life is naught but knowledge in trial: the more knowledge one has, the more life one has
Fostering the cultural commonalities of nations inhabiting the ancient territory of ECO Region is one of the key tasks of ECO Cultural Institute as per its Charter and dissemination of information and news pertaining to the ongoing cultural developments of these countries forms the foundation for moving towards the promotion of ancient cultural commonalities; otherwise, if collective awareness of the common contemporary history is not raised, the promotion of historical cultural commonalities will be unattainable.

ECO Cultural Institute plays a substantial role in strengthening the foundations of unity and integration among the ECO member states and is the manifestation of the most profound cultural commonalities of the ECO Region. Aiming to present the ongoing developments of ECO nations, ECI has published, for the first time, the “ECI Cultural News Digest” with the slogan “We are not unaware of each other” spanning the time interval June-September 2020 so as to fulfill its responsibility to display the aptitudes and capabilities of the nations of the ECO Region in areas of culture and education on one hand, and illustrate the Region’s outstanding, unique international image on the other.

Throughout the first issue of “ECO Cultural News Digest”, effort has been made to cover lesser known historical, cultural, sociological, literary, sports and art developments of the countries of the ECO Region which boasts of a unique historical background dating back to antiquity and also provide a platform for the immediate exchange of information on both the local events and international developments through mutual collaborations in the field of media.

Among the topics covered in ECI’s summer news digest are: traditional arts and crafts of the Region and their production process; TV series and cinema movies; historical monuments as well as tourist, sports, industrial and recreational centers; lives and works of national luminaries and celebrities; innovations and new achievements in the field of health; key points raised during dialogues on international level; Meeting of heads of states and governments; conferences and exhibitions; scientific, literary, artistic, educational and sports events; joint memorandums of cooperation concluded in various political, social and cultural fields; publication of books and scientific, research journals; press, film and music festivals; news of publishing industry; commemoration ceremonies of the countries’ luminaries; press conferences of the intellectuals and professionals as well as subjects pertaining to women.

Throughout this issue of the ECI Cultural News Digest, efforts have also been made to portray a vivid and promising image of the cultural events of the ECO Member States. What is presented here, is undoubtedly a ‘digest’, a glimpse of a vast body of information; yet hopefully, it will become a medium for facilitating future media collaborations in the path towards ‘cultural partnership’ as a part of ‘cultural commonality’.

We hope that the publication of this news digest will also pave the way for more cooperation of the ECO Member States with the ECO Cultural Institute in the field of media.

ECO Cultural Institute
Afghanistan Cultural Digest
We are not unaware of each other

Afghanistan Cultural News Headlines

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By Baysonghor Research Institute
The book 'Kart Dynasty of Herat' to be Published

Baysonghor Research Institute in Herat is publishing the book 'Kart Dynasty of Herat' written by the celebrated Afghanistani translator, Ali Muhammad Zahma.

According to ECI public relations quoting Mehr News Agency, Baysonghor Research Institute of Herat is going to publish the book 'Kart Dynasty of Herat' written by late Professor Ali Muhammad Zahma, the distinguished Afghanistani translator. Zahma, one of the outstanding translators and researchers of Afghanistan and professor of literature at Kabul University, passed away in August 2018 in Vienna, Austria.

After Mohammad Davood's coup d'état, and particularly since the late 1950s, Zahma was banned from teaching at the university, was harassed a lot and imprisoned and tortured at some points. Thus, he left Afghanistan. He has left significant works of translation in various fields including philosophy, sociology, and literature, some of which have not yet been published.

Kart Dynasty mentioned in this book were a group of rulers in Khorasan during 643 to 783. The first ruler of the dynasty, and in fact its founder, was King Shamsuddin Muhammad bin Abu Bakr, whose lineage traces back to the Kings of Ghurid dynasty. The capital of this dynasty was the city of Herat and a total of eight monarchs found the opportunity to rule. The Kart Dynasty was overthrown by Amir Timour Gurkani. / 2020-06-29

On the occasion of the:
10th Anniversary of the Establishment of Afghanistan's National Institute of Music

Ahmad Sarmast received the prestigious Polar Music Prize from King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden.

Afghanistan's National Institute of Music (ANIM) was established on June 20, 2010 by Ahmad Nasser Sarmast, a recognized musician of Afghanistan. The Institute primarily aims to improve and change lives, ensure the rights of children and adolescents in the field of music, empower women and contribute to gender equality through music, safeguard and restore the country's musical traditions and also ensure cultural and musical diversity as well as cultural diplomacy. In a very short period of time, the Institute turned into one of the most influential and recognized educational and cultural institutions in Afghanistan at both national and international level.

In 2018, the Institute received the prestigious Polar Music Prize, and its students, particularly members of Zohreh Orchestra, have performed in many countries. It is worth mentioning that half of the students of Afghanistan's National School of Music are orphans and homeless.

Sarmast, the founder of Afghanistan's National Institute of Music (ANIM), have been trained at Moscow Conservatoire and later continued his studies in the field of music in Australia. He has received his PhD degree in Afghanistan Music from Monash University of Australia. In 2006, he returned to Afghanistan to study 'how the damage caused by war on Afghanistan's music could be eliminated'. He also believes in the 'healing role of music' for the 'future of Afghanistan'. Sarmast also won the UNESCO Award for Cultural Heritage Conservation. / 2020-06-30

'Once Upon a Time in Iran':
Shooting of Iran-Afghanistan Joint Cinema Production Begins

The shooting of the movie "Once Upon a Time in Iran", a joint production of Iran and Afghanistan cinema, has begun.

According to ECI public relations quoting Mehr News Agency, the shooting of the movie "Once Upon a Time in Iran", written and directed by Gholamreza Jafari and produced by Amir Zemestani and
We are not unaware of each other

Gholamreza Jafari, has begun in Tehran. The film is a joint production of Iran and Afghanistan cinema in social genre and narrates the story of an Afghan family living in a villa as its caretaker. Vahid Sheikhzadeh, Amir Zemestani, Sogol Ghalatian, Shohreh Sadat Mousavi, Saharnaz Abbaszadeh, Hassan Maqsoudi, Elnaz Mohammad Beygi, Eileen Jahed, Ronika Bahramzadeh, Sohrab Ansarian and Marjan Alavi are among the cast. / 2020-07-02

Participated by Abdul Ghafoor Liwal:
3rd Round of Afghanistan-Iran Talks

H.E. Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to Iran attended the virtual meeting 'The 3rd round of Afghanistan-Iran talks'.

On July 5, 2020, H.E. Mr. Abdul Ghafoor Liwal, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to Tehran, attended the virtual meeting 'The 3rd round of Afghanistan-Iran talks' held at the initiative of the Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS) of the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Afghanistan's Institute for Strategic Studies. Present at the online event were political, scientific and cultural figures of the two countries who exchanged views on regional and global issues.

In part of his speech, H.E. Liwal talked about the peace process initiated by Afghanistan government and the need to reach a regional consensus on the subject, as well as Afghanistan government's efforts made in cooperation with the Iranian officials to legalize the presence of Afghan refugees in Iran and their travels to and from this country in order to prevent unfortunate events.

The meeting concluded with the participants expressing gratitude to the organizers and calling for the continuation of such meetings at various levels and on different subjects. / 2020-07-08

Hussain Bakhsh Safari of Afghanistan Tops Jujitsu List of Best in World

In a latest ranking of the bests in Contact Jujitsu, Hussain Bakhsh Safari of Afghanistan topped the table for the second year in a row.

In this ranking, Safari is followed by Inkh Wangur Jav and Ganto Gukh, both from Mongolia, who have stood in second and third places respectively.

Born in 1996 in Bamyan province of Afghanistan, Safari has been involved in martial arts since childhood. He joined the Afghan national jujitsu team in 2010 and after several years of training in jujitsu, Safari participated at the 5th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games (AIMAG) held in Turkmenistan. In 62-kg weight class, safari defeated opponents from Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan and won the first gold medal in Asian Contact Jujitsu for Afghanistan.

Safari had also won the 67-kg weight class of United Arab Emirates International Championships held in Al-Ain.

In 2019, he went to India to participate in the international competitions in which he won a gold medal after defeating three opponents.

In the same year, Safari also competed in the Asian Games in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, where he won a gold medal in Contact Jujitsu and a bronze medal in fighting Jujitsu.

After multiple achievements in Jujitsu, Hussain Bakhsh Safari became interested in free fighting. In the last international competition held early 2020 in Moscow, he defeated Peter Berg of Russia. This victory was strongly welcomed by users of the Afghan social media thus encouraging him to gain five more victories and only one defeat in free fighting. /2020-07-09
Prof. Zainullah Manalai, the Renowned Pashto Language Author

Professor Manalai, the Afghan researcher, literary figure and historian, was born in 1924 in Nangarhar. He has authored more than 30 books and more than 200 papers on literary, cultural and historical subjects. Translation of classics such as Ferdowsi's Shahnameh, Saadi's Boostan and Attar's Mantiq al-Tair into Pashto are among his outstanding works. With his eloquent and fluent literary language, Prof. Manalai greatly contributed to the strengthening of Pashto language. He passed away in May 2020 at the age of 96. / 2020-07-12

Online Poetry Session of Afghanistan-Tajikistan Poets

The first online poetry session between Afghan and Tajik poets was organized by Afghanistan Ministry of Information and Culture on Monday, July 6, 2020.

Present at the online session were poets from Nangarhar, Bamyan, Kandahar, Kabul, Balkh, Panjshir, Badakhshan, Kunduz and four poets from Tajikistan. Head of Information and Culture of Department of Kunduz Province, Abdul Shakur Ghadrdan, stated that the literary program has been organized to strengthen cultural relations and promote good neighborliness as well as ancient cultural and historical commonalities between the two countries of Afghanistan and Tajikistan. "The online program will be held among Afghan and Tajik poets once a month", Ghadrdan added.

Next, Mahboubeh Babakarkhil, Head of People's Culture Department of the Ministry of Information and Culture of Afghanistan, welcomed the participating poets and talked about the long-standing cultural and historical relations of the two countries. She then continued her remarks saying that launching such programs has left a great impact on enhancing and further strengthening the mutual cultural relations between the two countries.

Further at the session, Tajik poet Ali Mohammad Moradi and poetess Rahim Jan, spoke briefly praising the measure taken for organizing the program and emphasized on its continuation. They further read their poems. / 2020-07-13

At the Press Conference of Afghan Artists was Discussed:

All Countries belonging to One Culture Should be Involved in the Registration of Common Artworks

The press conference titled "Art of Herat: Pride of Afghanistan, Common Heritage of the Region" was held on Sunday, July 12, 2020, at the Institute of Strategic Studies of Afghanistan in Herat province.

At the event, cultural figures and artists of western Afghanistan's Herat province expressed concern over the possible registration of miniature and calligraphy at the UNESCO world heritage list as the cultural heritage of Iran and Turkey and said the two countries should not register these arts for their own. They also stressed that Afghanistan government should take serious measures in this regard. Davoud Erfan, head of the Afghanistan Institute for Strategic Studies in Herat province, said: "Afghanistan government is the first to take measures for national and global registration of tangible and intangible heritage of the country and second, the countries of the region belonging to the same culture should consider the rights of all regional countries when registering..."
We are not unaware of each other

common works globally." Meanwhile, Nik Mohammad Mostamand Ghori, a calligraphy scholar of Herat province, said: "Afghanistan has valuable artworks in Thuluth, Naskh and Kufi in its historical monuments and the two children of Shahrokh Mirza Teymouri were among the most famous calligraphers of that era. Afghanistan's history is itself proof to the fact that the country also has a long-lasting history in the field of calligraphy, and efforts should be made to register this art as a common heritage of the regional countries."

On the other hand, Towfiq Rahmani, Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts of Herat University, added that Herat is clearly the cradle of the evolution of miniature art, and as the inheritor of this sublime art, Afghanistan must take action.

Moreover, Azita Ebrahim, a professor at the Faculty of Fine Arts of Herat University said: "Unfortunately, Afghanistan has forgotten these two arts and it is time the country pays attention to its cultural assets".

According to a statement by Afghanistan Institute for Strategic Studies in Herat province, a resolution was issued at the press conference stating that no country or modern politics can claim these two arts (miniature and calligraphy) as theirs alone.

A Female Literary Figure Becomes Senior Advisor to Afghanistan Ministry of Education

According to ECI public relations quoting Shafaqna news agency, Dr. Homeira Qaderi has been appointed as the Senior Advisor to the Ministry of Education on Provincial Affairs.

Homeira Qaderi was born in 1979 to Herati parents in Kabul. In 1992, she started writing stories. During the Taliban rule, one of her stories was reviewed during a critique session in Herat.

In 2000, Qaderi came to Iran to pursue her academic endeavors and completed her bachelor's and master's degrees in Persian language and literature. In 2007, she defended her dissertation titled 'An analysis of the process of story writing in Herat from 1919 to 2001' under the supervision of Dr. Sirous Shamisa at the Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages of Allameh Tabatabai University.

Prior to this, Ms. Qaderi had also served at the Ministry of Education.

Attended by Afghanistan Minister of Information & Culture: Afghan Film Marks 52nd Anniversary of Establishment

Afghan Film cinema organization marked the 52nd anniversary of its establishment.

According to ECI public relations quoting Afghan Film, present at the ceremony were the Minister of Information and Culture, Deputy Minister of Arts and Culture, heads of the ministry, rector and professors of Fine Arts University and a number of filmmakers and cultural figures of the country as well as representatives of media.

At the 52nd anniversary of Afghan Film, Mahal Wak, a young Afghan actor and veterans including Mamnoon Maghsoudi, the dexterous artist, and Janab Khaksa, a master of comedy in Afghanistan cinema, were honored.

For investment in cinema equipment, Ali Foroutan was honored while Masoud Eslami was praised for producing and investing in independent cinema. Moreover, for promoting cinema culture and cinema halls, efforts of Nama Rasaneh family cinema were appreciated.

Further at the ceremony, two Afghan filmmakers, Nabi Tanha and Maryam Faqirzadeh, were also venerated for making Afghan Film activities more productive. Other people commended by Afghan Film were two staff members of the Ministry of Information and Culture, Shafiq Ahmadzai, Head of the Minister's Office, and Liaqat Ali Afzali, Head of Finance and
Administration department, who were honored for their professional cooperation with Afghan Film.

Afghan Film president Sahra Karimi said that she has made substantial changes to Afghan Film over the past year and hopes that the organization takes considerable measures for the production of various films to represent Afghanistan.

Afghan Film is a government film agency affiliated with the Ministry of Information and Culture, which not only makes films but also possesses a rich repository of the history of Afghanistan's film and cinema. / 2020-07-20

Attended by the President of Afghanistan: National Archives Received Historical Documents of Ghurid period

President Ghani of the I.R. Afghanistan handed over the collection of historical documents of the Ghurid period to the National Archives.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute quoting the Presidential Office of Afghanistan, during a ceremony, Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, the President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, handed over the collection of historical documents of the Ghurid period to the National Archives.

During the event, which took place at the Archives building, President Ghani delivered a speech expressing gratitude to Khaja Mirza Mohammad for handing over the historical documents of the Ghurid period. He then submitted the documents to Tahir Zuhair, caretaker of the Ministry of Information and Culture.

Then Tahir Zuhair and Gholam Mohi-ud-Din Siddiqui delivered speeches followed by the remarks of Mohammad Afzar Rahbin, the head of the National Archives.

The head of the National Archives noted that presidency of the National Archives considers gaining access to the collection of Ghurid documents an important achievement. He continued his remarks saying that in order to enrich the depository of the National Archives, sufficient funds should be allocated so that historical documents of the country could be collected through a national call and thus, their smuggling will be prevented.

The president then instructed the officials of the National Archives to prepare a national call and propose a specific mechanism to allocate funds.

He also instructed the Ministry of Finance to arrange for a special chapter to be opened for the National Archives.

President Ghani further said: "The key point is to make electronic versions of these documents to facilitate the access of teachers and students, and I am sure that these documents will soon be translated into different languages because they are very rare and most of the world countries have very few documents from the Abbasid and Ghaznavid periods." / 2020-07-30

The New Teen Book "Atashgah" Released in Iran

Saad publisher has launched a new book titled "Atashgah" by Ahmad Modaqeq for its teen readers.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute quoting Mehr news agency, "Atashgah", the most recent book by Ahmad Modaqeq, the Afghan author, comprises several stories acclaimed by many readers. His novel "Russian Songs" was honored at the 11th Jalal Al-e Ahmad Literary Awards.

The book tells the story of a teenage boy Habib who lives with his family in the Balutak region. Like other people in the region, his family is suffering from the oppression of Ayyub Khan, the ruler of the region who lives in a fortress near Atashgah Mount. He is engaged in struggles to save his father who has been imprisoned by Khan.

The target group of the book published by Saad in 112 pages is teenage readers. The book is available in Saad website: saadpub.ir. / 2020-08-04
Publication of the book "The Sleeping World" in Balkh

During the times of seclusion of world cities, the book titled 'The Sleeping World', which is a selection of poems, was launched at the initiative of Abdul Wahab Mujir.

Published by Balkh Writers' Association in 76 pages and in 1000 copies, this poetry book has been printed in the summer of 2020 at 'Sooratgar' print house in Balkh.

This selection of poems includes an introduction and 28 poems by 27 poets such as Abdul Wahab Mujir, Injaneb (Saleh Mohammad Khaleeq), Najib Barvar, Dr. Abdolsamei Hamed, Mohammad Ismail Borhan Abdali, Qiyamuddin Qate, Sahabaz Iraj, Saadat Panjsheeri, Negi Badakhsh, Ayel Shabrooz, Latifeh Qaderi Rasekh, Atef Kobolian, Mohammad Arif Bassam, Mohammad Nasser Farhat, Sohrab Sirat, Zubair Hejran Qasemzadeh, Eliyas Sabouri Samdyar, Ahmad Shah Faye, Yahya Javaheri, Mohammad Anvar Hakimzadeh, Firooz Khavar, Raheleh Yar, Enayatullah Ali Bavar Bamik, Mohammad Sadeq Osyan, Mohajer Alireza Raheb and Seyedeh Hosseini. / 2020-08-04

Well-Known Afghan Poet, Sulaiman Layeq, Passes away

An Afghan well-known literary figure, poet and top writer of the country passed away at 90.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute as quoted byHamshahri online website, Sulaiman Layeq an Afghan well-known literary figure, poet and top writer passed away in Kabul at 90.

The cause of his death was the injuries he sustained in an explosion in Kabul last year, according to his relatives.

He was one of the founders of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, but has not been politically active in recent years. Sulaiman Layeq was promoted to lead the Academy of Sciences, and also was the Minister of Nationalities and Tribal Affairs. Layeq was an inspirational poet and writer who published several books on poetry in Afghanistan. / 2020-08-05

An article by Dr. Seyed Zia Hosseini:
The architectural Styles of Afghanistan through the Lens of Islamic Architecture

Architecture means soul and meaning and without it, life will be meaningless.

Architecture has surrounded us and its relation to our essential and daily needs indicates its profound and precise effects on our lifestyles. Depending on time, place and social requirements, the architectural styles and techniques vary greatly.

In the most general sense, style comprise of distinctive patterns or characteristics of a work or a set of works that are completely dependent on the form of the work of art, and stylistics, is a way of categorizing artworks in a given field based on their formal similarities.

Although in the world's art and architecture, stylistics is considered an important issue, yet due to its variety, there is no clear consensus among researchers on its definition and functions. In Afghanistan, so far no research has been conducted or no book has been written about the architectural styles or their stylistics or categorization of such styles. But, the concept has been included in the scientific discussions on architecture for about half a century.

The paper at hand endeavors to explain the concept of architectural stylistics and identifies and classifies the architectural styles of Afghanistan for the first time. To this end, first the types and characteristics of research methods in the field of architecture have been discussed. / 2020-08-10
Panjshir Holds 8th Mulberry Cultural Festival

Attended by a number of poets, writers and cultural figures, the 8th Mulberry Cultural Festival was held in Malima village of Panjshir.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, quoting Tolo News, the festival participants said that holding such cultural events is important for strengthening national unity among people.

"Such events indicate compassion, harmony and solidarity among all the tribes of Afghanistan", said Ekram Khamoosh, one of the poets attending the festival. Every summer, Panjshir hosts hundreds of tourists who come mainly to enjoy the area's green nature as well as Panjshir Sea.

Atefeh Mohammadi, who had participated in Panjshir's Mulberry Cultural Festival along with her friends and family members, said: "There were many women participating at the festival and Panjshir province hosted them very well".

Noor Ahmad Ahmadi, a resident of Baghlan province, had also attended the festival. He says that he and a number of his friends came to Panjshir from Baghlan province to spend a good time: "The safety of any area is an important factor encouraging people to travel to other provinces and Panjshir's safety is the reason we are here".

Meanwhile, Panjshir's local officials are also endeavoring to facilitate the conditions for the arrival of national and foreign tourists in the province. / 2020-08-11

Turkey Supports Sports Activities in Afghanistan

Turkish Coordination and Cooperation Agency (TIKA) donated sports equipment to the Paralympic Federation of Herat Province, Afghanistan.

While announcing the news, Ali Ergun Cenar, TIKA's coordinator in Herat, said: "We hope that the athletes could continue their training with these equipment."

While thanking TIKA for its support of Afghanistan's sports activities, Nader Shah Heydari, the head of Herat Paralympic Federation, said: "Since the establishment of this federation 6 years ago, a total of 250 athletes have joined and 15 disabled athletes have won medals in various disciplines." / 2020-08-12

Leena Alam to Judge Imagine India Film Festival in Madrid

The Afghan actress, Leena Alam, has become a jury member of the 19th Imagine India Film Festival to be held in September 2020 in Madrid, the capital of Spain.

The festival was previously postponed due to the outbreak of Corona virus. Now the international festival is scheduled to take place from September 24 to October 8, 2020.

About 155 films from around the world are participating in the festival this year. The jury is made up of 20 members from 10 countries led by Mahtab Keramati, an Iranian actress and Afghanistan's Leena Alam will help decide the winner in the Best Actress category at the festival.

