



Iranian cinema marks National Cinema Day with record week

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian cinema marked National Cinema Day on September 12 with its busiest week of the year, as theaters across the country drew more than 485,000 moviegoers while Cinema House unveiled plans to honor veteran filmmakers and revive its long-delayed awards.

The celebrations coincided with the 25th week of the Iranian year, when cinemas welcomed 485,712 viewers between September 5 and September 11, IRNA reported. Box office receipts reached 531.66 billion rials during the week, which became the strongest period for cinema attendance since the start of the year. Discounted ticket prices on Friday also helped draw larger crowds to theaters.

The figures extended a five-week upward trend in cinema attendance. Weekly audiences rose

from about 251,000 in mid-August to 328,000, 352,000 and then 399,000 before reaching the latest high.

Kourosh Cineplex topped the list of the country's busiest cinema complexes with 23,205 visitors, followed by Iran Mall Cineplex with 19,668. Hadish Cineplex, Charsou Cineplex and Azadi Cineplex also ranked among the five most visited venues of the week.

Soroush Sehat's 'The Pool' led the weekly film chart with 111,604 viewers, narrowly ahead of Kazem Daneshi's 'The Death Bath', which attracted 111,470. Yousef Hatamikia's 'Escort' came third with 103,518 admissions.

The celebrations continued on Saturday, September 12, when Cinema House held a press conference in Tehran to outline its National Cinema Week program. Homayoun As'adian, CEO of Cinema House, said the week's events would include a ceremony honor-

ing a number of veteran artists. The organization will also name its library after filmmaker and playwright Bahram Beyzai, while a conference hall at its second building will be dedicated to filmmaker Nasser Taghvaei.

Cinema House is also preparing to settle the status of its awards after a seven-year interruption. Mohammad Mehdi Asgarpour, chairman of the organization's board, said Cinema House was developing a mechanism that would allow filmmakers to review and vote on works produced during the past seven years.

"We want to determine once and for all" which films were regarded as the best during that period, he said.

The organization hopes to use online platforms to give its members wider access to films before holding the event later this year, bringing the long-delayed awards process to a close.



Motorcyclists take cultural route to Yerevan

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A group of Iranian motorcyclists set off from Tehran on September 11 for Yerevan on the first international Tehran-Yerevan motorcycle tourism rally, introducing travelers to the cultural landmarks and scenic routes linking the two neighboring countries, according to the Touring and Automobile Club of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Fifteen motorcycles with engines above 250cc departed from the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts in Tehran, marking the first time such a large group of



Iranian high-capacity motorcycles have officially and legally crossed the country's borders on an organized international tour.

The riders traveled through Tehran, Alborz, Qazvin, Zanjan, West Azarbaijan and East Azerbaijan provinces

before passing through the Aras Free Zone and Jolfa. They entered Armenia through the Norduz border crossing on September 12.

The group is scheduled to reach Yerevan and visit some of Armenia's best-known historical and cultural sites, including Garni and Ge-

ghard, before returning to Tehran along the same route.

The 10-day journey will conclude on September 21.

Beyond the ride itself, the tour offers participants a chance to experience the cultural landscapes, historic attractions and tourism potential along the Tehran-Yerevan route.

Organizers have also placed emphasis on sustainable tourism and safe riding, while presenting the journey as a cultural exchange on wheels that brings together travelers, heritage and the diverse attractions of the region.

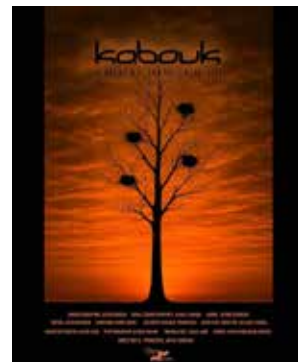
'Kabouk' enters New Orleans film festival competition

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Iranian filmmaker Jafar Sadeghi's documentary 'Kabouk' will compete in the main feature documentary section of the 37th New Orleans Film Festival, scheduled to run from October 21 to 27 in the United States, the Documentary, Experimental and Animation Film Center announced.

The Iranian production is among 26 feature documentaries selected for this year's competition, joining a diverse lineup of films from established and emerging documentary film filmmakers, ILNA reported.

Produced by the Documentary, Experimental and Animation Film Center, 'Kabouk' tells the story of a family in northern Iran whose peaceful life is disrupted by unexpected visitors



in their garden.

The film previously screened at the 19th Cinema Vérité International Documentary Film Festival in Iran, where it won the Audience Award for Best Documentary.

