License Holder: Islamic Republic News Agency
Publisher: Iran Cultural & Press Institute
Chair of ICPI Board of Directors: Sadegh Hossein Jaberi Ansari
ICPI CEO: Ali Motaghian
Senior Editor-in-chief: Hadi Khosroshahin
Editor-in-chief: Asgar Ghahramanpour

Editorial Dept. Tel: +98 21 84711560
Address: 208, Khorramshahr Ave., Tehran, Iran
Advertising Dept. Tel/Email: +98 21 88500601/irandaily@iranagahiha.com
Website: www.irandaily.ir/newspaper.irandaily.ir
Email: irandaily@icpi.ir

Iran Daily

irandaily.ir | newspaper.irandaily.ir | IranDailyWeb

Vol. 8276 ● Saturday, November 28, 2026 ● 100,000 rials ● 8 pages

Leader highlights Basij's growing role

Social Desk

Leader of Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei l has called for a major overhaul of the Basij volunteer force, urging it to draw on growing public support and develop new models under the slogan "Every Iranian, a Basij member".

In a message marking Basij Week, which ran from November 20 to 26, the Leader described the organization as a remarkable institution founded on the teachings of the third Imam of Shia Imam Hussein (PBUH) and dedicated to defending Islam and Iran's dignity.

The Leader said the Basij first demonstrated its capabilities during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war, when its members played a central role in the military effort.

The war also shaped a lasting ethos of faith, commitment, sincerity, courage, sacrifice and service to others, he added.

Although the war ended after eight years, Ayatollah Khamenei said, the spirit of the Basij continued to influence Iran's formal and informal institutions.

He attributed this legacy to the war, the leadership of the late founder of the Islamic Republic, Imam Khomeini and broad public support.

The Leader said the recent nationwide mobilization of Iranians after the recent wars had created an opportunity for a new phase in the Basij's development.

Iran has faced two wars waged by the United States and Israel, a 12-day war in June 2025 and a second, 40-day war that began in late February 2026.

The Basij organization should use this expanded public base to design and manage more advanced forms of the force, taking concrete steps toward the goal of making every Iranian a Basij member, he said.

Ayatollah Khamenei said many members of the armed forces, government, parliament and the wider public identified with the Basij's principles, even without formal membership.

He urged the organization to make full use of this broader support.

He also called on the Basij to spread its ethos through everyday conduct, including kindness, humility, respect for the public, generosity, modesty and avoiding ostentation. Such behavior, he said, could encourage communities across cities, towns and villages to embrace its values.

The Leader said the organization had long helped compensate for shortcomings in state and non-state institutions.

Its expanded social base now represented a major resource that should be mobilized to address national problems and pursue new opportunities.

Ayatollah Khamenei expressed hope that the Basij would set an example of collective cooperation and national solidarity, helping drive Iran's future progress.

The Leader concluded by praying for the fallen Basij members, wishing wounded veterans patience and recovery, and seeking divine support for Basij members in Iran and the Resistance Front.

Tehran, Tashkent seek joint Silk Road tourism routes



Iranian Tourism Minister Reza Salehi-Amiri addresses the int'l tourism summit in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, on November 27, 2026.
IRNA

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran and Uzbekistan are seeking to develop joint tourism routes along the historic Silk Road, boost direct flights and expand cultural exchanges, as Tehran pushes to turn shared heritage into practical tourism cooperation.

Iranian Tourism Minister Reza Salehi-Amiri outlined the proposals during talks with Abdulaziz Akkulov, chairman of Uzbekistan's Tourism Committee, on the sidelines of an international tourism summit in Tashkent on Friday.

He called for easier visa procedures, more direct flights, joint travel packages and closer private-sector ties. Proposed routes would link Mashhad in northeastern Iran with Samarkand and Bukhara in Uzbekistan.

He also suggested developing rail connections linking Samarkand, Bukhara, Merv in southeastern Turkmenistan, Sarakhs in northeastern Iran and Mashhad.

The two countries could also develop combined tours for visitors from third countries, highlighting their shared history, architecture, cultural traditions and Nowruz, the Persian New Year, Salehi-Amiri said.

Cooperation in traditional arts and heritage preservation also featured in the talks. Iran plans to send 10 handicraft artists to Uzbekistan to train local artisans and share traditional skills, the minister said.

In a separate meeting with Gayane Umerova, head of Uzbekistan's Presidential Department of Creative Industries, the two sides discussed cooperation in the preservation and restoration of historic sites.

Speaking at the summit, Salehi-Amiri said Iran had about 3,000 active eco-lodges and aimed to establish at least one in every village.

The country also has around 25,000 tourism facilities, including hotels, tourism villages and health tourism centers.

"Iran was encouraging tourism facilities to adopt renewable energy, particularly solar power, as part of efforts to promote sustainable tourism," he said.