Last year, the film 'Black Kite' directed by Tarique Qayumi was screened at the festival; in which Leena Alam played the role of Jamila.

Leena Alam was born in Kabul in 1978. In 1989, Alam and her family moved to America because of the civil war in Afghanistan. She began her acting and cinema career in 1998. Alam is now an award-winning Afghan film, TV and theater actress who has appeared in films such as Kabuli Kid, Loori, A Letter to the President, and Hassan. She has also been...
known as the character Shereen after playing in the TV drama, Shereen, the first of its kind to have been made in Afghanistan and produced by Kaboora and TOLO TV.

Imagine India Film Festival Director Qazi Abdur Rahim said he hopes the festival would not be postponed again due to the coronavirus. Festival Imagine India aims to showcase mainly Indian and Asian films to contribute to the better comprehension of the culture of India and other countries. Categories in the festival are as follows:
- Best Film
- Best Director
- Best Actress
- Best Actor
- Best Music
- Best Cinematography
- Best Edition
- Best Script
- Best Short Film
- Award for Lifetime Achievement
- Recognition to An Institution

Fresh Productions of Afghan Film

Afghan Film will produce six documentaries in historical and social genres during 2020.

On Wednesday, July 29, 2020, the Afghan Film Director signed contracts with six independent filmmakers to produce six documentaries.
- Feature documentary "COVID-19 in Afghanistan" / Director Seyyed Massoud Eslami / Independent filmmaker;
- Feature documentary "Ruins" / Director Sami Hasib Nabizadeh / Independent filmmaker;
- Feature documentary "Kabul's Straw Sale Street" / Hezbollah Soltani / Afghan Film Employee / Independent filmmaker;
- Feature Documentary "Jar-e Khushk Village of Baghlan" / Basheer Masham / a Graduate of the Faculty of Arts / Film in Pashto;
- Feature historical documentary "Mahmood Tarzi" / Abbas Mohammadi / Independent filmmaker;
- Feature historical documentary "Constitutional Movement in Afghanistan" / Qader Aryaee / Afghan Film Director.

Dr. Sahraa Karimi, Director of Afghan Film, also noted that making these documentaries not only enriches the filmmaking culture in the country but is also an important step towards reviving Afghan cinema, especially the production of historical, social and anthropological documentaries. Karimi also believes that the production of these six documentaries by Afghan Film is a good opportunity for entrepreneurship which has provided jobs for at least 72 filmmakers.

Titled "From the Fresh Wounds":
Latest Poetry Book by Salih Mohammad Khaliq Published

Titled 'From the Fresh Wounds', the nineteenth poetry book of Salih Mohammad Khaliq, the poet, researcher, translator and journalist from Balkh and chairman of the Balkh Authors Association, was published in the summer of 2020.

Published by Balkh Authors Association in 84 pages and one thousand copies, the book contains 35 lyrical poems and 4 couplets and has been printed in Maslaki Afghan print house in Kabul.

Jakfar Hosseini is the cover designer while Seyyed Ali Mousavi has done page layout. The publication costs have been paid by Hamidullah Arvin, a judge and President of the General Criminal Court and Deputy to Samangan Appellate Court.

Many of the book's poems reflect the difficult times of the cities’ isolation as well as issues such as patriotism and people's pains and sorrows. Having beautiful and fresh images and discoveries and a fine and solid language can be considered as some of the most important characteristics of these poems.
Salih Mohammad Khaliq has been working in the field of literature and poetry and is one of the most prolific poets and writers of the country. So far, he has published 32 research works including some Russian-Persian translations.

Due to his brilliant scientific, cultural and literary record, in March 2020, the governor of Balkh named him 'The Researcher of Balkh'. In 2016, the Foundation for Afghanistan Graduates awarded him the title of 'Balkh's Veteran Author' while in Spring 2017, the President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan awarded this poet and writer the 'Governmental Medal of Ghazi Mir Masjidi Khan'.

Moreover, in August 2020, the Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies awarded him the title 'Balkh's Elite'.

During 'Master Mohammad Mehdi Mirzaei's Night'

Afghan Master Calligrapher Honored

During a program titled 'Master Mohammad Mehdi Mirzaei's Night', Iran's cultural attaché in India honored the Afghan master calligrapher.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, quoting the public relations of the of Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, present at the event were masters of the filed from Iran and India as well as literary figures from other Persian-speaking countries such as Afghanistan.

The event also hosted some outstanding Iranian master calligraphers such as Moradi, Teymouri, Rabbani, Ameli, etc., along with Indian master calligraphers including Mohammad Ahrar, Mohammad Noshad, Arman Habibi, Mohammad Ferdows Yasari, and others who also presented their artworks at the sidelines of the event.

Speaking on the program, Alireza Qazveh said that some videoclips on the activities of Afghan calligraphers were screened and part of the interviews made with Master Mirzaei were presented for the groups (Iran-India groups I & II) which were welcomed by the cultural figures of the Persian speaking countries.

He went on saying that during the two-hour-program, more than six hundred articles, artworks, photos, videoclips as well as reviews and comments of the participants in this ceremony were screened. He went on saying that there are more than four hundred artists, writers and cultural figures present in the two Iran-India groups I & II among whom, two hundred are prominent academic and higher-education level personalities.

Qazveh concluded his remarks saying: "These programs are organized every Friday, each with a specific theme. In the previous session of the program held last week, the first Persian poetry book of India's Dr. Belram Shakla was reviewed and next week, the program will focus on Hajj pilgrimage in Persian literature."
We are not unaware of each other

Iranian poetry and literature in Afghanistan and the great capacity of the Iranian language for interaction between the two countries.”

Mahdi Afzali CEO of Roudaki Foundation also referred to the mission of the foundation in the development of Iranian language and literature saying: "The foundation is ready to hold joint events including cultural weeks. We should seek to strengthen the relationship between Farsi-speaking countries more than before and holding common events can help in this regard."

Referring to the foundation's prediction in defining events in the protection and development of Farsi language, Afzali stressed that this chapter can lead to greater synergy between Farsi-speaking countries in the field of culture and art.

In the end, both sides discussed the limitations of holding web based events due to the Coronavirus pandemic and decided to form an expert committee to provide the Roudaki Foundation the ground to carry out cultural activities in Afghanistan. / 2020-08-18

'Farhad Darya', Voice of Music for Peace & Reconciliation

Farhad Darya, a famous Afghan musician and singer, was born on September 22, 1962.

After completing his academic studies at the Polytechnic and Kabul Universities, he formed his first professional music group called 'Baran Ensemble'. During the civil war, Darya went to Europe and thus Baran Ensemble scattered. He married in France and moved to the United States in 1995 and settled in Virginia.

During the 1980s and 1990s, Darya released several albums, most of them on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the war and displacement of the peoples of this country. 'Hello Afghanistan', which was his first album after years of war, deals with the same issue. During this time, he became one of Afghanistan's top musicians and 'Best Singer of the Year' in Denmark. Darya released more than 18 music albums during this period.

Farhad Darya has been working on philanthropic and humanitarian projects since 2003. He has been selected as the UN "Goodwill and Peace Ambassador" in Afghanistan and since then, has been active in assisting street children and has also been working earnestly in the field of human rights.

In 2008, Darya released his international and studio album "Heh", which was warmly received in Afghanistan. Farhad Darya has also held concerts in Tajikistan and Germany. His works have been messengers of peace, reconciliation and peaceful coexistence of the Afghan people.

Afghanistan's Best Singer (2003 and 2009), Denmark's Best Singer (2005), Afghanistan's Best Album of the Year (2006), and the 2007 Human Rights Award are the titles Darya has won so far. / 2020-08-20

'Paghman', Summer Resort of Kabul Residents

Located 25 km from the capital city of Kabul, Paghman is one of the recreational and historical areas of Kabul which attracts many tourists every summer.

Paghman has two very popular valleys including "Paghman" and "Pashei". Both the sites are very green with a very pleasant weather. In Paghman's center, there is the famous "Paghman Hill" which is one of the best recreational areas in Afghanistan.

Mohammad Ali Eslami Nodoshan, the Iranian scholar and researcher who traveled to different cities in Afghanistan few decades ago, described Paghman in his book "Safir-e Simorgh", which is a memoir of his trip to Afghanistan: "Kabul's nearest summer resort is Paghman. Like Shemiran in Tehran, it is
more or less the same distance from the city; it is a very pleasant and clean village with large gardens.... The streets are so clean and flat and when water is sprinkled on the soil in the evenings, they smell of mud, which is much more pleasant than asphalt smell ..."

After Afghanistan took back its independence from Britain in 1919, Amanullah Khan sought to create a symbol for Afghanistan's independence, and thus, he built 'Tagh-e Zafar' (Victory Arch) in Paghman region as this symbol.

As stated in the book "A Brief and Illustrated History of Afghanistan", the names of those sacrificed their lives to take back the country's independence have been engraved on the structure's domed wall.

'Tagh-e Zafar' was severely damaged during several decades of war, and after the new developments in Afghanistan, the government of Hamid Karzai rebuilt the building while preserving its historical originality.

After the proclamation of the International Day of Nowruz, when Afghanistan hosted the Nowruz celebration in 2014, the government decided to hold this international celebration in Paghman region. To this purpose, a magnificent palace combining traditional and modern architecture was built it in Paghman. / 2020-08-20

**Javad Khavari's New Novel Published**

Javad Khavari, the creator of "Talisms", and the outstanding Afghan researcher and scholar, has in his new novel "Bood va Nabood" offered a fresh aspect of his philosophical and ontological outlook in the field of Afghan novel writing.

This 171-page book has been published jointly by Tak Publications and Maghsoudi Publishing Institute in Kabul. Those interested may purchase the book at Ferdowsi website.

Mohammad Javad Khavari has so far written several books. / 2020-08-27

**Nuristan National Park of Afghanistan in Pictures**

Nuristan province is located in the east of the country and has recently been declared a national park and wildlife sanctuary. The province has dense forests and is home to various species of animals. It is also considered one of the popular tourist attractions in the country.
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Titled "Seas Have Crocodiles":
A Book on the Life of an Afghan Immigrant to Italy Published

The Seas Have Crocodiles" written by Fabio Gada and translated by Marjan Mardani was published by Amout Publications.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Mehr news agency correspondent, the novel is the real-life story of Enayatollah Akbari, an Afghan immigrant, written by the Italian author Fabio Gada. Gada's main career is training and educating the children in need and also writes for several Italian newspapers and magazines. His latest book "The Seas Have Crocodiles" written based on the real life of an Afghan immigrant, has sold 400,000 copies in Italy and has been translated into 30 languages. The book has been recently published in 192 pages and 1100 copies by Amout publications. / 2020-09-07

New Season of Afghanistan Football League to Begin

A memorandum of understanding for the government's financial support of the 9th season of the Afghan Football Premier League was signed today in Kabul.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Tolonews, the nation's football league--the Afghan Premier League (APL)--is scheduled to start in Kabul in two weeks, and the government today pledged its financial support for the competition. A memorandum of understanding for the government's financial support of the 9th season of the Afghan Football Premier League was signed today in Kabul.

The season will begin on September 24, with the top eight teams from the eight zones of the country. "This year, the Afghanistan Premier League will be held with the support of both the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the president. As in previous years, the Moby Group and the Ministry of Information and Culture will jointly coordinate this program," said Tahir Zahir, the information and culture minister. "The president of Afghanistan and the vice president pay attention to sports, athletes and champions as much as possible, and this is the case with the Afghan Premier League, which is organized by the Football Federation and Moby Group," said Rezwan Murad, the head of the media and public affairs department of the Office of the First Vice President.

The Ministry of Information and Culture, on behalf of the government, has paved the way for the league competition.

The matches are scheduled to run for 15 days, and Moby Group will provide live coverage of the competition on TOLO and LEMAR TV channels. "We want to take this opportunity to introduce the values of the country over the last twenty years to the world through football, and to reach the homes of the citizens of the country through television, as well as to introduce the real face of Afghanistan to the world," said Shafiq Ghawhari, CEO of Moby Group. Despite the threat of the coronavirus, football federation officials said the league will be held following certain health measures and with a limited number of spectators.

Teams:
Toofan Harirod from the west zone
Shaheen Asmaee from Kabul
Oqaban Hindukush from the central zone
Spinghar Bazan
Abasin Sape from the east zone
Simorgh Alburz from the north
Mawjhai Amu from the northern zone
and De Maiwand Atalan from the south zone are
the eight teams that will compete in the 9th season of
the league. / 2020-09-09

Father of Afghan Saffron Passes Away

The Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
of Afghanistan expressed deep condolences over the
demise of the country's 'Saffron Father', calling it a
great loss for the nation.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting
Bakhtar news agency, Mohammad Akbar had
established the first saffron fields in Afghanistan 25
years ago contributing to the promotion of the
cultivation and production of this plant in the country.
Due to promoting Saffron cultivation in the country,
Mohammad Akbar is considered as one of the
founders of saffron cultivation industry in Afghanistan.

Mohammad Akbarkeh, known as the 'saffron father'
of Afghanistan, recently died of an illness.Afghanistan
is currently one of the world's largest saffron
producers. Moreover, Afghan saffron holds the first
place across the world in terms of quality. / 2020-09-16

With Afghanistan's Membership at UN
"Commission on the Status of Women":
Afghanistan's Historic Victory at UN

Afghanistan's Permanent Mission to the United
Nations announced that Afghanistan has been elected a
member of the UN Commission on the Status of Women
for a four-year term (2021-2015).

This is the first time that Afghanistan has become a
member of the commission since joining the United
Nations.
Afghanistan's Permanent Mission to the United
Nations has termed the country's membership in the
UN Commission on the Status of Women as a
"historic victory." / 2020-09-16
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Azerbaijani Author Lauded at Baku Book Center

The Baku Book Center organized an event to praise Bahram Bagirzade, the celebrated Azerbaijani artist and author.

According to ECI public relations quoting Day.az, at the event, the famous journalist Vogar Imanov read a section of the author's book online which is available in the social media channels as well as Facebook and Instagram pages of Baku Book Center.

It is worth mentioning that Bahram Bagirzade is a renowned artist and author of the Republic of Azerbaijan who has been hospitalized in Baku hospital since June 13, 2020 due to corona virus infection. Bagirzade has written more than 30 books. / 2020-06-22

At the Invitation of Georgia: Azerbaijani Artists to Participate in an Int'l Contest

A group of artists of the Republic of Azerbaijan will participate in the first international contest titled "Online Coordination" in Georgia.

According to ECI public relations quoting Day.az, aiming to promote the classical music and discover young talents, the contest will be held in Georgia on July 10-15, 2020 among young classical music vocalists. Contestants aged 7 to 30 will participate at the event which will be organized at the initiative of the Union of Georgian Folk and Classical Music. / 2020-06-25

Iran-Azerbaijan Discuss Coop

Masumeh Ebtekar, the Iranian vice president for women and family affairs, and Bahar Muradova, Chairman of the State Committee for Family, Women and Children held an online meeting to discuss matters of mutual interest in the field of women and family affairs.

According to ECI public relations quoting Azertag new agency, at the online meeting, the two sides discussed issues pertaining to implementing the articles of the MoU signed in February 2016 between Azerbaijan's State Committee for Family, Women and Children and Iranian Vice Presidency for Women and Family Affairs.

At the meeting, Muradova stressed that the relations between Azerbaijan and the Islamic Republic of Iran have always been based on mutually beneficial cooperation and strong friendship, and serve the interests of our countries and peoples.

During the meeting, information was provided on the socio-psychological and financial assistance provided for vulnerable families during the pandemic. Moreover, the Chairman of the State Committee for Family, Women and Children of the Republic of Azerbaijan, presented a report on the active presence of the country's women in the political and sociological life of the country.

In her turn, the Vice President of the Islamic Republic of Iran for Women and Family Affairs, expressed gratitude for the close cooperation and stressed the importance of the work done as a result of joint activities. Giving detailed information about the positive experience gained in the field of women and family affairs, she also announced readiness to share such experience with the Azerbaijani colleagues.

During the meeting, the sides also exchanged views on issues such as prevention of domestic violence, violence against women and children, ensuring gender equality in all areas, economic strengthening of women and also prospects for bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the field.
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Just a few months ago and by the decree of Ilham Aliyev, the president of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Bahar Muradova, who was previously the first deputy of Azerbaijan Parliament, was appointed as the Chairman of the State Committee for Family, Women and Children of the Republic of Azerbaijan. / 2020-06-29

Azerbaijani Poets to Participate at the Colombian Poetry Festival

Two poets from the Republic of Azerbaijan will take part in the International Poetry Festival of Colombia.

According to ECI public relations quoting Day.az, Rameez Roshan and Nigar Hasan-Zadeh, two well-known Azerbaijani poets, will take part in the international Colombian poetry festival 'Festival Internacional de poesía' to be held online in Medellín, from August 1 to October 10, 2020.

The two poets are supposed to attend in the festival on September 5. At the event, each poet will be given 20 minutes to read poems. According to the festival rules, the poems will be read in the original language and translated into English.

It is worth mentioning that 191 poets from 103 countries will participate at the online festival. The Festival Internacional de poesía was founded in 1991 at the initiative of Fernando Rendón, the renowned Colombian poet. / 2020-06-30

Heroes of Fight Against Corona Honored in Azerbaijan

The second virtual exhibition 'Günməyən qəhrəmanlar' (invisible heroes) was mounted in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

According to ECI public relations quoting day.az, the second virtual exhibition of Gilavar Photography Club has been dedicated to the endeavors by journalists, photographers and reporters and the sacrifices they made to fight against the spread of coronavirus in the country.

"The exhibition was organized to illustrate the continuous efforts being made by journalists and photographers”, said Rashid Mokhtiyev, one of the exhibition organizers.

The first exhibition was mounted in April with the slogan "Stay at home" and featured 56 photos from 19 photographers. The second edition exhibits 55 works by 5 spokespersons, 19 journalists, 19 photographers and 12 filmmakers. / 2020-07-02

Ilham Aliyev Proposes Global Solidarity Against Corona Virus

The proposal of Ilham Aliyev, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to hold a special meeting to discuss issues regarding the fight against the new coronavirus (COVID-19) has been supported by more than 130 countries.

Hikmat Hajiyev, Head of the Department of Foreign Policy Affairs of the Presidential Administration, said that Ilham Aliyev's proposal for holding a special meeting at the UN General Assembly on the subject of fighting against coronavirus was supported by more than 130 countries.

Pointing to the lack of sufficient global solidarity in fight against COVID-19, Hajiyev said that countries' differences in viewpoints hinder such fight and added: "Aliyev made this proposal for global solidarity. We hope that the meeting is organized at the earliest. The world needs to work together promptly.” / 2020-07-07
Songs by Azerbaijani Artist in Germany

The music composed by an artist from the Republic of Azerbaijan was performed in Germany.

According to ECI public relations quoting day.az, the Bridges Orchestra in Germany staged a music concert based on the music composed by Azerbaijani artist Hatica Zinlava. The artist, who has been working in Germany since 2005, has been actively holding concerts in various German cities.

In her latest performance, she performed the folk songs "Ey Lachin" and "Bayat-i Shiraz". In an exclusive interview, the artist has said that the event aimed to introduce the arts and culture of Azerbaijan in the world.

The concert inaugural featured Johann Dalkhov, conductor of Bridges Orchestra, who briefly talked about the part of Silk Road running through Azerbaijan. The performance was very appealing to the audience and some pieces of music from Iran, Russia and Mongolia were also performed. Hatica Zinlava has previously performed at several world-famous festivals in the Republic of Azerbaijan, the United States, Canada, Austria, Italy, Turkey, etc. / 2020-07-08

"My Thoughts Aloud and Key Issues" Published in London

The international London Prize has published the book "My Thoughts Aloud and Key Issues" by Sariya Mammadova, the Azerbaijani author.

According to ECI public relations quoting news.day.az, the book, shortlisted for the London Prize, begins with an introduction by physics Nobel laureate Lev Landau, which focuses on the role of authors and intellectuals in societies.

Born in 1947 in Baku, Sariya Mammadova is a graduate of the Faculty of Petroleum and Chemistry of Azerbaijan and the author of more than 20 books and 200 scientific and research papers. She is also a member of Azerbaijani and Russian Writers Unions. / 2020-07-12

Rep. Azerbaijan, Special Guest of Int'l Cultural Forum in Russia

The Republic of Azerbaijan will participate as special guest at the 9th St. Petersburg International Cultural Forum in Russia.

According to ECI public relations quoting day.az, the theme of the 9th St. Petersburg International Cultural Forum in Russia will be devoted to "Culture of Civilization - Civilization of Culture" and will be held on November 12 - 14, 2020. The reports say that this year, Azerbaijan and France will be guests of the forum.

The forum's press service noted that during corona virus pandemic that has severely harmed global social cooperation and has also tested habitual models of social interaction, culture is the only medium that could infuse the spirit of hope in a better tomorrow and establish effective interactions. Cultural figures, representatives of art, academic and business communities as well as world cultural policy leaders will take part in the forum. The event is being organized by the Government of Russia, the Ministry of Culture and the Government of St. Petersburg. / 2020-07-12
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Azerbaijan Museum of Culture Reopens

The Museum of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan named after Mirza Fatali Akhundov has resumed activities.


Those interested may visit the museum complying with health protocols which includes a fever testing upon entering the museum complex. Moreover, wearing face masks is mandatory.

It is worth mentioning that due to corona virus pandemic, museums had been closed since March. / 2020-07-19

Mirza Fatali Akhundzadeh Commemorated in Tbilisi

The commemoration of Mirza Fatali Akhundzadeh was held in Tbilisi, Georgia.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Report, present at the ceremony were the staff members of the Museum of Mirza Fatali Akhundzadeh, the founder of Azerbaijan National Drama of and one of the outstanding figures of this country. Then flowers were offered to the grave of this celebrated figure which is located in Tbilisi Botanical Garden. Moreover, flowers were also put in front of his half-body statue erected in the Azerbaijani school of this city.

