

Minister urges support for rural, nomadic culture

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Culture Minister Abbas Salehi on Wednesday called for greater support for cultural and artistic activities in rural and nomadic areas, saying their traditions are central to the country's identity. In a message marking the National Day of Villages and Nomads, Salehi said his ministry was committed to supporting cultural and artistic activities in these areas, identifying local talent and creating more opportunities for them to participate in the country's cultural life, IRIBNEWS reported. "Iran cannot be reduced to its cities, historical monuments and cultural centers," Salehi said.

He said much of Iran's identity had been shaped in villages, tribal communities and along nomadic migration routes. "Generations have preserved the country's culture, languages, arts, rituals and traditions through everyday life," he said. Salehi also pointed to the role of rural and nomadic communities in production and development. He credited them with helping preserve Iran's cultural and civilizational heritage and defend the country's territory and borders. He said their ties to Iran had again been evident during sensitive periods in recent years, particularly during the 40-day war launched by the US and Israel in late February. The minister said younger gen-

erations increasingly needed a living connection with Iran's history and culture to understand their roots. Rural and nomadic traditions, dialects, music, handicrafts and indigenous ways of life, he said, are not simply remnants of the past but part of Iran's cultural capital for the present and future. Art, Salehi said, can bring this living heritage closer to younger generations and bring lesser-seen stories of rural and nomadic life into the broader culture. He ended the message by congratulating Iran's rural and nomadic communities and praising those whose cultural work and presence help keep "a part of Iran's soul" alive.



Iranian documentary 'Throne of Wood' heads to Africa festival

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Iranian documentary 'Throne of Wood', directed by Sadeh Kazemi and produced by Documentary House, has been selected for the Africa International Film Festival (AFRIFF), which will run from November 1 to 7, 2026, in Lagos, southwestern Nigeria, adding another international screening to the film's festival run, IRNA reported on Wednesday. The documentary tells the story of a woman of about 100 who is determined to preserve her independence and way of life in a rural village. Known locally as "Soghra Rais", chief Soghra in Persian, meaning for her strong and authoritative character, she continues to live alone despite having more than 50 grandchil-



dren and great-grandchildren. The film focuses on her conflict with villagers over collecting firewood for cooking. The dispute intensified after a fire at a neighbor's home raised concerns about the practice. Through that struggle, the documen-

tary examines the tension between personal autonomy and the fear of becoming a burden on others. 'Throne of Wood' previously won the Best Documentary Award at the seventh Kobani International Film Festival, strengthening its profile on the international

festival circuit. Before its selection for AFRIFF, the film had also been screened or selected at several festivals, including the Cinema Verité International Documentary Film Festival in Tehran, northern Iran; the Göttingen International Ethnographic Film Festival in the central German city of Göttingen; and the Portobello Film Festival in London, southeastern England. The latest selection extends the international reach of a documentary that uses a deeply local story to explore broader themes of aging, self-reliance and the right to make one's own choices. The film's central character remains committed to living independently, even as those around her urge her to change long-standing habits.

Iranian photographer wins Jack Schrader Award at US art exhibit

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian photographer and filmmaker Armin Amirian has won the Jack Schrader Award at the 13th annual FL3TCH3R International Exhibit in the United States for his photograph 'Constitutional Revolution of Iran'. The exhibition ran from August 7 to September 27, at Fischman Gallery in Tennessee, in the southeastern United States, ILNA reported on Wednesday. The award-winning photograph was created in 2020 as a part of Amirian's 'hICEstory' series, which shows figures from Iran's Constitutional Revolution



emerging through layers of ice. The revolution marked its 120th anniversary in August 2026. The 2026 show had no specific theme. It allowed artists to explore contemporary issues affect-

ing society and culture through diverse media and approaches. More than \$2,000 in awards were presented. The awards ceremony was held on September 4. Part of the exhibition pro-

ceeds supports the Fletcher Hancock Dyer Memorial Scholarship for an art and design student. Amirian has participated in more than 100 international exhibitions and festivals. He has also received awards from the Fletcher Dyer Foundation, including an award for artistic excellence. Works from 'hICEstory' have been shown in solo exhibitions in Iran, Italy and France. The series has also appeared at international exhibitions at London's Saatchi Gallery and venues in the United States, Germany and Spain.

Tehran to form 300-scooter fleet for traffic police

Social Desk

Tehran is forming a 300-scooter fleet for its traffic police as the capital expands plans to promote scooters for short trips and clean transport. Pouria Alimardani, head of the Tehran Municipality's Transportation and Traffic Organization, said on Wednesday the fleet was being formed at the request of Tehran's traffic police. It is now being equipped. "The lightweight scooters can be used for short missions and to help officers reach locations quickly," he said, according to ISNA. The municipality is also developing "vitality routes" with dedicated, safe paths for bicycles, electric bicycles, pedestrians and scooters. Alimardani said scooters should not be used on highways or roadways. They should instead be ridden on designated routes and in line with safety rules. In the first phase, the municipality will provide financial support for the purchase of 2,000 scooters by students and young people. The subsidy for each purchase is 1.5 billion rials (nearly



\$570). "The municipality is acting as a facilitator by developing infrastructure for scooter use," Alimardani said. Rental shared scooters are also available on the city's vitality routes. The plan aims to encourage residents to replace cars with scooters for short trips to universities, schools, gyms and metro stations. The official noted that electric scooters could be more suitable than bicycles on Tehran's hilly terrain. He said scooters could account for about 1% to 2% of transportation in other countries, particularly for trips of less than five kilometers.

Beijing's 'smart geoeconomics' ...

Within this framework, Iran is the most resilient actor, having successfully neutralized Western sanction structures, and it possesses the capacity to provide stable energy for China—particularly crude oil, gas, and a high-value chain of petrochemical derivatives like methanol and gas-based products—with the highest level of reliability.

Nevertheless, current realities indicate that the deep potential of the two countries' 25-year comprehensive agreement and their joint membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and BRICS still requires a leap from the stage of "theoretical understandings" to "organic and operational linkages." The need for effective, continuous, and multi-layered communication between Tehran and Beijing demands that coopera-

tion be rapidly deepened across three key axes: first, strengthening bilateral monetary agreements to neutralize Western currency coercion; second, immediately operationalizing Iran's rail and port infrastructure projects along China's corridor arterial routes; and third, joint investment in upstream and downstream energy and petrochemical industries aimed at intertwining the vital interests of the two economies. Finally, it must be emphasized that in today's volatile world, passivity or optimism regarding short-term compromises with the Western international system is a strategic error. The convergence of Tehran and Beijing is not a tactical choice; it is a historical and inevitable necessity to ensure national security, sustainable economic growth, and the formation of new global blocs centered on multilateralism.