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Iran's cultural days open in Moscow with national orchestra performance

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's cultural days in Russia officially opened in Moscow with a performance by the National Orchestra of Iran at the Bolshoi Theatre attended by the culture ministers of both countries and about 1,700 people.

The audience, mainly Russian citizens and people interested in Iranian culture, heard the national anthems of Iran and Russia before the orchestra closed the ceremony with a performance of "Iran Ostovar", or "Steadfast Iran," IRNA reported on Tuesday.

Iranian Culture Minister Abbas Salehi described the event as "not only an official event, but a renewal of a covenant between two civilizations".

He said Iran and Russia had developed cultural, intellectual and artistic ties alongside their geographical proximity, and that cultural events could help build on those exchanges.

Salehi said this year's program would give Russian audiences an opportunity to become more familiar with aspects of Iranian culture and arts.

Russian Culture Minister Olga Lyubimova also stressed the role of culture in expanding bilateral ties, saying: "It is culture that gives this dialogue depth and content."

She said music, theatre, cinema and visual arts could help people become familiar with each other and gain a better understanding of their traditions and cultures.

Lyubimova also described the joint performance of Iranian traditional instruments with symphonic music and works by Russian composer Pyotr Tchaikovsky as a symbol of cultural cooperation.

The National Orchestra of Iran, conducted by Homayoun Rahimian and featuring vocalist Mojtaba Asgari, performed Iranian national music and a Russian piece using 20 Iranian and foreign instruments. The orchestra is also scheduled to perform in Kazan, western Russia.

The Iran Cultural Days program runs from Sept. 25 to Oct. 6 in Moscow, St Petersburg in northwestern Russia, Kazan and Astrakhan in southern Russia. More than 160 Iranian artists representing 30 fields are taking part, with programs covering music, Iranian film screenings, traditional arts, creative industries and specialist meetings.

The event comes as the two countries continue exchanging cultural programs. Russia held its own cultural week in June 2025 in Tehran, central Iran, and Isfahan, central Iran.

Iranian Culture Minister Abbas Salehi addresses the audience at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow as Iran's cultural days opens in Russia on September 29, 2026.
IRNA

The program is intended to bring together artists and audiences through a broad range of cultural activities, while giving Russian audiences greater access to Iranian music, cinema and traditional arts.

Feature films flood Iran's children's festival

Arts & Culture Desk

Entries of feature films for Iran's International Film Festival for Children and Youth have more than doubled this year despite difficult conditions in recent months, the festival's secretary said on Tuesday, as organizers prepare to introduce new sections and technical awards.

Hamed Jafari, chief executive of the Farabi Cinema Foundation and secretary of the festival, said at a news conference in Tehran that the overall number of submissions had increased significantly, with feature film entries more than twice last year's level, IRNA reported.

He did not give the number of Iranian or foreign films submitted.

Jafari said organizers had expected the February US-Israeli war and developments in recent months to affect film production and filmmakers' participation, but "production increased significantly".

He said the higher number of submissions would allow the festival secretariat to make a more detailed selection in terms of both quality and quantity.

This year's program includes new sections on artificial intelligence and documentary competition. Jafari described artificial intelligence as "a reality that must be addressed correctly".

Another new section, called "Mirror", will examine children's and youth films released in cinemas, on television and on platforms between the previous festival and this year's event. It will cover issues including audience attraction, product development and advertising campaigns.

Organizers said all other special sections had been removed this year in honor of the children killed in Minab, a city in southern Iran, with the "Minab Award" becoming the festival's only special section.

A screenwriting competition titled "The School I Used to Attend" will also be held as part of the Minab section. The award commemorates 168 people killed in a US airstrike on an elementary school in Minab on February 28, most of them schoolchildren.

The festival will also introduce technical awards for crews working behind the scenes on children's and youth productions. Jafari said the move was intended to give greater recognition to those involved in the production of films outside the spotlight.

The 38th International Film Festival for Children and Youth will run from Oct. 3 to Oct. 8 in Isfahan, central Iran.

The festival will be held alongside the Youth Filmmaking Olympiad in Isfahan, with films, child and youth jury activities, workshops and specialist meetings brought together at a single venue.

The event is organized jointly by the Farabi Cinema Foundation and Isfahan Municipality.