The year 2020 marks the 208th birth anniversary of Akhundzadeh. He was 66 years old when he passed away while he had lived 44 years of his life in Tbilisi. / 2020-07-19

Celebrated Azerbaijani Singer, Khan Shushin, Commemorated

This week, the live program of International Mugham Center of Azerbaijan was dedicated to the memory of Khan Shushin, the celebrated singer of this country.

According to ECI public relations quoting mct.gov.az, the program featured Ramz Quliyev, Mensum Ibrahimov, Kamila Nabiyeva, other renowned Azerbaijani singers plus Beyimkhanim Verdiyeva Javanshirova, the president of Khan Shushin Foundation, who talked about the life and works of Khan Shushin, one of the pioneers of Azerbaijani music, and his role in the development of Azerbaijani music.

In her speech, Beyimkhanim Verdiyeva Javanshirova, the daughter of the late Khan Shushin, highlighted that her father always endeavored to contribute to the growth and flourishing of Azerbaijani national music.

It is worth mentioning that Khan Shushin holds a very unique position in Mugham music of the Republic of Azerbaijan and his role in educating the singers of the country is praiseworthy. / 2020-07-23

'Steppe Man' (Çölçü) Latest Int'l Awards
Directed by Azerbaijani director Shamil Aliyev, the movie 'Steppe Man' (Çölçü), won top six awards from the United Kingdom, Singapore and India.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute quoting trend.az, due to corona virus pandemic, juries of the festivals announced the polls online.

The film 'Steppe Man' (Çölçü) was made in 2012 at the instruction of the Ministry of Culture of Azerbaijan in "Azerbaijan Film" studio named after Jafar Jabarli and has so far won 55 awards from 90 international film festivals.

The film depicts the story of an inhabitant of Sabzdasht (steppe) who lives far from the city and has a deep connection with the nature. His father introduces him to the decency of life in the steppe.

After the demise of the father, the young man meets a girl and the incident opens a new page in his life. / 2020-07-30

'Farida' Named Best Film at Russian Film Fest

Produced by Narimanfilm studio of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Movie 'Farida' was named best at the Russian film festival.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting day.az, the feature film won Best Director Award at the 4th Gorky Film Festival of Contemporary Russian Cinema held on July 7-23 in Nizhny Novgorod, Russia. The Festival jury comprised of the best Russian actors, actresses and directors.

Co-produced by Narimanfilm Studio and St. Petersburg School of New Cinema, the full-length feature film 'Farida' has been written and directed by Ksenia Lagutina. The main character is played by Maryam Ibrahimova, a young Azerbaijani actress. 'Farida' is about a young woman who has come from the Azerbaijani village of Khinalig to St. Petersburg looking for her husband. She is completely unaware of her husband's whereabouts.

The big city draws many people to Farida's life and turns her life upside down. / 2020-08-04

Concluding an official contract: Canni de Byazi to Lead Azerbaijan National Football Team

The Football Federation of the Republic of Azerbaijan announced that it has reached an agreement with Canni de Byazi to lead the team.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Varzesh 3, Canni de Byazi, the former coach of teams such as Levante and Alaves, has been officially appointed as the new coach of Azerbaijan national team.

The name of de Byazi have so far been mentioned several times as an option to lead Esteghlal, Persepolis and the national Iranian football team; however, the Italian coach will finally work in Iran's neighborhood. Following Branco's departure from Persepolis, de Byazi was suggested as his successor, but eventually, Gabriel Calderon took over the team's leadership. De Byzai did not replace Andre Stramaccioni either and he didn't lead any Iranian team at the end.

Canni de Byazi became more popular during the Euro 2016 competitions when Italian coach brought the lesser-known Albanian national team to the prestigious competition for the first time. / 2020-08-10

'In Between Dying' Included in Venice Film Festival Lineup

The Venice Film Festival announced that a movie by a director from the Republic of Azerbaijan has been included in the Festival's final Lineup list along with 18 other films.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting day.az, the film "In Between Dying" directed by Hilal
We are not unaware of each other

Baydarov from the Republic of Azerbaijan has been included in Venice Film Festival lineup. In Between Dying tells the story of Davud, a young man trying to find his "real" family.

The film is a joint production of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the United States and will receive its world premiere in the main competition at the 77th Venice Film Festival to be held on 2-12 September, 2020. / 2020-08-16

"One Thousand and One Nights" Ballet Show to be Staged in Russia

The Vienna Music Film Festival kicked off in the Russian city of Yekaterinburg.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting day.az, at the festival, which will run from July 29 to August 12, 2020, the ballet show "One Thousand and One Nights" by Azerbaijani director Fikret Amirov will be staged on August 6.

Held annually in this city since 2010, the festival holds performances, concerts, and film screenings at Ural University. Due to the corona virus outbreak, the number of the audience to attend the event will be decreased to 750 people so as to comply with health protocols.

Fikret Amirov won the Soviet State Prize in 1980 for this ballet, and in 1983, the ballet was registered with 'Melody' corporation. / 2020-08-16

Azerbaijani Carpet, Special Guest of St. Petersburg Int'l Cultural Forum

A rare Azerbaijani carpet is on display at the Instagram page of St. Petersburg International Cultural Forum.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting day.az, the cultural platform showcased a unique example of 'shedde' carpet, which is one of the rarest Azerbaijani and world carpets ornamented with unique alternating squares and large horizontal rows of loaded camels caravan. According to ancient beliefs, camel is a patient animal, symbolizing wealth and the image of a whole caravan meant the eternal movement of life.

At the St. Petersbug International Cultural Forum 2020, scheduled for November 12-14, the Republic of Azerbaijan attends as special guest. / 2020-08-19

In the Telephone Conversation of Uzbekistan & Azerbaijan Officials: Abdulaziz Kamilov Congratulates Jeyhun Bayramov

During a telephone conversation, the Foreign Ministers of Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan reviewed the schedule and other organizational issues of the upcoming bilateral and multilateral events at various levels, including under the chairmanship of Uzbekistan in the CIS.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Fars news agency, at the beginning of the telephone conversation, Abdulaziz Kamilov congratulated Jeyhun Bayramov on his appointment as Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Foreign ministers emphasized that despite the new circumstances caused by the coronavirus pandemic, Uzbekistan - Azerbaijan cooperation is actively developing, the trade turnover from January to July this year has increased by 163%.

The development of bilateral cooperation including the increase of trade turnover between the countries amid pandemic was stressed.

The sides also discussed the issues of holding the next meeting of the joint intergovernmental commission on cooperation between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The cooperation in the framework of international organizations, as well as the issues related to the
current chairmanship of Uzbekistan within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) were discussed. Ministers also exchanged views on other issues of mutual interest. / 2020-09-09

Moscow State Museum of Oriental Art Hosts: Exhibition of Artworks by Azerbaijani Masters

Moscow State Museum of Oriental Art hosted an exhibition of the works by Azerbaijani masters of the Absheron school.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Day.az, the exhibition features about a hundred works created by Tair Salakhov, Rasim Babayev and Kamal Akhmedov and other outstanding masters who worked in the second half of the XX - early XXI century.

Specialists are of the opinion that the unique works of the artists of this school have not lost their value over time; on the contrary, these artists have always been recognized by the world art community and their works have been collected and preserved by the experts of the country museums.

The State Museum of Oriental Arts provides the visitors with a permanent exposition of the fine arts of the Caucasus and Central Asia, familiarizing them with the artistic processes and brilliant personalities of the East. / 2020-09-14

Presented in 15 Districts of Paris: Azerbaijan Arts & Culture Presented in France

The arts, culture and history of Azerbaijan was presented in 15 districts of Paris.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Day.az, the program was organized within the framework of Friendship Associations of countries as well as the for Association Dialogue France Azerbaijan (ADFA).

During the event, various publications and literature on culture, art, history, customs, cuisine, tourism potential of Azerbaijan, as well as national sweets were presented at ADFA pavilions and music performances were organized, which aroused great interest of Parisians and guests of the capital. Guests of the pavilion also received information on Azerbaijan's traditions and tourist attractions. / 2020-09-1
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A Total of 145 Archeological Objects Identified at Qaleh Ganj, Kerman

The supervisor of the archaeological team working in the central section of Qaleh Ganj county in Kerman city of Iran said that 145 archeological finds have been unearthed during the excavations made with the permission of the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism.

According to ECI public relations quoting IRNA, while announcing this, Fatemeh Alizadeh said that the objects discovered are very diverse and include ancient mounds, sites, graveyards, qanats, shrines, petroglyphs, furnaces, caravanserais and fortresses. She went on saying that in fact these findings seem to portray a long-term sequence of cultural eras dating from stone age and pre-historic times to the late Islamic period.

Concluding her remarks, Alizadeh reiterated: "Considering the fact that only a fraction of the area has been examined so far, so the number of archeological finds is expected to rise in the future". Fereydoon Fa'ali, the director general of cultural heritage, handicrafts and tourism organization of Kerman province had previously told an IRNA reporter that based on the archeological surveys, human inhabitance in Qaleh Ganj county dates back to 5 thousand B.C. / 2020-06-23

Jamshid Khanian Nominated for Hans Christian Andersen Award 2022

The International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) has nominated Jamshid Khanian among the nominees for 2022 Hans Christian Andersen Award.

According to ECI public relations quoting IRNA, the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) has listed 9 reasons justifying Jamshid Khanian's nomination for the Hans Christian Andersen Award 2020. IBBY is of the opinion that Khanian's works and his continuous contribution to the literature of children and young adults has promoted the level of the audience's literary literacy and aesthetic outlook and has also helped improve the quality of this literary genre.

The Hans Christian Andersen Award is the highest international recognition given to an author and an illustrator of children's books. Given every other year by IBBY, the Hans Christian Andersen Award recognizes lifelong achievement and is presented to an author and an illustrator whose complete works have made an important, lasting contribution to children's literature. / 2020-06-25

Master Shahriyar's Autobiographical Novel Launched in Nakhchivan

During a visit to Iran's cultural attaché in Nakhchivan, Fariz Ahmadov, director of Nakhchivan State University Library, talked about his latest novel titled 'Biography of Mohammad Hossein Shahriyar' and said: "This book will be launched on the occasion of the 115th birth anniversary of Shahriyar."

According to ECI public Relations quoting the Public Relations of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, Abolfazl Rabiee, the Cultural Attaché of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Nakhchivan met with Fariz Ahmadov, director of the Nakhchivan State University Library at Iran Consulate General.

During his speech, Rabiee pointed out to the expansion of mutual cooperation in different fields of library science including bookkeeping, exchange of
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books, journals and scholarly papers, organizing training courses for the staff members of Nakhchivan State University Library in coordination with Iran National Library and Archives Organization as well as equipping Nakhchivan State University Library with Iranian books in numerous fields of science, literature and humanities. / 2020-07-15

With the registration of 14 Iranian Cities & Villages
Iran Ranks First in World for Number of World Craft Cities

According to ECI public relations, 48 world cities and villages have been registered by World Crafts Council (WCC) as world cities or villages of handicrafts.

Out of this number, 40 cities belong to Asia-Pacific region while 6 cities are in Latin America and 2 cities in Europe. Having registered 14 cities and villages in the World Crafts Council, Iran ranks first in the world in this field. These registered cities and villages include:

1. Shiraz, Fars Province: World Craft City for Handicrafts;
2. Zanjan, Zanjan Province: World Craft City for filigree;
3. Malayer, Hamedan Province: World City for Woodcarving & Carved-Wood Furniture;
4. Tabriz, East Azarbaijan Province: World Craft City for Carpet Weaving;
5. Isfahan, Isfahan Province: World Craft City;
6. Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi Province: World Craft City for Gemstones;
7. Lalejin, Hamedan Province: World Craft City for Pottery;
8. Marivan, Kordestan Province: World Craft City for Klash (Footwear) Stitching;
9. Sirjan, Kerman Province: World Craft City for Kilim;
10. Abadeh, Fars Province: World Craft City for Woodcarving (Monabbat);
11. Meybod, Yazd Province: World Craft City for Handwoven Floor Covering (Zilou);
12. Khorashad Village, South Khorasan Province: World Craft Village for Towel Weaving (Holebafi);
13. Qasemabad Village, Gilan Province: World Craft City for Chadorshab Weaving;

Azadi Tower Hosts Veteran Photography Camera Collector

Mohammad Ali Jadid ol-Eslam, the Iranian veteran artist and a prominent photographer, was the guest of Seyed Abbas Azimi, CEO of Azadi Tower.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute, quoting the public relations of Azadi Tower, Mohammad Ali Jadid ol-Eslam was born in 1952 in Tabriz and has been working in the field of photography since 1964. Possessing 950 cameras, he is the holder of the largest collection of cameras in Iran. His largest camera uses 24*18 film and the smallest ones are the Minox and Leica spying cameras. In addition to cameras, he also possesses a collection of old photographs from Qajar period.

Presently, Jadid ol-Eslam is the chairman of East Azerbaijan Photographers Association.

Among the items in his collection are Foclander, Schneider and Zeiss lenses, Hasselblad medium-range cameras, Zeissikon, Kodak, Roliflex, Rolly-Code, Brunica, Butchers (England), 35mm cameras, Leica types (with the Reich III engraved logo), Nikon, Canon, Pentax, Contacs, Robot, and a variety of spying cameras, stereoscope cameras for 3D negative photography, and older instant cameras. / 2020-07-30
World's Most Exquisite Illuminated Quran at Iran National Library

Qazvini Quran, one of the world's masterpieces in illuminating Quran, is being kept at Iran National Library and Archives.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Iran Book News Agency (IBNA), Qazvini Quran which dates back to 1805, is one of the world's masterpieces of art in the field of Quran illumination and each page of this Quran contains a specific type of illumination.

'Zein al-Abedin Qazvini' Quran is an exquisite and precious Quran with 547 pages and over 600 different illuminations from every school of illumination that existed in Iran at the time, which is one of the reasons that makes it a unique work.

Nearly four kilograms of pure gold and precious stones were used in illuminating it and 35 masters of art worked on it for about 10 years.

The unique features of this Quran had led some Saudi and English collectors to buy it at any possible price, but fortunately, its last owner refused to do so and finally, it was given to NLAI in 2008.

To Review the Initial Works in Dramatic Literature

Call for Papers on Mirza Agha Khan Tabrizi

Call for papers on 'Mirza Agha Tabrizi: Pioneer of dramatic literature in Iran' was published.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, quoting the public relations of the Advanced Research Institute of Arts (ARIA), an affiliate of the Iranian Academy of Arts, this research institute intends to hold a conference titled 'Mirza Agha Tabrizi: Pioneer of dramatic literature in Iran' to provide an opportunity for studying the origins and the process of evolution of theater as well as dramatic literature and presenting new readings of the first works of dramatic literature in Iran.

Other organizations involved in with the conference include: the Department of Drama and Dramatic Literature of the Academy of Arts, Cultural, Social and Sports Organization of Tabriz Municipality, Azarbaijan 'Charkh-e Niloofari' Higher Education Institute, Nabi Akram (PBUH) Higher Institute of Tabriz as well as the Deputy for Social and Cultural Affairs of the University of Tehran (Molavi Theater).

Iranian Artist Makes It to UNESCO's Painting Contest

Fatemeh Andikfar became a finalist in the UNESCO painting contest with works inspired by Goddess Anahita and the Achaemenid sardis.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, quoting Honaronline, the UNESCO painting competition is held every year for different age groups. Fatemeh Andikfar of Iran rose to the final in 2019 and 2020.

Andikfar, now a graphics student, told Honaronline: "Since I was a child, I liked painting and the arts, and I started painting since I was in primary school," she said. "In 2014, I attended Firouzeh Golmohammadi classes and was trained under her. I also exhibited my works at two public exhibitions in 2018 and 2019. I participated in the UNESCO Contest four times. I advanced to the final in the past two years, and was
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the only representative of Iran in my age group in 2019 when I was chosen as a finalist", she added.

"The competition was supposed to be canceled this year due to the coronavirus outbreak, but it was recently announced that the judges had reviewed the works and the best ones had been presented. Still, an exhibition that used to be held in previous years showing select works was suspended along with the award ceremony", she said.

She continued: "I participated in the 18-25 age group. Every year in the fall, a call for participation is released and the organizers announce a theme, so that all interested parties can submit papers on that theme. The first year I participated, the theme was 'water.' The second year, it was 'global peace', the third year 'ancient scripts and monuments' of each country, and the fourth year, the theme was 'our planet, yesterday and today'.

Andikfar explained about his two jobs that had advanced to the final saying: "For the contest with the theme 'ancient scripts and monuments' from each country, I went to the National Museum and saw different works there. I wanted to incorporate an Achaemenid symbol into my painting. So, I painted the image of a bust, colored it sapphire blue and navy blue, and used Iranian and Islamic patterns in the background. And for the 2020 contest, I painted a woman from whose interior different plants had grown. Anahita, the Iranian goddess of nature, had inspired me to paint that image. Anahita is the symbol of fertility, and I wanted my work to give a feeling of growth, a change of season and start again", she said. / 2020-08-04

Iranian Film Week Kicks off in Sofia

With the cooperation of Cultural Attache of Iran Embassy in Bulgaria, "MENAR" International Film Festival kicked off in Sofia in the framework of Iran Film Week.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Iran Embassy in Sofia, during July 24-30, 2020, one Iranian movie will be screened each night in Sofia Cinema House. Movies such as "Pastarioni" by Soheil Movafaq, "Qasr-e Shirin" by Reza Mirkarimi, "The Little Rusty Brains" by Houman Seyyedi, "Motherhood" by Roqiyeh Tavakoli, "Fasl-e Narges" by Negar Azarbajani, "316" by Peyman Haqqani and Mahshid Afshtarzadeh's "Five Starred" are the ones that will be screened at this cultural event.

According to this report, to encourage the audience to better attend this cultural event, every night a package of Iran cultural products will be awarded to one of the audiences chosen through lottery.

Bulgarian cinemas are now authorized to screen films with 50% of the hall's capacity and in compliance with hygienic protocols. / 2020-08-05

Art Exhibit "100 Works, 100 Artists" to be Held Online

The 28th edition of the exhibition "100 Works, 100 Artists" will be held virtually and artworks of different prices will be offered for purchase.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, quoting Fars News Agency, due to the critical conditions created by Corona virus pandemic, the 28th edition of the exhibition "100 Works, 100 Artists", the summer event of Golestan Gallery, will be held virtually.

Lily Golestan, the director of Golestan Gallery and the designer of this event, announced the above news: From July 31 to September 22, the exhibition "100 Works, 100 Artists" will be presented on the website and Instagram of Golestan Gallery for art lovers and those interested to buy. Golestan said that 713 entries were submitted for participation in this edition from among which 282 ones were selected for display and sale.
She also noted that several private collectors have also offered their works by veteran artists such as Parviz Kalantari, Reza Maafi, Parvaneh Etemadi, Nasser Ovissi, Kambiz Derambakhsh, and Farzarmarz Pialaram. She added that the works are on sale at reasonable prices, and hoped that these difficult days would end soon and everything would return as it was before. / 2020-08-06

**Department of Research & Education of Iran Public Libraries Foundation Announced:**

**Call for Submission of Research Projects in 2020**

The Department of Research and Education of Iran Public Libraries Foundation has released a call inviting the country’s researchers to submit their research projects. According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Mehr News Agency, the second call for Iran Public Libraries Foundation biennial has been published by the Research and Education Department of this Foundation to find solutions to the research problems of public libraries. The full text of the call and the file of applications are available at the web page of the management of research projects of the public libraries of the country at http://rpm.iranpl.ir. / 2020-08-10

**Exhibition of Gholam Hossein Amirkhani’s Works Opens**

An exhibition of calligraphy works by Gholam Hossein Amirkhani titled “Nastaliq, the National Heritage” was inaugurated on Friday, July 31, 2020. According to ECO Cultural Institute, quoting Khabaronline, present at the inaugural were calligraphy masters, artists and a group of arts and cultural figures at Tarrahi Honar Gallery.

Based on this report, due to the proclamation of Gholam Hossein Amirkhani as a living human treasure working in the field of Nasta’liq script and his inclusion in the national list of outstanding people preserving the intangible cultural heritage of the country, a collection of 17 works by Amirkhani were exhibited.

Those interested may visit the exhibition on weekdays (except Wednesdays) from 10:00 AM to 8:00 PM at Tarrahi Honar Galley located in No. 2880, Zafaranieh street, Vali-e-Asr (AS) Ave. The exhibition runs until August 10, 2020. / 2020-08-12

**As a World Heritage City: Yazd City to Hold 1st Int’l Exhibition of Children’s Photos**

The director general of the governor’s office for women and family affairs announced holding of the first international photo exhibition titled ‘Children and the World Heritage City’ in Yazd.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting the Public Relations Department of Yazd Governorate office, Fatemeh Danesh Yazdi stated: "The first international photo exhibition titled 'Children and the World Heritage City' by the Yazd Provincial Office for Women and Family Affairs - as the national contact point of the convention of the Rights of the Child- will be held in October 2020 in Yazd". While saying that five international judges will attend the event, she added: "Necessary correspondence has been made with the Ministry of Justice for the implementation of this program and due to corona virus pandemic, the event will be held virtually".

Danesh Yazdi further added: "The exhibit will feature pictures of children received from 220 child-
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friendly cities, and UNICEF is also going to publish the selected pictures in a book." / 2020-08-13

38th Iran Book of the Year Award Calls for Entries

The secretariat of the Islamic Republic of Iran's 38th Book of the Year World Award released the call for this edition of the event.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Iran Book and Literature House, aiming to select and introduce worthwhile international books, and honor their authors, editors, and translators for elevating the general knowledge and culture, and developing public scholarship/readership with the Islamic and Iranian written heritage, the 38th Iran Book of the Year Award will be held in February 2021. The Secretariat of the Award Committee invites all scholars, writers, translators, and publishers to nominate book(s) for consideration, not later than September 21, 2020. / 2020-08-17

Tehran to Host 34th National Crafts Exhibition

Managing Director of Iran Tourism Specialized Development Company announced readiness to hold the 34th National Exhibition of Handicrafts.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute, quoting the public relations of Iran Tourism Specialized Development Company, on Saturday, August 1, 2020 Khashayar Nikzadfar Managing Director of the company announced readiness to hold the 34th National Exhibition of Handicrafts and said: "Following the call announcement, the exhibition host was selected which has already started activities for the upcoming event."

