's geographic position within that system — remains structurally important. The strategic objective should not be to make Hormuz irrelevant. It should be to ensure that no single disruption at Hormuz can translate into an uncontrollable global energy shock. Kirkuk-Baniyas can contribute to that objective, not by eliminating Hormuz or removing Iran from the regional energy equation, but by adding another layer of "energy-route redundancy and geopolitical risk diversification." That is the more realistic way to understand both the future of Kirkuk-Baniyas and the enduring strategic importance of Hormuz.