TENDER NO.: 01-31-0480003

First Announcement

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The National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC) is seeking to procure the specified goods listed in the table below through a Qualitative Evaluation Call for conducting a public tender via the Government Electronic Procurement System (SETAD). All stages of the tender process including the receipt of tender documents, submission of bidders' proposals, and the opening of bid envelopes, shall be carried out exclusively through the Government Electronic Procurement System (SETAD) portal at www.setadiran.ir Bidders who have not previously registered must complete the registration process on the aforementioned portal and obtain an Electronic Signature certificate to participate in the tender.

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Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their" Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: www.setadiran.ir, not later than14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded. The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of **8,842/10 EURO** or **15,060,000,000 RIAL**, in favor of NISOC.

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Iran-US diplomacy needs ...

The most important obstacle to the negotiations concerns the operational and

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implementation-oriented interpretation of the process by the two sides. The United States sees Iran's nuclear issue as the starting point for new negotiations and the implementation of an agreement, whereas Iran believes that this issue is contingent on, and results from, the arrangement of the other components of the agreement alongside one another.

Therefore, the core dispute is that Iran's proposed final step has become the United States' proposed first step. Under such circumstances, mediation by other actors, no matter how diplomatically powerful they may be, becomes difficult. It is not easy to bridge the gap between these two points of disagreement or devise a third way forward. If another approach can be envisioned in this regard, it must serve the national interests of the Islamic Republic.

Another issue concerns [US President Donald] Trump's particular approach of structuring the situation around a "short-term cost-benefit" calculation. This mental and analytical equation is constantly redefined in Trump's mind, and this has resulted in the emergence of contradictory positions on his part.

The United States is dealing with a president whose thinking, unlike that of Obama, Biden and even George W. Bush, is not centered on a particular doctrine or fixed principle, whether in the realm of hard power or diplomacy.

Meanwhile, the role of the Israeli regime cannot be overlooked. Tel Aviv can upend the agreement in question at any moment, even if it is concluded. [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu's position at the helm of Tel Aviv's political and executive affairs, as well as his fear of losing the upcoming general election, cannot be ignored at this sensitive juncture.

Given Donald Trump's meeting with Xi Jinping and China's emphasis on the need for Iran and the United States to return to the negotiating track, what impact could this meeting have on the two sides' diplomatic process? Can Beijing play a more active role at this stage in mediating, bringing the two sides' positions closer, or guaranteeing the implementation of a possible agreement?

Certainly. China cannot be regarded as being on the same level as Pakistan, Qatar and Oman. In addition to its ability to mediate, China has the power to shape the game and manage the situation. China's economic power, geopolitical concerns, and its tactical and strategic points of convergence and divergence with Washington are highly influential in shaping this equation. China and the United States both view past, current and future developments in the international system as a multi-piece puzzle and establish meaningful links between all phenomena and their relationship with their own strategic and tactical concerns. I believe that China can play a prominent role both in shaping a new equation and in guaranteeing it.

What lessons does the experience of the Islamabad understanding and the disputes that emerged afterward over the interpretation and implementation of commitments hold for a possible new agreement between Iran and the United States? To prevent such disputes from recurring, what mechanisms should be put in place?

It appears that the most important keyword relevant to this question is "guarantee", rather than "commitment". A memorandum of understanding aimed at ending a war must focus on the tools, levers and arrangements that make it impossible to violate or misinterpret its provisions.

The Islamabad understanding was based on "commitment", not "guarantee". A commitment is something that is put down on paper, whereas a guarantee is a tool through which one makes sure such a commitment is necessarily implemented by the parties to the dispute.

This principle did not apply to the Islamabad understanding, to the extent that the United States violated it from the very moment it was concluded. The continuation of Israeli attacks on Lebanon and Qatar's failure to release Iran's frozen assets, which was carried out on US orders, are clear examples of this.

Moreover, the creation of a second route, or the so-called southern route, through the Strait of Hormuz was in direct conflict with Article 5 of the Islamabad understanding concerning Iran's management of the strait during the initial period covered by the understanding.

Nevertheless, there was no tool or guarantee in place that could force Washington to pay a price for violating these provisions.

Therefore, the focus of any negotiations with the other side should now be on guarantees and the tools needed to enforce the provisions.