"Iran Tourism Specialized Development Company has coordinated with the provinces and handicrafts centers to provide information on handicrafts and encourage craftspeople to participate in the event", he added.

Managing Director of Iran Tourism Specialized Development Company further stated: "We are making the initial arrangement for the event and we plan to hold the exhibition in full compliance with the protocols announced by the Ministry of Health." / 2020-08-18

Titled: 'The Fact that I Miss You'
Salar Aghili's New Album Released

Barbad Music Institute released the new music album of Salar Aghili in the new chapter of its activities.

According to ECI public relations quoting Honaronline, the album 'The Fact that I Miss You' has been composed by Nasim Shamloo and Peyman Khazeni and vocalized by Salar Aghili was released by Barbad Music and Cultural Institute.

'The Fact that I Miss You' is one of the most well-known poems of Mahdi Mazaheri and the first one in the poetry collection 'Raheel' that was warmly welcomed by the literature enthusiasts.
The 9-track album has been produced following classical Iranian music with a new approach to the musical instruments using novel lyrics of Mahdi Mazaheri. / 2020-08-19

Sec. Gen. of Iran Drama Therapy: Necessity of 'Digital Drama Therapy' during COVID-19 Pandemic

While referring to the video conference of the World Drama Therapy Association and pointing to the issues raised therein, the Secretary General of the Drama Therapy Association of Iran said that two new drama therapy centers will be opened in Iran.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Mehr news agency, Amraei elaborated upon the World Drama Therapy Association's plan to hold the World Drama Therapy Week in the context of the Corona virus outbreak and said: 'Attended by representatives from 15 countries, the videoconference of the World Drama Therapy Association was held on July 29, 2020. At the meeting, the founding members of the union, including Iran, presented their activity reports followed by a discussion on the acute conditions incurred due to corona virus spread and the situation of the drama therapy centers amid the pandemic'. He said that the World Drama Therapy Association was established with 10 members, including Iran, and currently continues its activities with 60 members, adding: 'In this meeting, representatives of new members were introduced thus increasing the number of members of the World Drama Therapy Association to 60 countries'.

Amraei continued his remarks saying: 'Also in this meeting, the solutions of dramatherapists to tackle the new conditions occurred due to pandemic and distance learning training in digital drama therapy were discussed. Moreover, the issue of digital drama therapy was examined in detail.'

At the videoconference meeting, a report on the activities of the Iranian Drama Therapy Association, workshops, provincial agencies and virtual methods of drama therapy training were also presented. Talking on the date and time of holding the World Drama Therapy Week this year, the founding member of the World Drama Therapy Association said that the World Drama Therapy Week will be held on October 18 - 25, 2020.

In the end, the General Secretary of the Iranian Drama Therapy Association briefed the meeting on the activities of this association in the country and stated: "While taking measures to open two new centers in East Azerbaijan and Mazandaran province, we are also planning to hold the World Drama Therapy Week in Iran. If the health conditions are favorable, the opening ceremony would be held in person and otherwise via video conference." / 2020-08-20

1st Online Persian Language & Literature Course Held in Peshawar

Through the efforts of the Cultural Center of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Peshawar, the first virtual course of Persian language and literature began with the participation of professors from universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

According to ECI public Relations quoting the public relations of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, this virtual training course in Persian language and literature will be held by the professors of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa universities for 3 months and will be broadcasted through YouTube. / 2020-08-31
Mexican Theater to be Staged in Molavi Theater

Iranian director Behruz Sarv-Alishahi will stage Mexican playwright Hugo Salcedo's "El Viaje de Los Cantores", which roughly translates to "The Crossing" in English, at Tehran's Molavi Hall on Sunday next week.

The play is based on a true story that occurred in 1987 when 19 Mexican men were suffocated while attempting illegal immigration to the U.S.

The play focuses on six of the immigrants who pay $100 each to smugglers to be spirited across the border in a filthy railroad boxcar. The sealed boxcar stops on a sidetrack because of trouble with the train's engine and then tragedy strikes. Speaking to the Persian service of Honaronline on Tuesday, Sarv-Alishahi said that the idea of staging this play came to his mind when he was studying at the University of Avignon in France.

"Fleeing the homeland and immigration has always been a serious human issue throughout history, and at times, these immigrations have caused catastrophes like drownings in seas and oceans," he stated.

"Since the play is based on a true story and immigration is a serious issue at the present time, I decided to translate and stage it," he added. "The theme of the play is immigration, which is currently a big issue in the world. Many people are thinking about fleeing their native countries and then they have to think of returning shortly after immigrating," he noted.

According to Sarv-Alishahi, the play has been translated into Persian for the first time and he will be the first Iranian director to stage it. His cast composed of 13 actors, including Babak Qaderi, Taha Hamedi, Melika Shahab, and Elham Parvizi, has been rehearsing the play in Tehran over the past month in which the city is facing a spike in coronavirus cases.

"Theater is not our hobby; rather it is our job and stricter health protocols are observed at Molavi Hall to prevent the spread of the virus. We have to continue our activities, because coronavirus exists in parallel with our lives," Sarv-Alishahi said. / 2020-09-02

Iranian documentary "Asho" Wins 2 Awards in Italy, Mexico

Iranian short documentary film "Asho" directed by Jafar Najafi won two awards from two film festivals in Italy and Mexico.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting ISNA, "Asho" received the best short movie award from Mexico's Documenta festival and Italy's Film Festival della Lessinia.

Asho had already had its premiere and won the best documentary in children and young adults part of International Documentary Film Festival in Amsterdam. The documentary regards a young shepherd named Asho that has a dream to become a Hollywood actor. / 2020-09-02

Kish Island to Host Iranian Folk Music Festival in November
Kish Island in the Persian Gulf will be hosting the third music festival, highlighting Iranian regional and folk music in November.

"The festival has been organized to help preserve and promote Iran's rich regional music and encourage the youth to learn contemporary music, while also reviving the island's tourism," secretary of the festival Hamid Hadi has said.

"The festival can also lead to increased empathy and friendship among Iranians of different ethnicities through Iranian regional music," he said.

"Innovation in ritual music as well as traditional music, songs and melodies are the main topics of the festival," he said.

The submitted works will be selected by a team of prominent Iranian regional musicians, and the top works will have performances on the island during the festival running from November 9 to 13.

He also said that there are additional facilities for neighboring Persian Gulf countries to participate in the festival.

The organizers have also dedicated a section to honor veteran regional musicians and researchers.

"Interested applicants can submit their works to the secretariat of the festival before October 11," he concluded. /2020-09-03

Iranian Translator Esmaeil Saadat Dies at 95

Esmaeil Saadat, an Iranian scholar who translated many fascinating books from the Western literature into Persian, died at his home in Tehran at the age of 95.

He was a senior member of the Academy of Persian Language and Literature and the Editing High Council of Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting. He was also the director of the academy's Department of Literary Research Encyclopedia.

Romain Rolland's "Life of Michelangelo", Sophie Rostopchine's "Sophie's Misfortunes" and George Edward Moore's "Ethics" are among the works translated by Saadat.

He also rendered several books on Islamic studies, including "Islamic Philosophy" by Majid Fakhry. /2020-09-03

Iranian Film Wins 3 Int'l Festivals

Qasr-e Shirin' (Castle of Dreams) film directed by Reza Mirkarimi will be displayed in the 4th edition of Slemani International Film Festival in Sulaymaniyah, Iraqi Kurdistan.

The film which will hit the silver screen in Salem Cinema Hall would compete with several other movies from France, South Korea, China, Spain, Luxemburg, Turkey, Germany, the Netherlands, Greece, Syria, Albania, Poland, Belgium, and Palestine in World Cinema Section of the festival. ‘Qasr-e Shirin’ has already won three awards at the Shanghai International Film Festival: the Best Actor Award, the Best Director Award, and the Golden Goblet.

The film has also won two awards at the Batumi International Art-House Film Festival in Georgia and was selected as the best film according to critics in the West and East Eurasian Film Festival (Orenburg, Russia).

At present, the film is participating in the Vancouver Film Festival in Canada. The 4th edition of the Slemani International Film Festival with the theme of "Earth Cancer" is slated to be held in Sulaymaniyah, Iraqi Kurdistan, on October 1-7, 2019. /2020-09-03
"Khorshid" Red Carpet at Venice Film Festival

"The Sun", is one of 18 Movies which has a chance to win the Golden Lion Award as the best International movie.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting honaronline, the red carpet ceremony of "Khorshid" (The Sun) movie directed by Majid Majidi and co-written by Nima Javidi was screened on Sunday evening in 77th Venice Film Festival.

Majidi and a number of the movie cast including Javad Ezzati, Shamila Shirzad, Ramin Koosha and Amir Banan took part in this ceremony "The Sun", is one of 18 Movies which has a chance to win the Golden Lion Award as the best International movie.

The film was the first showed on Saturday for media Community in lido and had five more plays till night. This movie will be shown 9 more times until Monday for press and public. The 77th Venice Film Festival runs from September 2nd to 12th. /2020-09-07

Account of the Swiss FM on the 'Pearl of Middle East'

Following a visit to Isfahan, the head of Switzerland’s Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), Ignazio Cassis stressed on the need to knowing the culture and people of Iran as a prerequisite for good diplomatic relations.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting ISNA, Ignazio Cassis who is in Iran to meet with Iranian officials, has traveled to Isfahan on Saturday and after his visit to the city, he wrote on his official twitter account, "Visit to the city of Isfahan, the Islamic Republic of Iran- a pearl in the Middle East. Knowing the culture and people of a country: a prerequisite for good diplomatic relations”.

During his visit to Isfahan, Cassis met with city officials and academics after having visited some of the tourist attractions of the historical city. He said that cooperation in tourism and science are the advantages for Iran and Switzerland after the coronavirus outbreak.

The Swiss foreign minister said that political experts believe that it is a chance for Iran to take steps for and also a chance for hostile foreign countries to change their approach toward Iran. Referring to the difficult economic situation created by the US sanctions, Cassis said that scientific diplomacy is a way for further interaction among the countries to advance peace and understanding.

Thanking the hospitality of the officials and people of Isfahan, he said that he would commemorate the 100 years of mutual relations between Iran and Isfahan in an official meeting in Tehran. /2020-09-07

To Build Trust for Safe Tourism during Corona Outbreak: Iran Publishes Promotional Videos "Experience Safe Travel in Iran"

The promotional teasers of "Experience Safe Travel in Iran" has been published emphasizing on observing health protocols and responsible travel.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts has concurrently published two promotional teasers on safe and responsible travel in Iran and how to follow health protocols when
traveling, emphasizing that the use of authorized places and under the control of the Ministries of Health and Tourism, using private vehicles in short trips or keeping social distance in public vehicles and places and also observing hygiene protocols by the service sections, reduces the risk of getting the Corona virus and makes the trips safer.

These promotional videos have been produced taking into account the requirements of two target communities of Iranian and foreign tourists, and for the first time, "Simorgh" symbol has been used as Iran's tourism brand along with the slogan 'IRAN Majestic'. The logo and brand were previously unveiled at the Tourism Fair held in February 2020. / 2020-09-08

On the Occasion of Tajikistan Independence Day: Hassan Rouhani Congratulates Imomali Rahmon

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani sent a message to the President of Tajikistan to offer him and the people of the country congratulations on the 29th anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Tajikistan.

In his message to Tajik President, Rouhani said, "I would like to offer my sincerest congratulations to Your Excellency and the people of your country on the 29th anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Tajikistan."

"With regard to the common culture and language, the Islamic Republic of Iran is always willing to develop and deepen relations between the two countries in all bilateral and multilateral fields. In the current situation resulting from the global crisis of coronavirus, it is necessary for the officials of the two countries to work harder and interact with each other to develop cooperation in order to solve the economic problems of the region and share experiences in fighting this disease," he added. "I hope that in the light of good understanding and joint efforts, we will see the further development of relations between the two countries in the direction of mutual interests, as well as the development of regional and international peace and security," he noted.

"I wish Your Excellency health and success and the people of the Republic of Tajikistan prosperity and felicity," Iranian President said. / 2020-09-09

Iranian Music in Farhang Sharif's Viewpoint

Iran's well-known musician Farhang Sharif who had skillfully improvised works of arts by the Iranian musical instrument the Tar could be regarded as one of the fantastic players in the classic music of Persian culture.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting IRNA, September 7 marks the demise anniversary of Farhang Sharif who was one of the skillful Tar players in Iran.

Born in the northern part of Iran on March 24, 1931, the artist was brought up by a music lover family. It is interesting to know that he started participating in the art class at the age of four.

He was influenced by celebrated musicians, namely Neidavoud and Abolhossein Shahbazi.

He was only 12 when he played on his own in a live radio program that was a valuable experience. One of the most impressive works of Sharif is called the Peyvand-e Mehr album that is accompanied by the fascinating voice of maestro Mohammad Reza Shajarian.

Having created numerous works, he attracted the attention of the audience in foreign countries and held concerts in various countries overseas.

The artist who had created the important work ‘Bazm-e Ashegan’ could receive grade 1 in arts that is equivalent to a doctorate degree.
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Farhang Sharif was laid to rest at 85 in the capital city of Tehran but his memorable works will always touch the hearts of those who are passionate about music. / 2020-09-09

From UK’s Sheffield to US’s Portland: Six Int’l Fests to Screen ‘Gracefully’

Iranian documentary ‘Gracefully’ is set to be screened at Sheffield International Documentary Festival in the UK.

Arash Eshaqi’s ‘Gracefully’ was selected as one of the films to be screened as part of the event's Rebellions strand including films "that try to decipher the world while being an agent of change", according to the festival's website.

‘Gracefully’ won the Directors Guild Award at Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival in Japan. The 2020 edition of Sheffield Doc/Fest will extend throughout the year, both locally and virtually due to the coronavirus pandemic. ‘Gracefully’ will be screened in Sheffield in autumn, and online in Sheffield Doc/Fest Selects in parallel. / 2020-09-14

At Venice Film Fest was Awarded for Best Young Actor
Ruhollah Zamani Wins Marcello Mastroianni Award

Ruhollah Zamani, the young actor of Iranian film "Sun Children" directed by Majid Majidi won the Marcello Mastroianni Award for Best Young Actor at the 77th Venice Film Festival.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting ISNA, the special award for young talent was awarded to Rouhollah Zamani by Cate Blanchett as jury president of the event but Zamani was unable to attend the festival after testing positive for coronavirus. "Sun Children" tells a story of 12-year-old Ali and his three friends. Together, they work hard to survive and support their families, doing small jobs at a garage and committing petty crimes to make fast money. / 2020-09-14

At the Meeting of Mohammad-Hassan Talebian & Markus Leitner was Emphasized: Expansion of Iran-Switzerland Museum Cooperation

Iran and Switzerland will expand their cooperation in terms of holding joint museum exhibitions, said the Deputy Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts.

Mohammad-Hassan Talebian made the statement in a meeting with Swiss Ambassador to Tehran Markus Leitner and First Secretary at the Embassy of Switzerland in Iran Thomas Widmer, according to IRNA.

Talebian said that the history of cultural relations between the two countries dates back 100 years. Iran has so far identified more than 1.2 million historical buildings and sites, of which 33,000 are among Iran National Heritage List, he added. With 24 sites registered in the UNESCO World Heritage List, Iran stands at ninth level, Talebian said. Announcing the case of Trans-Iranian Railway, which extends from the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea that has recently been sent to the World Heritage Committee, he said that several engineers from Switzerland and
other countries have played a significant role in the construction of the railway.

Talebian also announced that Iran has 711 museums, 4,000 private collections, and a variety of historical and cultural monuments, while cooperating with France, Spain, Germany, Italy, and Armenia in holding joint exhibitions. Highlighting Iran's rich culture and diversity of tourist attractions, Leitner referred to his visit to some Iranian cultural cities and his country's readiness for cooperation on joint exhibitions. / 2020-09-16
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Title: 'Hayat-i Hayvanat'—XIV Century Manuscript Unveiled at National Library of Kazakhstan Academy

A XIV Century Manuscript titled ‘Hayat-i Hayvanat’ was unveiled at the Manuscripts and Rare Books Section of the National Library of Kazakhstan Academy.

‘Hayat-i Hayvanat’, an ancient manuscript written in Egypt during the 14th century, was unveiled at the Manuscripts and Rare Books Section of the National Library of Kazakhstan Academy.

According to ECI public relations quoting Kazpravda.kz, the book has been donated to the Library in 2018 by Alikhan Baymenov, chairman of the religious committee of the city of Astana. The press service of the National Library of the Republic of Kazakhstan announced that the book is a scientific zoological research written back in the 14th century in Egypt by the famous scientist Abu Baka Kamaluddin Muhammad ibn Musa Isa ibn Ali in Arabic language and Naskh script. Later in 1900, the book was republished in Kazan by the Imperial University publishing house.

‘Hayat-i Hayvanat’ has been restored at the Manuscripts section of the National Library of Kazakhstan and was unveiled online. / 2020-06-24

Kazakhstan to Launch Two New TV Channels

Kazakhstan will launch two new TV channels.

According to ECI public relations quoting 24.kz, Aida Balayeva, the Minister of Information and Social Development of Kazakhstan, announced saying that:

will become a new niche channel dedicated to the rich cultural heritage of Kazakhstan. The second television project, the ‘Al Farabi’ TV channel, will be launched on the basis of the Khabar agency by the beginning of the school year. It will become a new educational television platform for children and teenagers from six to 18 years old as its audience.”

It is said that the corona virus pandemic has necessitated the establishment of these channels. / 2020-07-01

Kazakhs Recite Abai Poems in the Alps

A number of Kazakh and foreign students and researchers recited poems of Abai, the great Kazakh intellectual, in Alps mountains.

According to ECI public relations quoting 24.kz, the event was organized in Lucern city at the initiative of the Kazakhstan Embassy in Switzerland on the occasion of the 175th birth anniversary of Abai. Present at the event were professors and students of University of Zurich who are interested in the works of this eminent scientist as well as a number of Kazakhs living in the country.

Alibek Bakaev, Kazakhstan's Ambassador to Switzerland, noted that for the Kazakhs, Abai holds the same position as Tolstoy for the Russians, Shakespeare for the British and Goethe for the Germans, and that if the world becomes aware of Abai’s unique role in the development of Kazakh literature, then we can claim that Kazakh literature has gained its real place in the world.

Prof. Dr. Peter Finke, head of the School of Social Sciences at the University of Zurich, highlighted the importance of Abai’s works in Kazakhstan's history and literature.

During the event, held in a friendly atmosphere, some of Abai's poems were recited in Kazakh, French and German languages. / 2020-07-06
Kazakhs Celebrate Dombra National Day in Switzerland

Dombra National Day was observed in Switzerland.
According to ECI public relations quoting 24.kg, at the event, a group of Kazakh musicians from Austria, Germany and Italy chanted "The soul of the Kazakhs lies in the melody of Dombra" while making a group performance, celebrating the National Day of the Dombra in Lucern city of Switzerland along with Kazakh musicians performing national Kazakh music and songs.

In his opening remarks, the Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Switzerland Alibek Bakayev noted that "culture is the most reliable bridge between peoples, which makes them closer and more understandable to each other. And, as you know, the soul of the Kazakhs is precisely in the sounds of Dombra, while the soul of the Swiss breathes the beauties of the Alps. Today we have witnessed this unusual cultural synergy."

The ambassador went on saying that Dombra is an ancient Kazakh instrument and we have organized this event to take measures for promoting the instrument globally. The program was warmly welcomed by the audience. / 2020-07-08

Aidar Aishabikov Performs at Trafalgar Sq. in London

Kazakh students living in the British capital of London played Dombra in downtown London.
According to ECI public relations quoting 24.kg, on the occasion of Dombra Day, Aydar Aishabikov, the renowned Kazakh musician, performed Dombra in the famous Trafalgar Square in London. Aishabikov, a student of Faculty of Laws at University College London and winner of the 'Bashalaq' contest, made the performance to make Londoners acquainted with both this Kazakh national instrument and the country's music.

"Dombra is not only the national instrument of Kazakhs, but is also considered a part of our cultural heritage, and I occasionally play it for foreign friends who warmly welcome the performance." The Kazakh Association of Foreigners has decided to make a video clip of the program and post it on social media.
It should be noted that her performance was well received by the audience. / 2020-07-09

Abai Statue Installed in Turkestan

The statue of the great Kazakh poet and intellectual, Abai Kunanbayev, has been installed in Kentai city of the Kazakh region of Turkistan.
According to ECI public relations quoting kabar24 of Kazakhstan, the 4.5-meter statue and 3-tonnes-weigh statue had been created by Kazakh artist Baerjan Jalin on the occasion of the 175th birthday of the celebrated poet. Also on this occasion, Amoozgaran (Teachers) Street was opened and the city's Youth Park was completely renovated. / 2020-07-14

Kazakh Cinema Unites Against Corona

The State Center for the support the National Cinema and Kazakh Film Studio unite against corona.
According to ECI public relations quoting inform.kz, the decision was made to take more measures for the development of the national cinema and the promotion of the national cinema industry.

According to cinema officials in Kazakhstan, the corona virus pandemic has inflicted severe damage to the country's film industry, and thus, this decision was made to help take serious steps in the field of cinema, including making films with more profound content and introducing the country's cinema to the world. / 2020-07-19

A Postcard of Tamgaly Petroglyphs

'Tamgaly' is located 170 km northwest of Almaty, Kazakhstan's largest city, and is known for its ancient petroglyphs.

In 1957, a group of archaeologists discovered more than 5,000 different petroglyphs on the site which was registered in UNESCO World Heritage List in 2004.