Among the other films in competition are Sam Green's 'The Oldest Person in the World,' which premiered at this year's

Sundance Film Festival, and Mexican filmmaker Otilia Portillo's 'Girls of the Forest.' The latter has earned several awards in 2026, including audience honors at CPH and South by Southwest.

Puerto Rican filmmaker Juan Dávila Santiago will also compete with 'Zenón and the Rebel Boats,' which won the award for Best Feature Documentary at the BlackStar Film Festival.

Eddie Sánchez's 'Mexican-American,' meanwhile, had its world premiere at the Tribeca Festival.

Founded in 1989, the New Orleans Film Festival will showcase 175 films selected from nearly 4,000 submissions representing 38 countries.

MovieMaker magazine has listed the festival among the world's notable events for filmmakers and moviegoers.

Zanjan's knife-making industry moves from traditional craft toward industrial production

700 workshops turn out 6m knives annually

By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

INTERVIEW

Deputy Director of handicrafts at the Zanjan Province Department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Dariush Naderi described knife-making as one of the province's most important metal-working crafts, saying around 700 workshops are currently active across Zanjan and produce an estimated six million knives



Dariush Naderi

annually.

Speaking to Iran Daily, Naderi said Zanjan's knife-making tradition enjoys international renown and that the province has considerable capacity in the field. He said the industry is at a critical juncture, with

its future dependent on preserving the authenticity and traditional skills of the craft while modernizing production and improving product quality.

A significant share of Zanjan's knife production reaches regional markets in addition to the domestic market, Naderi said, noting that Iraq is among the product's major export destinations. Some knives are also carried abroad by individual travelers, making it difficult to obtain precise, disaggregated figures on export volumes and the foreign-exchange revenue generated by the industry.

Naderi said the sector is gradually transitioning from a traditional, family-based structure toward semi-industrial and industrial production, a shift that has created new challenges for manufacturers. He identified fluctuations in prices and the procurement of raw materials as among the most press-

ing problems facing producers. Knife-making requires high-quality steel suited to the type of product being manufactured, he said, adding that volatile raw-material prices and broader economic conditions have increased production costs and affected manufacturers' profitability.

Naderi also stressed the need to introduce new technologies into the sector. Some producers continue to rely on traditional methods and tools such as fire and the anvil, he said, noting that these techniques are an integral part of Zanjan's knife-making identity. Modern technologies, however, should be adopted alongside traditional methods to improve productivity, quality and production capacity.

The preservation and transmission of specialized skills is another major challenge, Naderi said. Some master craftsmen and long-serving practitioners are now older, making

it essential to pass their knowledge and expertise on to younger generations.

"Knife-making is not merely an industrial production process," Naderi said. "A significant part of its value lies in the craftsman's skill, experience and technical knowledge at the different stages of making a knife."

If these skills are not properly transmitted, he added, part of the craft's traditional body of knowledge could gradually be lost.

Naderi also pointed to the presence of similar products and inexpensive mass-produced goods in the market, saying an important priority is to distinguish authentic Zanjan knives from products sold with a similar appearance.

Strengthening the Zanjan knife brand, highlighting its technical and artistic characteristics, and enabling consumers to identify authentic products can help protect

genuine producers and increase the craft's value, he said.

As part of efforts to strengthen the product's position, a geographical indication for Zanjan knives was registered in 1404 through the efforts of the handicrafts department in cooperation with the Zanjan Chamber of Commerce, Naderi said.

He described the registration as an important step toward consolidating the product's identity and brand and supporting producers in the province. It can also help promote Zanjan knives in domestic and international markets, he said, adding that further measures are needed to improve quality, packaging, marketing and exports.

Naderi emphasized the potential of Zanjan knives in overseas markets, saying export development is an important avenue for increasing the craft's value. He said efforts should focus on markets where high-quality

products with a distinct cultural identity are more highly valued.

"Zanjan knives are not merely tools," Naderi said. "They are the product of the knowledge and skills passed down through generations of craftspeople in the province."

Presenting these qualities more effectively, he added, could help establish Zanjan knives as products with artistic and cultural value in both domestic and international markets.

Naderi stressed that strengthening the industry requires cooperation among relevant institutions, particularly in raw-material supply, training and skills transfer, standardization, producer support and market development.

Such cooperation, he said, can help preserve the historic standing of Zanjan's knife-making tradition while helping the industry move toward more competitive production.