Uzbekistan, which has 44 eco-lodges, expressed interest in drawing on Iran's experience in rural tourism.

Visa access and health tourism were also discussed. Salehi-Amiri said Iran had unilaterally waived tourist visa requirements for Uzbek nationals and called for reciprocal measures.

He noted that visa-free travel had not been extended to Iranian service passport holders in Uzbekistan, which allows citizens of about 90 countries to enter without visas.

To promote tourism, Salehi-Amiri proposed annual exchanges of 15 media professionals and content producers from each country.

He also invited Uzbek officials and tourism businesses to the 19th Tehran International Tourism Exhibition in February.

Akkulov said Uzbekistan planned to send a delegation of officials, tourism operators and handicraft artists to the event.

He added that his country was working to increase flights and ease visa procedures with Iran, and viewed cooperation with Iranian medical institutions as valuable for developing its health tourism sector.

On the sidelines of the summit, Salehi-Amiri also met tourism officials from Tajikistan, Pakistan and Azerbaijan to discuss bilateral and regional cooperation.

Salehi-Amiri said existing agreements with Uzbekistan should be translated into time-bound action plans, with designated officials responsible for implementing each area of cooperation.

The minister was in Uzbekistan at the invitation of its tourism chief to attend the summit on sustainable and resilient tourism, the opening of the Tashkent International Tourism Exhibition and bilateral meetings with tourism officials.

Rial-based debit card mechanism launched for foreign tourists with €5,000 limit



Arts & Culture Desk

Foreign tourists visiting Iran can now obtain payment cards holding up to the equivalent of 5,000 euros each, with exchange rates negotiated directly with banks or licensed currency exchange offices, under a new scheme unveiled by the Central Bank.

Mohammad Reza Mani Yekta, head of the Central Bank of Iran's Payment Systems Supervision Department, said the revised system removes restrictions that had limited the previous scheme, including low card limits, exchange-rate constraints and the narrow range of banks and financial institutions offering the service.

All banks and licensed currency exchange offices can now issue the cards. Each foreign visitor can obtain up to two, with a balance of up to 5,000 euros per card.

The cards can be reloaded during a visit and used to transfer funds.

Tourists returning to Iran can reactivate previously issued cards with remaining balances.

On departure, they can recover unused funds in foreign currency or sell the remaining currency back.

Mani Yekta said pre-issued cards would be distributed through exchange offices to ensure uninterrupted service at airports and land border crossings without facilities for issuing cards immediately.

The cards can be used at more than 10 million payment acceptance points across Iran and on all domestic online payment gateways.

Eight banks currently provide the service: Bank Mellat, Sina Bank, Refah Kargaran Bank, Bank Melli Iran, Qarz-al-Hasaneh Mehr Iran Bank, Dey Bank, Shahr Bank and Bank Saderat Iran.

Ali Asghar Shalbafian, head of the Investment and Economic Affairs Center at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, called for faster issuance at airports and border crossings.

Saadi, Iqbal unite on canvas celebrating Iran-Pakistan friendship

Arts & Culture Desk

Verses by renowned Persian classical poet Saadi (c. 1213 - 1291) and Pakistani philosopher-poet Muhammad Iqbal (1877 –1938) have been brought together in a large collaborative artwork by two Iranian artists at the World Culture Festival Karachi 2026, celebrating the literary and cultural ties between the two countries.

Calligrapher Mohammad Saeed Naghashian and painter Hossein Eini Bakhsh created the six-by-1.5-meter work, titled 'Canvas of Friendship', in a live performance at the Arts Council of Pakistan in Karachi, southern Pakistan. Festival visitors were able to watch the artists at work.

The composition combines Nastaliq calligraphy and oil painting. It features images of Saadi's mausoleum in Shiraz, southwestern Iran, the mausoleum of Pakistan's founder Muhammad Ali Jinnah in Karachi, and Imam Mosque in Isfahan, central Iran.

Saadi's celebrated verse, "Human beings are members of one another, having been created from a single essence", appears alongside a verse by Iqbal in Urdu.

The latter reflects his philosophical view of humanity's potential for growth and spiritual elevation: "The stars fear the rise of the earthly human, lest this fallen star should become a full moon".



Hossein Eini Bakhsh (R) and Mohammad Saeed Naghashian poses for a photo with their joint artwork at the Arts Council of Pakistan in Karachi, Pakistan in an undated photo.
IRNA

The words "Long live Iran and Pakistan" also feature in the artwork as a symbol of friendship between the two nations.

The artists created the work as a gesture of appreciation for the sympathy and support shown by the Pakistani people toward Iran during the recent war, according to the Iranian report.

The World Culture Festival Karachi 2026 was held from November 20 to 22, bringing together artists from more than 50 countries.