The word 'tamgaly' has been derived from the Mongolian word 'tamga' meaning 'seal and sign'. "Many of these engravings and petroglyphs contain motifs of animals and humans with sun-like heads", Rinat Sharipov, a scholar of the petroglyphs, says.

"Many of these petroglyphs date back to the Bronze Age era, i.e. 14th to 12th centuries BC."

Sacred images, along with altars, temples and cemeteries of various belief systems portrays way of life in the Central Asia steppes in antiquity. / 2020-07-20

Arabic Version of 'Abai's Instructions' Published in Egypt

The book 'Abai's Instructions to Kazakh People', written by Abai Kunanbayev, the renowned Kazakh poet and intellectual, was translated to Arabic and published in Cairo.

According to ECI public relations quoting inform.kz, the book has been published in Arabic language by Khaled al-Saeed Ghanem, translator and a director of the Egyptian Ministry of Awqaf in Cairo, the capital of Egypt. In this book, the translator deals with the significance of Abai's advices and their philosophical value, as well as their role in the intellectual education of today's generation.

The scholar has taught in 'Nur-Mubarak' Egyptian-Kazakh University of Islamic Culture during 2014 - 2017, and during this time, he has written several scholarly papers and treatises on the history, traditions, religion and culture of Kazakhs. Presently, the researcher, accompanied by a group of Kazakh Orientalists, are conducting research on the Book of Words and also the collection of Abai's poems which will be published by Kazakhstan National Translation Center. / 2020-07-21

3,500-year-old Archeological Objects Found in Kazakhstan

Archaeologists have unearthed artifacts in Kazakhstan dating back more than 3500 years.

According to ECI public relations quoting 24.kz, the objects date back to the Bronze Age and were discovered on the banks of the Taldi River and comprise of cosmetics and jewelry.

The archaeologists are of the opinion that these objects date back to more than 3500 years. During excavations, archaeologists found a woman buried with her jewelry including a gold earring, a ring and
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bracelet. Moreover, around 200 grams of other bronze objects were found, some of which have been described in Iliad.

It is said that the method of production of such objects testifies to the high expertise and craftsmanship of the inhabitants of the region in metal products during that era. Totally, more than 120 amazing objects have been found in this area, 80 of which are bronze and belong to the 16th-17th centuries AD. / 2020-07-26

Darezhan Omirbaev's Latest Film on the Way to Locarno Festival

Directed by Kazakh director Darezhan Omirbaev, the movie 'Kairat' will be screened at the Locarno Film Festival in Switzerland.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting tengrinews.kz, the film will participate at the 18-year-old, best films category 'Through the Open Doors'. The movie 'Kairat' was made in 1991 and one year later, it premiered at Locarno Festival where it won the Silver Leopard Award for the director. 'Kairat' is the story of a young man who moves to Almaty, Kazakhstan in order to study and yet, fails to attend university. He looks at girls on public transportation and is embarrassed to approach them ... It is in fact the story of a young man growing up.

The Locarno 2020 will be held online on August 5-15, 2020. This edition of the event is contributing to the reopening of local movie theaters, with a line-up of films to be shown in three of the cinemas in Locarno and Muralto.

Along with the Cannes, Berlin and Venice Film Festivals, the Locarno Film Festival is one of the world's most prestigious festivals. / 2020-07-27

Bagdat Semidinova Dedicates a Song to the People of Kyrgyzstan

The famous Kazakh singer, Bagdat Semidinova, has dedicated a song to the people of the neighboring country of Kyrgyzstan.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute, quoting inform.kz, the song was performed following the hashtag 'From Kazakhstan with love'.

In her message, the singer tells Kyrgyz people: "Kyrgyzstan is a friend of us and has a long history. The song 'Kulgon Jash' is a true mirror of the culture and civilization of this country. I have planned to dedicate a number of our common songs with Kyrgyzstan to my dear ones in that country, hoping that these songs will bring hope and joy to their hearts in these unfortunate, difficult times". / 2020-07-29

Installing a Sculpture in Bayterek

Dombra National Day Observed in Kazakhstan

In Yanaykino village of Bayterek district in western Kazakhstan, a sculpture of Dombra, a Kazakh musical instrument, was installed.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting inform.kz, the sculpture was installed on the occasion of National Dombra Day in Kazakhstan with the support of the directors of the Doysin and Atip agricultural complexes. The sculpture has been made by Ruslan Ahmedov, a teacher in Chagan village.

Dombra is the world-renowned, national symbol of Kazakh culture and every Kazakh knows how to play
In Response to the Uzbek Artist’s Singing in Kazakh Language:
Alisher Karimov Sings an Uzbek Song

Following the famous Uzbek singer, John Rumi, presented the song 'Atamkin' to the people of Kazakhstan, Alisher Karimov, the famous Kazakh singer, performed the song 'Uzbekistan' in Uzbek language in response to the initiative of his Uzbek counterpart.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute quoting inform.kz, Alisher Karimov was quoted as saying: “In these turbulent times, we must do all we can to strengthen and deepen cultural and historical ties. The two friendly countries of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan have lived together for many years and have a long history of friendship and brotherhood. John Rumi’s song met with a huge wave of success in Kazakhstan society, and thus, I decided to present the famous song 'Uzbekistan' to the people of Uzbekistan.”

The song 'Uzbekistan' is a very popular song in the country and the Kazakh singer has performed skillfully, which was well received in Uzbekistan. / 2020-07-30

'Atbai's Fight' Qualifies for Shanghai Int'l Film Festival

Made by Kazakh director Adilkhan Yerzhanov, the film 'Atbai's Fight' qualified for the special section of the Shanghai International Film Festival in China.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting inform.kz, the festival was scheduled to take place in Shanghai on June 13 to 22, 2020, but due to coronavirus pandemic, it was rescheduled for July 25 - August 2, 2020. On July 25 and August 1-2, people of Shanghai will watch the movie 'Atbai's Fight' in 3 cinemas of the city. The story of the film is about a young man named Atbai, famous for his street fights, who decides to take part in martial arts competitions, win and make a change in his life with marrying the woman he loves.

The Shanghai International Film Festival is China's largest film event, held annually since 1993. In 1993, a number of 167 films from 33 countries participated in the festival. In 2018, 3447 films from 108 countries were submitted to the festival secretariat. The main prize of the festival is the "Golden Cup". / 2020-08-02

Zhasmin Tleumbetova Wins Belarusian Music Contest

Zhasmin Tleumbetova, the young Kazakhstani singer, won the 2nd place at the International Children's Singing Contest Vitebsk-2020 at the Slavianski Bazaar.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, quoting inform.kz, the contest was held among the students in Vitebsk, Belarus. The grand prix went to a Belarusian. In this year's "Slavianski Bazaar" contest, gifted youngsters from 17 countries competed in the field of music. The final exam was held on July 18 in two parts. In the first part, the singers performed a song in their native language and in the second part, they performed songs selected by the judges.
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It is worth mentioning that Kazakhstan's Adilkhan Makin won the Grand Prix of the 28th edition of the Vitebsk-2019 Song Contest. / 2020-08-02

Due to Corona Virus Spread
Kazakhstan to Hold the New Academic Year 'Digitally'

Due to corona virus pandemic, the new academic year will be held virtually in Kazakhstan.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting 24.kz, Kazakhstan's educational institutions are planning to organize virtual training programs due to this epidemic.

The modernized center of municipality of Nursultan, the capital of Kazakhstan, is planning to launch several virtual, distance learning projects. Currently, all schools in the city have signed a contract with Daryn Online and Bilimland and use modern tools and technologies and virtual courses.

Training programs are also provided for teachers to facilitate exchange of experiences and also offer methodological assistance. "We are currently working closely with Cambridge University professors to share experiences, and efforts are being made to improve teachers' knowledge," said Sander Davshiva, deputy president of the Center for Modernized Education.

Having participated in these programs, the teachers become acquainted with technical and technological innovations and at the end of the courses, the teachers will be awarded respective certificates of participation. So far, a number of 5,000 specialists have been awarded such certificates. The Modernized Education Center located in the city of Nursultan intend to hold the online program "Digital Education: Education and Experience" for 12,480 teachers in the city in August 2020. / 2020-08-05

Kazakhstan Restores the Dome of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi Mausoleum

The restoration of the dome of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi's Mausoleum in Turkestan city of Kazakhstan has been finished.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting 24.kz, the restorers have put in order the main dome of the mausoleum, which had been closed to the public for the past three years. Now the restoration of this section has been completed but restoration work still continues at other facilities located on the territory of the Azret Sultan State Historical and Cultural Reserve-Museum.

The architects have skillfully renovated the exterior of the dome using modern methods that prevent corrosion. / 2020-08-16

Kazakhstan's Oldest Mosque Discovered

Archaeologists have discovered the oldest mosque in Taraz city of in Kazakhstan's Zhambyl province.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Inform.kz, the newly unearthed mosque has become one of the most popular tourist attractions of the country and is visited by many pilgrims.

Nurlan Baghbayev, director of the Taraz Museum of Historical Monuments, said that the ancient
mosque fragments were found in 2006 during excavations near the Karakhan Mausoleum. More than ten hundred years ago the mosque was rebuilt from the Nestorian church of the VII century into the mosque. Artifacts, dated to the early Nestorian Christianity, were discovered during archeological diggings. The finding provides a unique opportunity to determine the exact time of the rise of Islamic culture in Central Asia.

The Taraz mosque is mentioned in the medieval written sources due to the military campaign against Taraz back to 893 by Samanid ruler Ismail ibn Ahmed, who conquered Taraz and converted the people of the city to Islam. It was him who ruled over to rebuild the ancient temple into the mosque. It is worth mentioning that in 2007, former Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev visited the historic mosque. / 2020-08-19

**Famous Kazakh Wrestler Dies**

Zhaksylyk Ushkempirov, the famous Kazakh wrestler, and holder of world and Olympic gold medals, died at 69.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting IRNA, the famous Kazakh wrestler had won world and Olympic gold medals in Greco-Roman wrestling. Ushkempirov won Kazakhstan's first gold medal at the 1980 Moscow Olympics in -48 kg weight category of Greco-Roman wrestling and was named Kazakhstan's national star.

He also won world's gold medal at the 1981 World Championships.

Ushkempirov was also inducted into the UWW Hall of Fame in 2014. / 2020-08-20

**Kazakh Film ‘Umai’ Wins Best First Time Director Award in Slovakia**

\[Image\]

Kazakh short film ‘Umai’ directed by Inkar Abdrash won the Best First Time Director award at Slovakia's Kosice International Monthly Film Festival.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting inform.kz, Slovakia's Kosice International Monthly Film Festival aims to promote talented filmmakers from all over the world. The jury of the film screening consists of young filmmakers from Slovakia. Each month, they select the winners who, at the end of the year, can qualify for the KIMFF's main awards in their categories. The annual awards ceremony is scheduled for 26th-28th May 2021. / 2020-08-23

**Kazakhstan Conducts Archeological Expedition in Turgai Steppes**

A group of Kazakh archaeologists have launched an expedition to explore the monuments in Turgai steppes of Kostanay region.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting 24.kz, in the framework of the project "In the footsteps of the ancestors", the archeologists first found mausoleum of two brothers Aygozhi and Baigozhi, both of them prominent figures from Kypshak tribe. They ruled over a large family. And after their death, they were buried in Zhanakala, by Karatorgai river. Historians say that they lived in the 18th century.

There are about a dozen and a half unique historical monuments in the Turgai steppes. Most of them are
under state protection. For example, the mausoleum of Abdygappar Khan, who is said to have had 50,000 soldiers in his army and was chosen by the peoples of the region as their Khan.

Presently, expeditions are going on in the region and the scientists believe that they will find other objects and monuments here. / 2020-09-07

Kazakhstan Foreign Ministry Says:
Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran Railway: A Symbol of Regional Friendship

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan described the Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran railway as a symbol of friendship between the three regional countries and a new opportunity to further develop international co-operation.

According ECO Cultural Institute quoting Fars News Agency, the Kazakh Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement: "Strategically, this railway is of great importance for the revival of the Great Silk Road, the development of trade among the Central Asian countries and the Caspian region, connecting north to the south and the east to the west". Construction of the Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran railway commenced in 2009 and was inaugurated in 2014 during a formal ceremony participated by the Presidents of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. / 2020-09-08

Since September 10, 2020:
Kazakhstan to Resume Flights to Kyrgyzstan & Uzbekistan

The interdepartmental commission for coronavirus containment of Kazakhstan has made the decision to allow resumption of flights to Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting akipress, relaunch of flights to Tajikistan will be considered. Thus, one flight will be resumed to Uzbekistan and 2 flights to Kyrgyzstan since September 10.

Air Astana will resume Almaty-Tashkent flights since September 11. The first flight will be made on Friday.

Uzbekistan Airways will resume flights from Almaty to Tashkent. / 2020-09-10

Since September 20:
Regular Kyrgyzstan-Kazakhstan Flights to Resume

Regular flights between Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan will be resumed from Sept. 20, 2020.

Almaty-Bishkek-Almaty flight will be operated by Air Astana twice a week on Tuesdays and Sundays. Kyrgyzstan canceled all international and domestic flights since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March and resumed domestic flights on June 5.

The country also resumed air services with Turkey and the United Arab Emirates from Aug. 7, and with Kuwait from Sept.10. / 2020-09-16

President Tokayev Creates Supreme Council Dedicated to Reforming Kazakhstan
Kazakhstan President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev signed a decree Sept. 14 establishing the Supreme Council for Reforms in the country.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Astana Times, the goal of the new body, announced by Tokayev in his Sept. 1 state-of-the-nation address, is to "ensure strategic planning of the country's sustainable development and the deepening of economic, social and political reforms." The Supreme Council will review and adopt the suggestions for reforms proposed by the new Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms which is responsible for analyzing the current situation, emerging trends, and international experience.

The council will be chaired by Tokayev, while Sir Suma Chakrabarti, former president of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), will serve as the deputy chair. The council will include some of the nation's high-level officials with vast experience in public administration and management.

They will include Kazakh Prime Minister Askar Mamin, Chief of the Presidential Administration Yerlan Koshanov, National Bank Chair Yerbolat Dossayev, Chair of Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms Kairat Kelimbetov, Chair of the Agency for Development and Regulation of the Financial Market Madina Abylkassymova, Security Council Secretary Asset Issekeshev, Deputy Chief of the Presidential Administration Timur Suleimenov and Chair of the Atameken National Chamber of Entrepreneurs Timur Kulibayev.

Chakrabarti also became the Aide to the President for economic development, according to a decree signed by Tokayev the same day. Chakrabarti brings extensive experience in international developmental economics and policymaking, and in designing and implementing large scale civil service reforms in the United Kingdom. He also co-chaired Kazakhstan's Foreign Investors' Council. / 2020-09-17
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Kyrgyzstan Cultural News Headlines

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Kyrgyzstan’s National Library has produced a documentary on the life and works of Kuluipa Konduchalova, the first Kyrgyz woman to run the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of this country.

According to ECI public relations quoting Kabar.kg, on the occasion of the centenary birthday of this renowned Kyrgyz figure, the Ministry of Culture of the Kyrgyz Republic have declared a week titled ‘Kuluipa Konduchalova and the Kyrgyz Culture’ to commemorate her.

In this movie, Kairat Imanaliyev Deputy Minister of Culture, Information and Tourism of Kyrgyzstan; Miditkhan Shirimkulov, speaker of Kyrgyzstan's then parliament; Jyldyz Bakashova, head of Kyrgyz national library; Mondozbey Tentoimishev and Irina Konduchalova, the daughter of this celebrated figure, have talked about the life and the contributions of Konduchalova in the culture of this country.

Except this movie, the Kyrgyz national library has mounted an exhibition of works, books and papers covering life events of Konduchalova and her contributions to the country. / 2020-06-22

Kyrgyz National Library holds online scientific conference on Farabi

In cooperation with the Kazakh Embassy in Kyrgyzstan, the National Library of the Kyrgyz Republic held a conference "Scientific Works of a Great Intellectual' to commemorate Farabi.

According to ECI public relations quoting Kabar 24, at the conference held online, a number of scientists, historians and university professors of both countries participated.

At the conference, the researchers emphasized that Farabi's philosophy is multi-dimensional and profound and could prove beneficial for any time and era.

Therefore, today the translation and publication of his works in different languages is more necessary than any other historic time.

It is worth mentioning that this year is the 1150th anniversary of this celebrated scientist whom will be honored in Kazakhstan and many other countries. / 2020-06-29

Kyrgyzstan’s Asia TV to Broadcast Iranian Movies

In a meeting held on Friday, June 12, 2020, the Cultural Counselor of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Kyrgyzstan and the CEO of the Asia TV of Kyrgyzstan discussed fields of cooperation between the two sides.

According to ECI public relations quoting Iranian Cultural Center in Bishkek, at the meeting, Ghasemi, Cultural Counselor of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Kyrgyzstan pointed out to the cooperation of Iranian Cultural Center in Bishkek with some news agencies, websites and other medias of Kyrgyzstan and expressed readiness for establishing cooperation with Asia TV of Kyrgyzstan.

The meeting concluded with the two sides agreeing to prepare and sing an MoU of cooperation. / 2020-07-02
Khalida Shimova Exhibition Held in Bishkek

An individual exhibition of Khalida Shimova, the Kyrgyz artist, is going on in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan.

According to ECI public relations quoting Akipress, the exhibition is being held at Gallery M in Bishkek city and 50 works created by the artist in different styles and forms are on display. Visitors may visit the exhibition observing social distancing. / 2020-07-12

Movie 'The Lake' Finds Way to Shanghai Film Festival

Directed by the Kyrgyz director, Emil Atageldiev, the movie 'The Lake' was nominated in the Asian New Talent Award of Shanghai International Film Festival (SIFF).

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Kabar.kg, Shanghai International Festival will be held from July 25 to August 2, 2020. The movie 'The Lake' has been made in collaboration with Aima and Aytish Film studios and on the ritual beliefs of the Kyrgyz people. The movie narrates an old Kyrgyz story in which the souls of ancestors live as fish in a sacred Lake. Most of the scenes in the film shot in and around the legendary Issyk Kul area.

The Shanghai International Film Festival (SIFF) ranks third among the 15 most prestigious international film festivals. / 2020-07-26

34th Issue of the Biweekly 'Kyrgyz Society & Culture' Released

The 34th issue of the biweekly 'Kyrgyz Society and Culture' was published by the Iranian Cultural Center in Bishkek.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute, quoting the public relations of the of Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, in this issue of the magazine of the Kyrgyz society and culture, topics such as Kyrgyz indigenous and local games, Qanbar Khan Philharmonic Music Band, Kyrgyz scholars and poets: Kasim Tinistanov; Kyrgyz cinema director: Aktan Arim Kubat; Kyrgyz traditional textiles, Kyrgyz cinema actors: Suimanqul Chakmarov and Kyrgyz Ala-24 TV Channel have been discussed.

Also included in this issue of the biweekly are: Kyrgyz religious activists: Abdushakir Normatov, Kyrgyz social and television activists: Ilim Qaribbekov and Private schools in Bishkek: Terms and fees. / 2020-07-30

Kyrgyz Films to be Premiered at Shanghai Int'l Film Fest

Two Kyrgyz films will be screened at Shanghai International Film Festival.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Kabar.kg, the full-length feature film 'Shambala' created by Artykpai Suyundukov based on the novel
'The White Ship' written by the famous Kyrgyz writer Chinghiz Aitmatov, and the film Lake' directed by Emil Atageldiev, will be screened at the festival. The International Film Festival will be held in Shanghai, China from July 25 to Aug. 2 this year. / 2020-08-02

Abdul Shakir Nurmatov, a Media Scholar

Chairman of the Council of Muftis of the Kyrgyz Republic is one of Kyrgyz Sunni scholars who has carried out outstanding religious as well as media activities.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute quoting the public relations of the Organization of Islamic Culture and Relations, Abdul Shakir Normatov was born on February 8, 1968 in the village of Qarabagh in Batkand Province. In 1993, he graduated from Imam Bukhari University in Tashkent, and in 2000, he graduated from Al-Azhar University in Egypt. In 2010 Noramatov was recognized as a graduate of Osh State University in southern Kyrgyzstan.

He is the author of several books in the field of religion, including "Principles of Islam", "The Way to Paradise", "Change Your Life!", and "Eternal Life". Abdul Shakir Normatov is also chairman of the Council of Muftis of the Kyrgyz Republic and imam of the Aisha Mosque in Bishkek. He is fluent in Kyrgyz, Russian, Uzbek, Arabic, Turkish and Persian. / 2020-08-04

Mass Prayers Suspended in Kyrgyzstan to Prevent Corona Virus Outbreak

The Kyrgyz Council of Ulema announced that in order to prevent the spread of the corona virus, the Eid al-Adha prayers will not be practiced publicly.

According to a Fars News Agency correspondent in Bishkek, the Kyrgyz Council of Ulema said that mass Eid prayers will not be practiced to prevent the spread of Corona virus. Due to the same reason, the Kyrgyz Muslims may make their sacrifices this coming Friday while observing hygiene protocols. Moreover, the Mufties emphasized that prayers should be made at homes and relatives should not be visited on the occasion. In Kyrgyzstan, the death toll has risen to 33,000 with more than 21,000 recovered and 1,301 died. In Bishkek city and Chui province, the epidemic situation has improved and many problems of shortage of medicine and medical equipment have been solved.

Currently, the government's main goal is to prevent the spread of the corona virus in other provinces where the health infrastructure is weaker than in Bishkek. 2020-08-11

Minister Azamat Jamankulov Announced: Kyrgyzstan Sets Goals for Theatres in 2020

Youth theater will be constructed in Bishkek, capital of Kyrgyzstan.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting culture.akipress, announcing the news, Azamat Jamankulov, the Minister of Culture, Information and Tourism of Kyrgyzstan said: "Last year, we started the renovation of several cultural centres such as the philharmonic hall, opera and ballet theater and Osh drama theatre. Though, due to lack of funds, unfortunately the renovation of Russian Drama Theater has not finished yet."

The Minister went on saying that the Ministry intends to start the renovation of Youth Theatre,
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Puppet Theatre, Baber Theatre in Osh as well as Gapar Aitiev museum in 2020 which will be finished next year. / 2020-08-12

**Kasim Tinistanov, Founder of the Kyrgyz Script**

Kasim Tinistanov, a prominent poet and journalist, is the founder of the Kyrgyz script.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Mehr News agency, Born on September 9, 1901 in the village of Chirpikti in Issyk-Kul Province, Kasim Tinistanov was a Kyrgyz scientist, poet and an activist. He is the founder of the Kyrgyz script. In the years 1909 to 1912, he received his early education under the supervision of a local cleric, and from 1916 to 1914, he studied at a Russian school in the city of Karakol (formerly Przhevalsk). In 1924, he graduated from the Kyrgyz-Kazakh College of Education in Tashkent.

In 1923, he established Kyrgyz language using Arabic alphabet, and years after, he cooperated in the change of the Kyrgyz alphabet from Arabic to Latin and then to Cyrillic. From 1923 to 1927, he worked as editor of "Ak Jal", "Jas Kairat", "Sana" and "Erkin Ta" periodicals and served as head of the science faculty of Turkestan State University. In 1926, he attended the first meeting of Turkology in Baku (Azerbaijan) and delivered an important speech on the transition of Kyrgyz script to Latin.

Tinistanov wrote many poems, among which the "Kasim Poetry Collection" gained more fame in the region. He also translated several books into Kyrgyz, including the works of Krylov, Russia's best-known fabulist. In 1934, Tinistanov was elected as a member of the Writers' Council of the Soviet Union.

On August 1, 1937, Tinistanov was ousted by Stalin and sentenced to death which was carried out on November 6, 1938. Kyrgyz 10-som banknote features Kasim Tinistanov and the state university in Issyk-Kul and Some streets and schools in Bishkek Province are named after him. / 2020-08-18

**Kyrgyzstan to Resume Filming of TV Series**

In Kyrgyzstan, two full-length feature films were being made this year which were postponed due to corona virus pandemic.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting kabar.kg, the Minister of Culture, Information and Tourism of the Kyrgyz Republic Azamat Zhomonkulov said during a briefing and added: "The shooting of the films "Elmenjeti" and "Amoo" continues. However, the filming of several television series and animated films has been suspended due to corona virus outbreak".

"As soon as the situation stabilizes, we will resume work in this direction," the minister assured. / 2020-08-20

**Bishkek To Host the 'Central Asian Romansiada' Competition**

The 4th International Exam of Love Stories, "Central Asian Romance", is scheduled to take place on October 29-30 in Bishkek.
According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting culture.akipress, the competition has been included in the 24th Moscow International Competition of Young Performers, and the winners of the Bishkek competition will take part in the final stage of the Moscow Romansiada Competition which will be held in Russia on December 5, 2020.

Bishkek competition will be attended by students of art and music disciplines as well as those interested in romance genre. The winners will be determined by a jury led by Professor Galina Preobrazhenskaya, director of the Moscow House of Romance.

It is worth mentioning that Bishkek competition will be held at the initiative of the Russian Cooperation Office in Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Embassy in Bishkek, the Kyrgyz Ministry of Culture, Information and Tourism, and radio Sputnik. / 2020-08-23

Kyrgyz Short Film "On a Boat" Wins Prize at Danish IFF

The Kyrgyz short film "On a boat" won a prize at the International Film Festival in Denmark.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting kabar.kg, the film festival was held from 24 to 30 August in the Danish city of Odense, the birth place of the celebrated Danish writer-storyteller, Hans-Christian Anderson.

The competition program included a film by a young Kyrgyz director Baizak Mamataliev "On a boat", which won the prize for the best script. The Odense International Film Festival (OFF) is Denmark's oldest and largest short film festival with a long and successful tradition, bringing together film fans every year from all over the world and from all genres not normally seen on the big screen.

Since 2013, the Festival has also been the first Danish film festival to be accepted as an Oscar qualifier for the short films category. / 2020-09-07

Kyrgyzstan-Turkey Discuss Cooperation in Education

Speaker of the Kyrgyz Parliament Dastanbek Dzhumabekov met with Deputy Head of the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities Sayit Yusuf and Turkish Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan Cengiz Kamil Firat.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute quoting kabar.kg, Dzhumabekov thanked the Turkish side for assistance in providing quality education to Kyrgyzstan's younger generation in Turkey.

"Thanks to friendly and fruitful cooperation between our two countries, about 2 thousand students from Kyrgyzstan studied at the universities of Turkey under allocated state scholarships", the speaker noted.

In his turn, Sayit Yusuf informed the Kyrgyz speaker about the purpose of his visit. He has planned introductory meetings in Bishkek and in the regions of the country within the Turkish scholarship program.

Dastanbek Dzhumabekov suggested considering additional quotas for students from low-income families.

He emphasized that the increase in the number of quotas will contribute to the development and rapprochement of the two peoples.

During the meeting, the Kyrgyz parliament's speaker also expressed gratitude on behalf of the deputies of the Jogorku Kenesh and on his own behalf to the Turkish side for the humanitarian assistance, rendered to the Kyrgyz people in the difficult period of coronavirus pandemic. / 2020-09-07
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With the Opening of 62 Schools: Kyrgyzstan's First Academic Year during Corona Virus Pandemic Begins

A number of 62 schools in remote districts of Kyrgyzstan started the academic year traditionally, Education Ministry's Preschool, School and Extracurricular Education Department said.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting for.kg, students of grades 1-11 of these schools attend classes traditionally.

These are schools in the green zone with problems with Internet access. These schools may use flexible schedule of learning and study via TV classes. / 2020-09-09

To Fight against Corona
Over 19,000 Medical Workers Trained in Kyrgyzstan

More than 19,000 medical workers in Kyrgyzstan have taken courses in such specialities as virologist, infectious disease specialist, resuscitation specialist, therapists, pulmonologist, laboratory and other specialists.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting 24.kg, the Prime Minister Kubatbek Boronov stressed the importance of continuing education and retraining of medical workers.

«It is necessary to step up retraining of doctors in the regions. Methods of treatment the disease according to the approved protocols of the Ministry of Health should be accessible and understandable to every physician, especially in remote areas. The last, fourth treatment protocol includes rehabilitation measures. It is necessary to pay great attention to post-coronavirus rehabilitation of the population» he noted.

The head of Government drew attention to the importance of ensuring due payments to medical workers and compensations to persons infected with coronavirus and the families of deceased health workers. / 2020-09-10
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Titled "Persian Inscriptions in Pakistan": 3rd 'Simorgh-e Parsi' Meeting Held Online

Iranian Cultural Center in Lahore held the third cultural and literary meeting "Persian inscriptions in Pakistan" which was broadcasted live on Instagram.

According to ECI public relations quoting Mehr News Agency, through the efforts made by Saadi Foundation and the Iranian Cultural Center in Lahore, the third cultural and literary meeting titled "Persian inscriptions in Pakistan" was organized. Present at the live session were Elham Haddadi, an expert of the Saadi Foundation specializing on the Indian subcontinent, and Morteza Rezvanfar, a faculty member at the Iranian Research Institute for Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism (RICHT). With the spread of Corona virus, the cultural and literary session titled "Roots of benevolence in the words of Saadi Shirazi across Iran and Pakistan" was held online with the cooperation of Dr. Iqbal Shahid, Head of Persian Language and Literature, G.C. University of Lahore.

Another session of the series titled 'Ferdowsi's Shahnameh in the Subcontinent (particularly Pakistan)' had already been held with the cooperation of Ms. Faleeha Kazmi, Head of Persian Department of Lahore College for Women University, and Iran's Saadi Foundation. / 2020-06-28

Iranian Cultural Center in Peshawar Releases: 'Khorasan Guide' Digital Book for Pakistanis

The electronic version of the book 'Khorasan Guide' has been uploaded on the Pashto section of website of the Cultural Center of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Peshawar.

According to ECI public relations quoting the public relations of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, the electronic version of the book 'Khorasan Guide', previously translated from Urdu to Pashto by Iranian Cultural Center in Peshawar, has been uploaded on Pashto section of the Center's website to provide an opportunity for those interested in subject from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa region of Pakistan.

The book 'Khorasan Guide' has been translated by Sajjad Elahi Zhondon in 284 pages and is available at http://ps.peshawar.icro.ir/index.aspx?fkeyid=&siteid. It is worth mentioning that the e-book has been prepared in 8 chapters and contains valuable information and images on arts and culture as well as historical, natural and religious tourist attractions of the area. / 2020-06-29

Razavi Poetry Event Held in Islamabad

Through the efforts of Iran Cultural Center in Islamabad with the collaboration of Astan Quds Razavi, the Razavi Poetry event was held in Islamabad, Pakistan.

According to ECI public relations, quoting the public relations of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO), continuing its cultural programs on the subject, Iran Cultural Center in Islamabad organized Razavi Poetry event online which was attended by outstanding Pakistani Shiite and Sunni poets.

The literary event was attended by Iftikhar Arif, former head of the Pakistan National Academy; Seyed
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Mohammad Ali Hosseini, Iran's ambassador to Pakistan and Mohammad Reza Kaka, head of Iran Cultural Center, some Persian language professors at Pakistani universities, as well as poets from Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

In this virtual meeting, which was attended by prominent scholars and cultural figures as well as more than 10 well-known Pakistani poets, the participants read poems and praises in Urdu and Farsi languages and expressed their affections towards the 8th Shiit Imam, Musa al-Reza (a.s.). In cooperation with the Organization’s representative in Khorasan Razavi, Iran’s Cultural Center in Islamabad dedicated moments of this webinar to a live broadcast of Imam Reza (AS) shrine for the devotees of Ahl al-Bayt in Pakistan. Then the poets recited their latest poems written on Hazrat Fatima Masumeh (s.a.) and Imam Reza (a.s.). / 2020-07-08

Meeting on Common Persian & Urdu Storytelling Held in Lahore

With the cooperation GC University of Lahore and University of Tehran, the 17th session of the series of cultural and literary meetings titled 'Simorgh-e Parsi' was held online to examine the commonalities of Persian and Urdu storytelling in the contemporary period.

According to the Public Relations of Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, with the coordination and follow-up made by Iran Cultural Center, the 17th session of the series of cultural and literary meetings titled 'Simorgh-e Parsi' was held online to examine the commonalities of Persian and Urdu storytelling in the contemporary period. The event was organized with the collaboration of GC University of Lahore, Urdu Language Department of the Faculty of Foreign Languages, University of Tehran and Saadi Foundation.

Present at the live event were Mohammad Kiomarsi, Dean of the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Head of the Department of Urdu Language and Literature, University of Tehran and Farzaneh Riyadh, Associate Professor of GC University of Lahore who spoke in Urdu language.

For those interested, the full-length video file of the program is available on Saadi Foundation's Instagram page. 2020-07-15

'Ganj Bakhsh' Library, A Common Treasure of Iran & Pakistan

During a meeting held with the caretaker of Iran Cultural Center in Islamabad, Ahmad Khan, a renowned codicologist of Arabic manuscripts, emphasized that Ganj Bakhsh Library located in Iran-Pakistan Persian Language Research Center is a great cultural and historical asset of both Iran and Pakistan.

According to ECI public relations quoting the public relations of Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of Iran-Pakistan Persian Language Research Center, Mohammad Reza Kaka, the caretaker of Iran Cultural Center in Islamabad and head of the center met with Ahmad Khan, a codicologist and cataloger of Arabic manuscripts and lauded his services.

During the meeting, subjects such as cataloging Arabic manuscripts in Ganj Bakhsh Library of the Iran-Pakistan Persian Language Research Center and the promotion of the Persian language in Pakistan were discussed, and the need to publish the catalog of Arabic manuscripts of the Research Center was emphasized. / 2020-07-19
Pakistan-iran Cultural Commonalities in the Course of History

The history of Iran and (present-day) Pakistan dates back to 2500 years and the reign of Darius and the Achaemenid conquest of the Indus Valley and its annexation to Iran.

According to ECI public relations quoting Tasnim News Agency regional office, while releasing the second part of Pamir documentary series, the website of the cultural institute ‘Pakistan- the most Iranian neighbor’ emphasized that Iran-Pakistan relations are 2500 years old.

According to 'Pamir' documentary, Yamauchi, the renowned Asian archaeologist, notes in his well-known historical book that Gandhara civilization was the easternmost and richest province of the Achaemenid Empire. He further emphasizes that Gandhara used to offer an annual amount of 800 kg gold to the Iranian king's court.

The documentary goes on saying that Darius was interested in the fertile plain of Sindh. Therefore, he commissions Scylax, one of his senior officers, to explore the course of Indus River. Upon discovering that the Indus River flows into Oman Sea, the Achaemenid king decides to annex the region to Iran. This is the beginning of Iran-Pakistan relations when provinces such as Sindh, Punjab and Baluchistan in present-day Pakistan are annexed to Iranian territory.

Another part of this special segment of 'Pamir' documentary deals with the activities of some people working in the area of cultural Iran. Through 'Pamir' video series, the cultural institute ‘Pakistan- the most Iranian neighbor’ attempts to address different cultural, historical, ideological and political dimensions of Iran-Pakistan relations. The previous section of the same series dealt with the national anthem of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, %96 of which is composed of Persian words. / 2020-07-23

'Iran Today' Competition Held in Peshawar

The first virtual competition titled 'Iran Today' was held by Iran's Cultural Attaché and Culture House in Peshawar.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute, quoting the public relations of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, this virtual competition was held providing forty questions per day as well as one post and seven questions on the achievements of the Islamic Republic of Iran after the victory of the Islamic Revolution. The 6-day competition aims to promote Iran's tourist attractions; its capacities in the areas of arts, culture, women, pilgrimage, medicine, etc. and also the developments of contemporary Iran and finally, to encourage the cyberspace audience to study more about this country. / 2020-07-29

Special Issue on Dr. Nabi Bakhsh Khan Baloch, Pakistani Codicologist

Number 114-115 (October 2017 to March 2018) of ‘Adabiyaat’ (Literature) quarterly Literature published in Urdu language by Pakistan Academy of Literature in Islamabad is a special issue focusing on Dr. Nabi Bakhsh Khan Baloch.

This magazine includes articles on the life and works of Dr. Nabi Bakhsh Khan Baloch such as his biography, personality, translation of some of his articles from Sindhi into Urdu, interview: Dr. Nabi Bakhsh Khan Baloch as seen by others, poems in his
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tribute, a selection of some of his articles in Urdu, a selection of his letters, a bibliography of his Works and English articles.

Dr. Nabi Bakhsh Khan Baloch, better known as N.A. Baloch, is a Pakistani codicologist and scholar and writer who specialized in the history of Sindh.

Lahore Hosts:
Int'l Webinar 'Life, Hope, & Persian Literature'

A two-day international webinar titled 'Life, Hope & Persian Literature' was held online by the Department of Persian Language and Literature and the Ferdowsi Chair of Lahore College for Women University in cooperation with Iran Cultural Center in Lahore.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting the public relations of Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, on the first day of the webinar, Bushra Mirza, vice- chancellor of Lahore College for Women University; Hossein Salimi, rector of Allameh Tabatabai University and Faleeha Zahra Kazmi, Head of the Persian Language and Literature Department of Lahore College for Women University; Reza Morad Sahraei, deputy Saadi Foundation in Education Affairs; Mohammad Nasser, Head of Persian Language and Literature Department, Faculty of Oriental Studies, Punjab Lahore University; Bahador Bagheri from Iran; Dehshiri, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Senegal; Maryam Hosseini from Al-Zahra University as well as Professors of Persian from numerous Universities of the world such as Iran, Senegal, South Korea, Serbia, Azerbaijan and Germany also participated in the webinar.

In their remarks, the participants of the webinar "Life, Hope and Persian Literature" emphasized that Persian language and literature has a very rich treasure and great personalities in the fields of Sufism, literature, poetry, storytelling and using various methods, these luminaries have delivered the message of hope to future generations and the general public.

On the second day of this international webinar, Bushra Mirza, vice- chancellor of Lahore College for Women University; and Faleeha Zahra Kazmi, Head of the Persian Language and Literature Department of Lahore College for Women University; Saleem Mazhar, Pro VC Punjab University Lahore; Mohammad Javad Dehghani, President of ISC & RICEST Iran; Iqbal Shahid, Former Dean GCU; Ayegun Alizade, Associate Professor Azerbaijan; Nasibeh Moazeni, Germany; Muhammad Safeer, COD Persian Department NUML; Ali Akbar Rezai Fard, head of Uran Cultural Centre and Representative of Saadi Foundation in Lahore; Nematollah Iranzadeh, Associate Professor ATU Iran, participated.

The international webinar concluded with screening of a video clip of the exhibition of art and calligraphy works of Persian language and literature students of Lahore College for Women University.

Quetta Hosts Iranian Handicrafts Exhibition

The Iranian Cultural Center in Quetta organized an exhibition of handicrafts and books on Iranian studies, calligraphy and miniatures works as well as nationally produced technologies of Iran.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting the public relations of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, on the eve of Eid al-Adha and Eid al-Ghadir Khum, and exhibition of handicrafts, books on Iranian studies, calligraphy and miniatures works as well as nationally produced technologies of Iran were put on display at the permanent exhibition of Iran Cultural center in Quetta, Pakistan.
On the first day of the opening of the exhibition, students of religious sciences of Khatam al-Banin seminary visited the exhibition, which was very well received by the visitors. / 2020-08-17 09

Two-Day Broghil Festival to Begin From Sept 5

A two-day Broghil Festival would be organized by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tourism Department and the Upper Chitral district administration from 5th of next month at Broghil National Park in Upper Chitral district.

The festival will showcase various activities, including donkey, horse and yak polo, cricket, football, buzkashi, marathon race, Tug of War, wrestling, music and other traditional games.

The yak race, yak polo, fireworks, traditional music and traditional food shows will be the main features of the festival.

Proper arrangements are being made for highlighting different aspects of the ancient and unique Wakhi culture.

A tent village will be established in Broghil to facilitate the participants and tourists. / 2020-08-27

Sakina Samo's Intezaar All Set to Premiere in New York

Veteran actor and producer Sakina Samo's directorial debut Intezaar is all set to premiere in New York at the Harlem International Film Festival.

The Mera Naseeb star took to social media to celebrate the news with her fans and followers. "Our Intezaar (Waiting) will have its world premiere at the Harlem international Film Festival in New York. See the link for all films being shown and how to watch online," she tweeted.

Written by Bee Gul, previously known for her work in Dar Si Jati Hai Sila, the story revolves around a family's patience. A father waiting for his family to leave him, a mother waiting for her son to come home and a daughter taking care of her ageing parents, waiting for them to pass on; loneliness, indifference of children and the fear of death, ever approaching.


Samo has been rewarded with the Tamgha-e-Imtiaz in 2011, for her exemplary contribution to the Pakistani entertainment industry. / 2020-09-03

Announcing September 25, Munir Akram Said: Imran Khan Likely to Speak at the Online UNGA Meeting

Pakistan's envoy to the UN said: Imran Khan will probably raise the issue of Kashmir and the aspirations of the peoples of this region at the 75th UN General Assembly Meeting again.

According ECO Cultural Institute quoting Fars News Agency, as per the preliminary list of speakers at the 75th UN General Assembly, Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan is likely to attend and address the conference via video conference on September 25.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the world leaders will not travel to New York to attend the UN General Assembly, and the summit will be held via video conference.

According to the announcement list, Imran Khan will be the sixth speaker to address the meeting in the evening of September 25th.
"I expect the Prime Minister to raise once again the issue of Kashmir and the aspirations of the people of the region for freedom and relief from oppression", said Munir Akram, Pakistan's ambassador to the United Nations. / 2020-09-08

Imran Khan's Emphasis on the Importance of Quality of Education in Pakistan

Prime Minister Imran Khan Tuesday said that provision of opportunities for quality education was among the top priorities of the government because it played an essential role in the development and prosperity of the country and nation.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting DailyTimes, the prime minister was chairing a meeting to review measures taken for the promotion of higher education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The meeting was attended by Minister for Federal Education Shafqat Mahmood, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz, Governor KPK Shah Farman, Chief Minister KPK Mahmood Khan, PM's Special Assistant Dr Shahbaz Gill, Chairman Higher Education Commission Tariq Binori, KPK CM's Advisor on HEC Khaleeq ur Rehman, Chief Secretary KPK, different serving vice chancellors, former chancellors and senior officials, PM office media wing in a press release said. Professor Dr Attaur Rehman also attended the meeting via video link. During the meeting, the prime minister stressed that for higher education and uniform opportunities in the basic education, implementation of merit and provision of facilities to teachers and students must be ensured.

The prime minister was given a detailed briefing over implementation of steps and future strategy regarding roadmap for the promotion of higher education in the province. / 2020-09-10

Pakistan Re-elected to Key UN Body

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Dawn, Pakistan has been elected to the UN Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) by securing 52 votes from the 54-member Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

"This overwhelming support constitutes 96 per cent of the total tally," said a spokesperson for Pakistan's Permanent Mission to the United Nations. "Pakistan's re-election is a resounding validation of its meaningful engagement within the United Nations as well as its contributions in the areas of international economic cooperation and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)," the spokesperson added.

The body functions as the main subsidiary organ of ECOSOC and the UN General Assembly for planning, programming and coordination of the work of the UN. / 2020-09-20
Tajikistan Cultural Digest
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Tajikistan Cultural News Headlines

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Book by Tajik Scholar on Tirgan Festival Published

‘Tirgan, Celebration of Water’ is the title of a book written by Dilshod Rahimi, a Tajik scholar, which has been published by Arjang Publications in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

According to ECI public relations quoting Khovar news agency of Tajikistan, the book deals with the significance of water for life on earth, the initiatives of the Republic of Tajikistan to promote the importance of water on international level as well as the customs and traditions of Tajik people pertaining to water.

In his book, Dilshod Rahimi, anthropologist and author of the book, has talked about the mystical and symbolical aspects of water and the history of Tirgan festival. He has also included some poems on this festive event.

It is worth mentioning that Tirgan is among the ancient festivals of Persian-speaking peoples and is celebrated annually on July 3 as a sign of respect to water and the key to prosperity and abundance. At the proposal of Emomali Rahmon, the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, at the 71st UN General Assembly held on December 23, 2016, the 2018-2028 period has been declared as the 'International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development'. / 2020-06-24

Tajikistan National Museum Makes Online Visit Available

Due to corona virus pandemic, Tajikistan National Museum has made virtual visit available.

According to ECI public relations quoting Khovar News Agency, since the outbreak of corona virus in the world, the number of visitors to the National Museum of Tajikistan has significantly decreased and thus, the Museum officials have decided to make virtual visits available for both local and foreign visitors.

According to museum officials, those interested may visit the museum's treasures on social media including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. in Tajik, Russian, English, Arabic and Chinese languages. There the audiences may become acquainted with museum objects dating from the Stone Age to modern times. Around 35 virtual tours of different historic eras been provided for the visitors. The tours include the Stone Age, the Bronze Age, Sarazm, Zoroastrianism, Achaemenid period, Amudarya Treasure, Greece and the West, Kushanid period, Samanid government, Hephthalites and World War II. / 2020-06-29

Tajikistan Launches Fresh Archeological Excavations in Jalaluddin Balkhi Region

The Archaeological Department of the Institute of History and Archeology at the National Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan has begun archeological excavations in Qala Laghman historic area of Jalaluddin Balkhi province.

According to ECI public relations, the historic area was first discovered in 1875. The archaeologists' map prepared then indicated two historical sites in the area and on the banks of the Vakhsh River. Qala Laghman is located 12 km from Helivard historic site and covers an area of 42.5 hectares.

According to archeologists, the region was once host to a small city with four gates and a thriving agriculture. / 2020-07-07
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Foreign Ambassadors Visit Tajikistan’s Tourist Attractions

Heads of a number of diplomatic missions to Tajikistan visited the country's tourist attractions.

According to ECI public relations quoting Khovar news agency of Tajikistan, the Saudi ambassador visited 'Camping Village' tourist area located in Sartagh village of Aini province.

Moreover, ambassadors of Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Kyrgyzstan, Palestine as well as the representatives of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and Aga Khan Foundation also visited the site. The tour was organized by the head of Environment and Tourism Department of Tajikistan's Ministry of Interior in collaboration with 'Sky Tour' Tourism Company. Local food and folk-art performances were provided for the guests by the municipality of Aini province. / 2020-07-14

On the occasion of Tajikistan's Independence Day "Book, The Source of Knowledge" Launched

The book titled "Book, The Source of Knowledge" was launched at the State Teaching University in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Khovar news agency of Tajikistan, the book contains papers by Tajik scholars written on the services rendered by Imomali Rahmon, the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, in the field of books and the promotion of reading culture in the country. The book has been compiled by Abduljabbar Rahmon Zoda, the Tajik scholar, at the initiative of Rohbar Qosem, the head of the committee for rural areas development, and published by Nasher publications in 500 copies. At the launching ceremony, Prof. Namonjon Ghaffori, the chancellor of Tajikistan State Teaching University, emphasized that the book has been published on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of Tajikistan's independence and National Unity Day.

The event featured the presence of some scholars and researchers who commented over the book. / 2020-07-16

Young Tajik Writers Gather at Tajikistan National Library

At the initiative of the National Library of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Department of Youth and Sports Affairs of Dushanbe Municipality, young Tajik writers meet every Tuesday.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute quoting Khovar news agency, at the meetings to be held at the National Library, the winners of the 'Foroughi Sobhi Donoi' competition will gather and discuss literary topics. It is worth mentioning that the competition 'Foroughi Sobhi Donoi' is held annually at the proposal of President Emomali Rahmon to promote reading culture among students to promote books and reading culture and also discover young talents. / 2020-07-16

Tajik Scholar Joins Russian Academy of Sciences
A Tajik scholar has joined the Russian Academy of Sciences.

According to ECI public relations quoting Khovar news agency of Tajikistan, Bazar Safar Aliyev, the Tajik researcher who is currently working at Chelyabinsk State Academy of Culture and Arts, will join the Russian Academy of Sciences as permanent member.

Dr. Safar Aliyev was born in 1956 in Yavan city of Tajikistan. Having finished his studies at faculty of culture of Moscow city, Aliyev served as professor of Tajikistan art university named after Mirzo Tursunzoda. In 1981, he defended his thesis titled 'The Formation and Development of Cultural and Epistemological System in Tajikistan' in Moscow. At the initiative of this Tajik scholar, a great Norouz celebration was held in Chelyabinsk city in 2008. This scholar has so far published 9 scholarly treaties, 3 educational instructions and more than 80 scholarly papers.

Moreover, several students have defended their dissertations under his supervision. / 2020-07-20

**Tajikistan to Launch New Television Networks**

Two TV channels will be launched in Tajikistan in the near future.

According to ECI public relations quoting Khovar news agency of Tajikistan, Noureddin Saeed, the head of Tajikistan's Television and Radio Committee, said that the measure will be taken in light of the meeting of President Emomali Rahmon of Tajikistan with the country's cultural figures in 2019.

"Science and Nature" as well as "Tourism and Folk Arts" are two TV channels set to be added to Tajikistan TV channels and presently, working groups are working to make the necessary preparations for launching. / 2020-07-23

**Tajik Media's Attention towards Azerbaijani Carpets**

The Tajik website ‘avesta.tj’ has published a comprehensive article on Azerbaijani carpets.

According to ECI public relations quoting mct.gov.az, the article titled 'Azerbaijani carpet, the national achievement of Azerbaijani people' underlines that the art of carpet weaving holds a special place in the life and history of the people of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The article also deliberates upon the art of carpet weaving in the Republic of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan National Carpet Museum with a treasury of more than 14,000 types of carpets and rugs, the carpet weaving schools of Guba, Baku, Shirvan, Ganja, etc. as well as information on the similarities and differences of these carpets and their characteristics. It is worth mentioning that the art of carpet weaving of the Republic of Azerbaijan was registered in the UNESCO list of intangible heritage in 2010.

According to this article, in order to preserve and promote the art of carpet weaving in the Republic of Azerbaijan, at the instruction of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the carpet museum of the country has been given 'national' status since July 15, 2019. / 2020-07-26

**Tajikistan to Establish Science and Technology University**

At the initiative of two Tajik businessmen, Tajikistan's University of Science and Technology will be built in Khujand, the capital of Tajikistan's Sughd Province.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Khovar news agency of Tajikistan, Nouruddin Qasimov and Kameljan Kamelov, intend to construct the university to contribute to the 20-year plan for education and development of sciences (2020-2040). The newly established university will offer twenty
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disciplines (in-class and online) in 68 classrooms, 8 laboratories, 20 specialized rooms, 5 large halls, a library, a restaurant and a dormitory.

It is worth mentioning that currently, Khujand has four universities. / 2020-07-27

Attended by H.E. Emomali Rahmon:
Largest Sports Complex Opens in Tajikistan

Attended by H.E. Emomali Rahmon, Tajikistan president; Rostam Emomali, National Assembly Speaker and Dushanbe Mayor, a large tennis and swimming complex was inaugurated in Dushanbe city.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, quoting Tajikistan's Khovar news agency, the complex is the largest tennis and swimming structure in the country, built over an area of 10 hectares. The construction of the building began in 2012 and 15 domestic and 5 foreign companies have been involved in its construction. More than 500 people have helped its construction and the complex have created 200 job opportunities.

The complex includes indoor and outdoor sports grounds, a tennis court with the capacity to seat 3,000 people, a 2000-seat Palace of Water Sports. The outdoor swimming pool has 27 elevators, 8 outdoor tennis courts and parking lots for 300 cars. Covering an area of more than 20,000 square meters, the water sports complex consists of 3 floors with its water temperature being 26 degrees in all year round. The depth of the ponds ranges from 0.7 to 6 meters and is intended for all ages. Moreover, the complex is equipped with recording video system.

The tennis complex has 5 floors and is built over an area of 40,000 square meters.

At the inaugural ceremony of the sports complex, Tajikistan President Emomali Rahmon, stressed the need for the development of sports in the country, and being opened concurrently with the 30th anniversary of Tajikistan's independence, he called the measure 'auspicious'. / 2020-07-28

To Fulfill President's Recommendation:
Tajikistan Opens Arms towards Foreign Tourists

The Tourism Development Committee of Tajikistan has announced that the country's Romit resort is ready to receive tourists in accordance with health protocols.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute quoting Khovar news agency, a group of experts from the Tajik Tourism Development Committee have visited the Romit resort in Vahdat district and announced that the region is now ready to receive tourists. With its beautiful natural landscapes and healing water springs, Romit Resort and 'Arkho' relaxation center are now ready to serve visitors. The restaurants and guest house of the sites have been reconstructed in accordance with international standards to fulfill President Emomali Rahmon's recommendations for the development of tourism in the region. The area's guest house has 5 floors and can accommodate 500 people.

The tourist area is located 75 km from Dushanbe, the capital of this country. / 2020-07-30

Coinciding with October 16 & Cinema Day in Tajikistan:
'Tojikfilm' Turns 90 Years

The 'Tojikfilm' company was founded in 1930 and has produced over 400 films. It is one of the oldest film companies in the region and has contributed significantly to the cultural and artistic life of Tajikistan. The company has produced a variety of films in different genres, ranging from feature films to documentaries.
On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of Tajikistan's independence, the country's cinemas are set to be renovated to their pre-independence status.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Khovar news agency of Tajikistan, Mahmadsaid Shohiyon, director of the Tojikfilm Institute, Tajikistan's largest film institute, said that 30 cinemas are under the auspices of this Institute, most of which are very old and inoperative.

This year, 'Tojikfilm' will be 90 years old, and the Institute has so far made 1234 films all of which will be included in a single list and screened at Kourosh cinema in Dushanbe on Cinema Day. It is worth mentioning that October 16 has been declared Cinema Day in Tajikistan. / 2020-08-02

Splendor of History in Tajikistan's 'Kokhi Navruz'

The complex building begun in 2009 and completed in September 2014.

From the very beginning the complex - "Kohi Navruz" was planned as the biggest national tea house in Central Asia, but in the process of building it turned into a real museum of national handicrafts of Tajik people. The whole territory of the complex including fountains, summer pavilions and garden - takes more than four hectares. Approximately four thousand craftsmen from all parts of Tajikistan were involved in the process of building.

Generally, the handicrafts of the complex are about forty thousand sq. m., they are: decorative wood carving of colon and ceilings, wall decorations: woodcarving, Florentine mosaic in colored mirrors, painted ceilings. Height of the biggest cupola is forty meters. The complex has seven lifts, including panorama elevator, bowling, billiard, 3D movie theater, night club, shop, art gallery and a small national teahouse, but the most breathtaking side of the building are its halls. / 2020-08-03

Tojikfilm to Call for Submission of Screenplays on Corona

Tajik Film will announce a competition to make a film focusing on corona.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Khovar News Agency, Mahmadsaid Shohiyon, director of the Tojikfilm, said: "With the outbreak of corona virus in the world, the world system failed and a fatal blow was struck to the human society." Shohiyon then continued: "The Canadian-Iranian director, Mostafa Keshvari, has already written and directed a film on corona. However, Tojikfilm will announce a contest in the coming days and upon the approval of a screenplay, its production process will begin". / 2020-08-04

Tajikistan Holds "Leader of the Nation" Chess Tournament

The first round of the second edition of "Leader of the Nation" chess tournament was held at Tajikistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute, quoting Tajikistan's "Khovar" news agency, 30 employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs participated at the competition and 5 of them made their way to the next stage.

At the inaugural, Khosrow Nazeri, Tajikistan's first deputy yo foreign minister, said: "Last year, Tajikistan President Emomali Rahmon proposed holding a chess
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tournament, that indicates the president's attention to the promotion of the game in the country." Nazeri further emphasized that this game is one of the oldest games in the world and requires knowledge, intelligence and memory as the most important features of this intellectual game./ 2020-08-05

In the congratulatory message of Emomali Rahmon to Hassan Rouhani was stated:

Expansion of Tajikistan-Iran Friendly Bonds under the auspices of Spiritual Commonalities

With a felicitation message, Tajikistan’s President congratulated his Iranian counterpart on the arrival of Eid al-Adha.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Fars News agency in Dushanbe, Tajikistan’s President, Emomali Rahmon in a message felicitated his Iranian counterpart Hassan Rouhani on the advent of Eid al-Adha. The message reads:

Dear Dr. Hassan Rouhani,
Esteemed President of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Greetings
Please accept our sincere congratulations and best wishes on the occasion of Eid al-Adha.
I wholeheartedly wish you health, prosperity and fresh achievements and also sustainable security and stability, progress, and prosperity, for the Iranian people.
I take this opportunity to express my strong determination for the advancement of all types of joint collaborations to expand and strengthen constructive cooperation between Tajikistan and Iran.
I trust that the main traditions of Eid al-Adha, which are rooted in the deep values of humanity, will further expand bonds of friendship and brotherhood as well as virtues such as understanding and support among our peoples in the future. Needless to say these bonds and virtues are rooted in the spiritual commonalities of our nations. I am also confident that we will proudly overcome the current threats, and from now on, we will increase our joint efforts to achieve the lofty goals of ensuring the welfare and development of the Muslim community.
With utmost respect
Emomali Rahmon
President of the Republic of Tajikistan. / 2020-08-13

President Emomali Rahmon Approves:
Symbol of Celebration of 700th Anniversary of Kamal Khujandi

President of Tajikistan, Emomali Rahmon, approved the symbol of celebration of the 700th anniversary of the great Tajik poet Kamal Khujandi.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Khovar news agency, the symbol was prepared by the Academy of Fine Arts, Union of Artists and the Tajik State Institute of Fine Arts and Design. The symbol which has a round shape, and is surrounded by red, white and green lines symbolizing the national flag includes the words Kamal Khujandi written in Tajik and 700 is displayed in numbers.
Ministries, government agencies, institutions, organizations, executive bodies of state authorities of provinces, cities and districts, the mass media can use this symbol in the celebrations devoted to the 700th anniversary of the great Tajik poet. It is worth mentioning that at the suggestion of Tajikistan, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has declared 2020 as the 700th anniversary of Kamal Khujandi, the renowned poet and mystic.
Kamal Khujandi was born in Khujand, Tajikistan and is buried in Tabriz, Iran. / 2020-08-20
Tajikistan & France to Strengthen Relations

On August 4, 2020, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan Sirojiddin Muhriddin received the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the French Republic to the Republic of Tajikistan Mrs. Yasmine Gouedard.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan, at the meeting the parties discussed expansion of bilateral Tajik-French relations in various spheres, and also emphasized the importance of organizing the scheduled bilateral events after the stabilization of the global situation related to the pandemic.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs thanked Mrs. Gouedard for her outstanding and valuable contribution to the expansion and strengthening of friendly relations and mutually beneficial cooperation between the Republic of Tajikistan and the French Republic. /2020-08-27

Tajik Chess Team to Attend Int'l Chess Competition

Tajikistan's chess team will take part in the International Chess Olympiad.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Khovar, the tournament will be held online from August 7 to 9, 2020.

The team of the Republic of Tajikistan include Muhammadkhoja Huseinkhojaev, Mustafokhoja Huseinkhojaev, Jamshed Isoev, Alisher Karimov, Mehriddin Sharipov, Jaloliddini Ilhomi, Nadezhda Antonova, Marvorid Nasiriddinzoda, Mutriba Hotami, Ruhsiona Saidova, Sabrina Abrorova. More than 1,500 chess players from 163 countries will take part in the International Chess Olympiad. The Olympic chess team of the Republic of Tajikistan will take part in 9 games.

The International Chess Olympiad started in July and will last until the end of August 2020. /2020-08-27

Tajikistan Publishes the book "Ancient Sarazm: Old & New Penjikent"

The book Ancient Sarazm: Old & New Penjikent” was published by ‘Noshir’ publications in Tajikistan.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Khovar news agency, the book consists of 5 chapters and elaborates upon the history of old Penjikent, its heroes and great ones and as well as the thriving era of the city. Part of this book illustrates the natural landscapes and attractions of this region.

Sarzam is located on the left bank of the Zarafshan River, 15 km from Penjkent city and this year, Tajikistan will celebrate the 5500th anniversary of this historic city. /2020-09-07

As the 1st Foreign Trip after Corona Pandemic: Uzbek PM to visit Tajikistan
Uzbek Prime Minister Abdulla Aripov will arrive in Tajikistan to attend an official opening ceremony of an Uzbek-language school in the Spitamen district of the northern Sughd province.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Asiaplus, the construction this school that will accommodate 640 pupils has been financed by the Uzbek government.

An agreement on construction of this school was reached during Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev's visit to Tajikistan in March 2018. Besides, the Uzbek government has financed the construction of a hospital with a total of 200 beds in the Qubodiyon district of the Khatlon province. Tajikistan, for its part, has committed to build a school to accommodate 640 pupils in the Uzbek city of Samarkand and a preschool institution in the Rishtan district of Uzbekistan's Ferghana region. / 2020-09-08

Tajikistan Signs MoU with JICA

Tajikistan Ministry of Agriculture signed an MoU with Japan Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to provide technical assistance to farmers in Sughd, Khatlon and Badakhshan regions.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting a Fars News Agency correspondent in Dushanbe, Tajikistan Minister of Agriculture Amanullah Salimzoda met with Hideki Tanabe, Chief Representative of JICA in Tajikistan.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed ways and means of supporting farmers and helping them increase crop yields during the Corona virus epidemic. Then a MoU was signed at the headquarters of Tajikistan's Ministry of Agriculture for providing technical assistance to agriculture in Sughd, Khatlon and Badakhshan provinces.

According to the document, Tajik farmers will also be provided with quality mineral fertilizers and seeds. / 2020-09-09

A regular meeting of the joint Intergovernmental Commission of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan on Trade and Economic Cooperation is scheduled in Dushanbe on September 28-29, 2020.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting kun.uz, the Intergovernmental Commission is co-chaired by the Prime Minister of Uzbekistan Abdulla Aripov and his Tajik counterpart Kokhir Rasulzoda. It is reported that the parties will discuss the opening of borders and the resumption of flights between the two states, which closed in mid-March due to the spread of the coronavirus infection. At the meeting, the sides intend to consider issues related to building up bilateral trade, promising investment projects, expanding ties in the field of transport and communications between regions.

The issue of the volumes of electricity supplies from Tajikistan to Uzbekistan, natural gas from Uzbekistan to Tajikistan and prices for them for next year will also be agreed at the meeting. / 2020-09-14

SCO SG's Telephone Conversation with Foreign Minister of Tajikistan

SCO Secretary-General Vladimir Norov had a telephone conversation with Foreign Minister of the Republic of Tajikistan Sirojiddin Muhriddin.
The officials discussed the results of the video conference of SCO foreign ministers on 13 May. They emphasised the need for cooperation, further unity and mutual aid in the SCO in overcoming the socioeconomic consequences of the coronavirus pandemic. Mr. Muhriddin reaffirmed support for the initiatives of the SCO Secretariat on stepping up cooperation in this area, including the establishment of a coordinating council for joint efforts to counter the threats of epidemics in the SCO space and drafting an SCO concept and plan of action on food security.

*Kheradgan* Publications Releases Tajik Poet's Book in Iran

Kheradgan Publications located in Tehran has published a book by the contemporary Tajik poet Abdul Jabbar Soroush.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Tajiki Section of Seda-ye Khorasan Radio, Safar Abdullah, a Tajik scholar living in Kazakhstan and a member of the Academy of Persian Language and Literature, said this is the second poetry book by Abdul Jabbar Shah Ahmad known as 'Soroush' that is being published in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The first collection of poems by this Tajik poet titled "Tree, Dawn and the Mirror" had been published earlier in Iran.

Other books such as 'cries of the dynasty of silence', 'loneliness island', 'dew of the breath', 'cry of memories', 'the white cross' and 'hear out the reed' written by this Tajik poet have also been published in Tajikistan.

Abdul Jabbar Soroush has also published the book on the interpretation of Kamal Khujandi's poems, containing 17,000 words

According to him, it has taken him twenty years to research Kamal Khujandi's poems and publish this book.
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1800-Year-Old Mosaic on Display at Amasya Museum

A 1,800-year-old mosaic has been put on display at Amasya Museum.

According to ECI public relations quoting Anatoly news agency, a mosaic decorated with apples motifs, discovered and unearthed during excavations in 2013 conducted by the archeological team of Hitit University Black Sea Archeology Application and Research Center, is now exhibited at the city's central Museum.

The 20-square-meter medallion mosaic dating back to the Roman period, estimated to be 1800 years old, portrays the history of Amasya's apples in pictures.

Güngör Duran, the president of Amasya Tourism Association told Anatoly reporter: "Displaying this mosaic at Amasya museum will attract attentions. Moreover, the mosaic gives an idea of the history of apple as one of the main products of this province". He went on saying that the mosaic may have been located in a garden belonging to one of the landowners of apples gardens of the period. During the Byzantine period, the house had been turned into church". / 2020-06-25

"Istanbul Photo Awards 2020" Announces Winners

The jury of the 6th international "Istanbul Photo Awards 2020" has decided upon the best entries and the winners will be announced on June 30.

According to ECI public relations quoting Anadolu Agency, the jury of the 6th international "Istanbul Photo Awards 2020", organized by Anadolu Agency, have chosen the winners of the different categories of the contest. The names will be announced on June 30 and the chosen photos will be available at www.istanbulphotoawards.com.

It is worth mentioning that the winning entries have been selected from among more than 10,000 photographs submitted by artists from more than 100 countries in four categories. The deadline for submitting entries to the contest, sponsored by Turkish Airlines, was November 1, 2019 - February 15, 2020. / 2020-06-28

Restoration of Aizanoi Ancient City of Kutahya Begins

UNESCO World Heritage Site of Aizanoi ancient city located in Çavdarhisar in Kütahya province of Turkey, is being restored.

According to ECI public relations quoting Anadolu Agency, Prof. Elif Özer, the head of the excavation and restoration team, told Anadolu Agency that, with its 5,000-year-old Zeus theater, the site the site was added to the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List in 2012.

Aizanoi belongs to period of Roman Empire and due to having 20,000 people capacity Roman theater and 13,500-people capacity ancient stadium in its neighborhood, the site is dubbed as the second Ephesus. Turkish Culture and Tourism Ministry along with Rıza Güral, a businessman in Kütahya, has signed a sponsorship protocol for the restoration. "We began to work with the support of the governor of Kütahya. With the project set to last about six years, we aim to make this place available for tourists at the earliest," she added.
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Yalın Pekvar, the project architect, pointed out that natural disasters like earthquakes and landslides had damaged the ancient theater and stadium. During this time, some of the theater's stones have been removed, and we are making best efforts to accurately measure the marble blocks and limestones used and replace them with similar ones. / 2020-06-29

Int'l Migration Film Festival in Istanbul

Int'l Migration Film Festival concluded and the movie 'For Sama' directed by Waad al-Kateab and Edward Watts won the Best Full-Length Film award of the Festival.

According to ECI public relations quoting Anadolu Agency, the awarding ceremony of the Int'l Migration Film Festival was held in Istanbul during a ceremony with Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the President of Turkey, participating through video-conference. The Festival, held with the support of the President's office as well as the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, "For Sama" directed by Waad al-Kateab and Edward Watts won the Best Feature Film award.

Nuri Bilge Ceylan, the celebrated Turkish filmmaker, who chaired the 7-member jury of the Festival in Feature Films Section of this year's festival, talked about this film saying: "The Best Film Award of the International Migration Film Festival went to a documentary film. This film changes our perceptions of the developments going on in Syria".

The Most Inspiring Script award was given to 'Just Like My Son' by Italian director Costanza Quatriglio and 'Children of the Shore' by Amelia Nanni as the winner of UNICEF International Short Film. The Same Boat Best Film award went to the movie 'There' directed by Zeynep Kopru's Orada from Turkey.

Moreover, 'Oskar & Lilli' by Arash Riahi, the Iranian director and scriptwriter, was given the honorable mention award. The movie deals with the story of Chechen refugee children Oskar and Lilli who have been living in Austria for six years, and are about to be deported with their mother.

The Best Film won €15,000 while Best Short Film and Best Inspirational Script were awarded €5,000 each. The Same Boat competition's selection was awarded €1,000. / 2020-06-30

'Safe Tourism' Certification System in Turkey

The ambassador of Russia praised Turkey's efforts to ensure tourists' safety and health.

According to ECI public relations quoting TRT Persian website, Alexei Yerkhov, Russia's ambassador to Ankara, said he was impressed by Turkey's efforts to maintain the flow of foreign tourists to the country and take measures to ensure their health and safety.

He stressed that Turkey has set up a very good system for issuing 'safe tourism certificate' and is carrying out many activities to ensure the safety and health of both local and foreign tourists at its airports, hotels and tourist attractions. "I think other countries must know about such system as well", Yerkhov noted.

It is worth mentioning that the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism has recently organized a program called "Discover Anew" in Antalya province, where ambassadors and members of diplomatic mission of foreign countries in Turkey were briefed about the country's tourism services despite the fight against corona virus. Present at the event were 50 ambassadors, diplomats and a large number of foreign journalists.

Turkey is the first country in Europe to apply "safe tourism certificate" system. / 2020-07-01
Number of Turkish Libraries Reach 32,411

The Turkish Statistical Institute has announced the Libraries' Statistics for the year 2019.

According to ECI public relations quoting The Turkish Statistical Institute, during the last year, one national library, 1,182 public libraries, 610 university libraries, 30,618 libraries of educational organizations, making a total of 32,411 libraries, were opened across the country.

A total of 137,014 people are members of National libraries while public libraries have 3,955,908 members, and university libraries have 3,568,073 one.

Moreover, a total of 1,443,751 books were available at national libraries while other resources available at the libraries count to 185,527.

Compared to the year before, the number of people using national libraries increased by 12.2 percent last year to reach 711,523. / 2020-07-06

ICRO Public Relations Announced: Online Persian Language Summer Courses Begin in Istanbul

Through the efforts by Iran cultural attaché in Istanbul, online Persian language summer courses have begun.

According to ECI public relations quoting Mehr News Agency, through the efforts of Iran's cultural attaché and Saadi Foundation branch in Istanbul, the Persian Language Training Center in Istanbul has begun teaching Persian language online starting Monday, June 29, 2020.

In order to help maintain the health of Persian language students during corona virus pandemic, the Istanbul Persian Language Training Center is organizing online classes.

These courses have been planned in four introductory, intermediate and advanced levels plus a conversation course, all of which will be held online thrice a week and each session will last two hours. / 2020-07-07

Antalya Offers Isolated Tourism Facilities

For those who wish to spend their holidays in isolation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Antalya hotels have allocated special sections of their beaches for this purpose.

These hotels have made changes in their services to ensure the health and safety of the tourists who wish to spend their holidays in a healthy and safe environment due to Coronavirus.

These arrangements include cabins and booths that allow people to sunbathe while keeping social distances.

Private lodges with various designs have also been established on the beaches of hotels. / 2020-07-08

Germany Supports Normalization of Tourism with Turkey
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Foreign policy spokesmen for Germany's ruling coalition parties have supported talks to normalize tourism with Turkey.

Nils Schmid, foreign policy spokesman for the Social Democratic Party (SPD); Jürgen Hart, foreign policy spokesman for Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Christian Social Union (CSU) parliamentary groups, and Cevdet Yılmaz, deputy leader of the Justice and Development Party of Turkey, discussed the agenda at a meeting in Berlin.

Nils Schmid, a member of Social Democratic Party (SPD), expressed hoped that ECU-Turkey relations would develop during the Germany's periodic presidency over the EU and said: "We expect that with more success in fight against COVID-19, Germany would cancel travel warnings in the upcoming days".

"I think this year I will travel to Turkey," Schmid said adding: "Perhaps in the next two or three weeks, there will be changes in the travel warnings and my wish will come true".

Jürgen Hart, foreign policy spokesman for Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Christian Social Union (CSU) parliamentary groups also expressed satisfaction over the continuation of dialogue between Turkey and Germany on tourism, saying that if we find a way to reduce tourism restrictions between Germany and Turkey, hundreds of thousands Turks in Germany and also hundreds of thousands of Germans who spend their holidays in Turkey would benefit.

While wishing Germany's success during its periodic presidency of the European Union, Cevdet Yılmaz said: "I think we will witness a very significant improvement in Turkey-Germany relations during this period." / 2020-07-09

TRT to Organize Digital Platforms for 'TRT World Forum'

Aiming to find solutions to cultural, political, economic and social issues, TRT World Forum will hold online programs titled "Digital Debates" this year.

The Turkish state-run broadcaster TRT World said in a statement that TRT World Forum, which has been held since 2017 to find solutions to major global issues through inviting civil society organizations, world-renowned thinkers, politicians, regional experts and journalists from many countries will organize online debates. In the online debates, to be organized by TRT World Forum for the first time, political issues of the day and media responsibility in this regard will be discussed. These Digital Debates are accessible through TRT World Forum's Facebook, YouTube and Twitter accounts. Debate hours will also be updated in TRT World Forum social network accounts. / 2020-07-09

Number of Tourist Flights to Antalya Increases

The decline in the number of corona virus cases in Turkey has resulted in the increase of the number of foreign flights to the country's tourist areas.

Following the application of health measures and principles adopted by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey in the fight against Corona virus, the 'Tourism Capital of Turkey' has become host to thousands of tourists in recent days the way that on July 5, 2020, a number of 36 aircraft from 9 countries landed at Antalya airport. During June, only 21,044 tourists had visited Antalya while in the first week of July, the number of visiting tourists to the area increased to 27,083 from among which 10,498 were Ukrainians.

Hygiene protocols are being strictly followed since the arrival at the airport through to transfer process to the hotel, during the stay and the use of recreational and health facilities.
"Since March 2020, this is the first time that the number of international flights to Antalya has increased as compared to the number of domestic flights to the city," Olkay Atmaja, president of the Turkish Association of Professional Hotel Managers, told Anadolu Agency.

Pointing to the necessity of receiving health security certification for hotels and guests houses with 50 rooms and more, Atmaja said: "The number of tourists has increased since July 1. The first arrivals have been from Kazakhstan, Belarus and Ukraine, and the number of tourists from these countries is still increasing."

"Turkey is in a good position in terms of food preparation hygiene and observing other sanitation protocols", he continued. Atmaja went on saying: "On July 5, 36 foreign flights from 9 countries landed in the coastal city of Antalya. This is a great success for this city." / 2020-07-12

Nature's Magic in Munzur Mountains Enchant Tourists

Located at Ovacık city of Tunceli province in Turkey, Munzur Mountains mesmerize visitors with their exceptional environmental diversity and splendor.

Ovajik is located at 1500 meters above sea level and offers stunning landscape, cool waters, natural pools and tourist centers such as Munzur National Park, Munzur Springs, Creek Munzur, Mercan Valley, etc.

With its cultural, historical and natural richness, this city hosts thousands of local and foreign tourists annually. Plateaus and icy lakes formed at 3,000-meters altitude of Munzur Mountains provide breathtaking, magical landscapes for tourists who tour the area on hot summer days. Ice lakes located in the heart of the high mountains create spectacular visions and take nature lovers to the depths of a dream. / 2020-07-14

Ata Ice Museum Opens in Erzurum

In order to mark the Democracy and National Unity Day, the Ata Ice Museum has been opened in Erzurum.

The museum, constructed in the Faculty of Fine Arts building in cooperation with Atatürk University and North Eastern Anatolia Development Agency (KUDAKA), was completed after 18 months.

Ata Ice is Turkey's only ice museum. With eight ice-making machines, 16 ice mold machines and 400 square meters of exhibition space, the museum will display ice sculptures under 5 degrees Celsius throughout the year.

The Museum visitors will experience professional lighting, sound and music alongside the works exhibited. / 2020-07-20

To be Held on September 20, 2020: Vodafone Istanbul Half Marathon

The Vodafone Istanbul Half Marathon will be held on September 20th.

The Vodafone Istanbul Half Marathon, which was promoted to gold status by the World Athletics and ranked among the world's top eight, half marathons, will be held on the historic peninsula.

In order to comply with the directives of the World Health Organization's guide on group activities during
COVID-19, the race will be held in limited numbers. This marathon is held annually in 10 and 21 kilometers, and this year, it will be held taking normal preventive measures and only in 2,500 meters and 21 kilometers distances. / 2020-07-30

Tourists Increased Interest in Turkey's Ancient City of Hadrianopolis

Tourists have shown increased interest in the Ancient city of Hadrianopolis, known as the “Zeugma of the Black Sea”.

Located in the ski town of Karabuk, this ancient city is famous for its mosaics with mythological motifs and animals.

Located in Eskipazar city of Karabuk, the motifs of mythical creatures and animals depicted on the site mosaics have brought the city its reputation. Dr. Ersin Celikbas, a Faculty member of Archeology department at Karabuk University and Director of Coordination at Excavation Activities, told reporters that so far, two baths, two church structures, one defensive structure, rock tombs, an amphitheater, one arch and dome structure, monumental cultic niche, city walls and various edifices have been uncovered in 14 different parts of the entire excavation site in Hadrianopolis.

Emphasizing that a 25-member-team is carrying out excavations on the site under the management of Kastamonu Museum, Celikbas added: "Hadrianopolis is an important site for Anatolia," said Celikbash, adding: "The most important historical element belongs to the 1st century BC to the present times. The site is also important in terms of tourism. Thousands of domestic and foreign tourists visit this area and admission is free." / 2020-07-30

Findikli Resort, a Place for Tourists to Escape Corona

Located in the Turkish province of Kastamonu, Findikli Resort has attracted the attention of tourists with its special conditions to prevent the contamination of the tourists with corona virus.

With its natural attractions for photography and opportunities of camping all year round, Findikli Resort in Arac town of the Turkish Kastamonu province is being widely welcomed by the tourists.

This Resort, which has turned to be one of the tourist destinations to isolate people during the coronavirus outbreak, offers a charming beauty.

At the Resort, where lacks even a guesthouse, the Arac municipality has built power and water transmission lines to meet the requirements of the nature lovers. Moreover, the Resort is also particularly suitable for those who would like to spend their holidays in caravans or tents. Arac Mayor, Satılmuş Sarkaya, told Anadolu Agency journalist Findikli is one of the astonishingly beautiful Resorts in Turkey.

Pointing to the fact that during this pandemic, tourists’ interest in resorts have increased, Sarkaya said: "People are looking for a place to breathe. They prefer to go to secluded places instead of hotels". / 2020-07-30

City mayor announced:
1st "Toy Library" Opened in Kastamonou
The first toy library was opened in Kastamonu.

Once the library and kindergarten are completed, library members can borrow their favorite toys. Rahmi Galip Vidinlioğluthe, mayor of Kastamonou, said: "This library is composed of 1298 meters of closed space and 1342 meters of open space. The kindergarten, located within the toy library complex, will have five classrooms and a playroom, five bedrooms, a dining hall and a conference hall, and the capacity to accommodate 100 students."

While emphasizing that the toy library will have playrooms and conference halls, a toy storage and repair area and a professional personnel unit, the Mayor of Kastamonou added: "Along with playing with toys, here the children will also train their sharing abilities and their learning power will be enhanced. The toy library will also help the economy significantly because the toys that other children are tired of playing with and have put them aside will be collected in this library. Therefore, the families who cannot afford to buy toys can use these objects here". / 2020-08-06

Fantastic Turkish Bays Host Tourists

- Bademli Bay
Bademli Bay in Dikli, Izmir Province, is one of the most beautiful combinations of forest and sea which with its natural attractions as well as Garip and Kalem Islands enchants visitors.

- Büyük Boncuklu Bay
The pristine and beautiful nature of Büyük Boncuklu Bay in Fethiye city of Mugla province is another regular choice of national and foreign tourists.

- Kadırga Bay
By traveling to Kadırga Bay which is located two kilometers from the city of Assos in the province of Çanakkale, tourists can experience the pleasure of swimming in the clear and azure waters near the lush forest.

- Gideros and Ginolo Bays
Gideros Bay in Cide and Ginolu Bay in Çatalzeytin, Kastamuno Province can also be a great vacation spot in nature. / 2020-08-10

ATOR statement says:
Russia Starts selling Turkish Tours

Releasing a statement, the Association of Tour Operators in Russia (ATOR) announced that following the resumption of Russia-Turkey flights which had been suspended for almost four months due to Covid-19 pandemic, it has started selling Turkish tours.

"Following the resumption of flights, the Russian tourism companies have also started selling tours to Turkey. In this regard, the sale of Istanbul tours will begin on August 1 while Antalya tours will be sold since August 10. Turkish tours are sold at very reasonable prices", the statement added.

Russia’s Deputy Prime Minister Tatyana Golikova have also announced that on August 1, flights to Turkey will resume first to Istanbul and Ankara, and on August 10, Antalya, Dalaman and Bodrum flights will be added to the tours. It is worth mentioning that
last year around 7 million Russian tourists visited Turkey, and Turkey is at the top of the list of most popular tourist destinations for Russians. Meanwhile, the Federal Air Transport Agency announced in another statement that with the resumption of flights, both Russian and foreign airlines will continue rendering services both in the form of tariff and charter flights. / 2020-08-10

**Hagia Sophia Book & Website Launched**

Concurrent with the first Friday prayers at the Hagia Sophia Mosque in Istanbul, Turkey after 86 years, the Turkish government announced that the Hagia Sophia website has been launched and a book on its reopening as a mosque has been published.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting IQNA, the Turkish Directorate of Communications has published a book and launched a website on the reopening of the Hagia Sophia as a mosque and saying prayers therein after 86 years.

According to this Directorate, the book titled 'Hagia Sophia Mosque: The trust of Fatih Sultan Mehmed Han, common treasure of humanity' has been prepared in Turkish, English, and Arabic and was distributed among visitors attending the reopening of the Hagia Sophia Mosque. Furthermore, the website "ayasofyacami.gov.tr" has been launched in Turkish and English languages offering selected parts of the book and historical photos of Hagia Sophia Mosque.

For the past 86 years, Hagia Sophia had been serving a museum and is one of the historical monuments visited most in Turkey by national and international tourists. In 1985, the building was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List. On July 10, 2020, a Turkish court nullified a government decree issued in 1934 turning Hagia Sophia into a museum and turned it into a mosque after 86 years. This decision of the Turkish government has met with many positive and negative reactions in the world. / 2020-08-10

**Turkish Students Win Top Medals at European Physics Olympiad**

Members of TUBITAK Physics Olympiad team won 5 models at the 4th European Physics Olympiad.

The students of the physics Olympiad of the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK), won 5 medals at the 4th European Physics Olympiad. According to TUBITAK statement, the contest was held online on July 18 and hosted 250 students from 57 countries. At this edition of the contest, Turkey won 2 gold and 2 silver medals plus an honorable mention. The European Physics Olympiad is an annual contest for high school students from Europe and elsewhere. / 2020-08-11

**Murat Kekilli's 'Ey sevgili' Released**

Murat Kekilli, the famous Turkish composer and rock music artist, has composed 'Ey sevgili' by Sezai Karakoçan.

The famous artist whose style and works have been well received by his huge number of fans, has composed Sezai Karakoçan's "Ey sevgili". Composer and rock music artist Murat Kekilli's song, published 5 days ago on digital platforms under the name "Sakın Kader Deme", was listened to by thousands of people in a short time.
Kekilli said that he composed the piece about 10 years ago and added: "Despite this, we did not share the song. No tree bears fruit when is not due". Drawing attention to the fact that they preferred to go live at the same time as the opening of Hagia Sophia, the artist said: "we were working on the piece and it was over. We were just trying to make it better. Then, we heard of the reopening of Hagia Sophia and preferred to release it concurrently with the opening.” / 2020-08-12

**Similarity of Turkey’s Lake Salda to Mars**

The US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) says Lake Salda in Turkey is similar to Jezero Crater on Mars.

Following the launching of the Perseverance rover trip to Mars, NASA posted pictures of NASA Earth page on Twitter. One of these images was a view of Lake Salda from space. This post points to the geological similarities between Lake Salda in the Turkish province of Bordeaux and the crater of Mars, and in fact researchers did field work at Lake Salda to prepare for #CountdownToMars and #NASAPersevere. According to NASA Earth Twitter post, Lake Salda in Turkey has geological similarities to Jezero Crater on Mars. Researchers had conducted research on Lake Salda to prepare for the trip to Mars. / 2020-08-12

**Razgatlioglu Becomes 3rd in Superbike Championship Race**

Turkish motorcyclist and PATA Yamaha's rider, Toprak Razgatlioglu, finished third in the Superbike World Championship race held at Jerez, Spain.

After a gap that incurred due to the corona virus outbreak, the first 4.4 km race was held in the Spanish city of Jerez, and Razgatlioglu participated. Ducati Corse team's Scott Redding from Britain was the winner of the race, while Kawasaki Motors Racing's British racer Jonathan Rea came in second. / 2020-08-19

**Izmir Int'l Film Festival to be Held in September**

The Izmir International Film Festival will be held on September 22-26, 2020.

According to a statement issued by the festival's secretariat, the Izmir International Film Festival, which started in 2018, will be held this year while observing health protocols to prevent the spread of corona virus.

Within the framework of this festival, any film screened in cinema will automatically be included in the competition and thus, all movies will be screened outdoors across thirty regions of Izmir province. TV series and digital productions will also be present at this year's edition of the festival. The best works will be put on display on the festival's website for vote.

The winners of this festival will receive the Golden Artemis Award. / 2020-08-27

**World's Remarkable Attention to Turkey’s Copper Products**
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Traditionally produced copper products by the masters of the art in Kahramanmaraş city in Turkey are exported to many Middle Eastern countries, including Iran, the Balkans and the United States.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting TRT, the specific method being used by the coppersmiths of Kahramanmaraş city is very interesting and leads to the production of exquisite handicrafts produced for more than half a century.

These products of the master coppersmiths are being widely welcomed both at nationally and abroad and therefore, all types of pots, coffee makers, pitchers and trays decorated with different designs are being marketed both locally and internationally. / 2020-08-27

**Turkey’s Mobile Cinema Launched**

Turkey’s mobile cinema will screen movies in the open air starting today until the end of September.

This mobile cinema brings together audience from all ages in open-air.

Launched in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the General Directorate of Cinema of the Republic of Turkey, the Mobile Cinema aims to screen films for free for all ages ranging from 7 to 70 years, particularly children. As part of a project designed to screen films in different cities of Anatolia, the mobile cinema has been adapted to the circumstances brought about by the new coronavirus and will thus screen movies in open air from today until the end of September. / 2020-09-02

**Int'l 212 Photography Festival**

The 212 Istanbul Photography Festival will be held on October 8-18, 2020.

According ECO Cultural Institute quoting Galleryonline, the conditions of participation are as below: Each artist can submit minimum 5 and maximum 10 entries.

- Genre is free.
- All entries must be submitted in JPEG format.
- Participation fee: free.
- Prize: € 5,000
- Due to the outbreak of coronavirus, the 212 Istanbul Photography Festival has been postponed to October 8-18, 2020.
- Registration deadline: September 20, 2020. / 2020-09-03

**On the occasion of World Duchenne Awareness Day: Istanbul Bridges Turn Red**

The lighting, made at the request of the Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy Families’ Association, continued into the early hours of the morning.

The Istanbul bridges, lighted in different colors on important occasions, turned red this time on the occasion of Duchenne World Awareness Day. The lighting, requested by the Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy Families Association, continued into the early hours of the morning.

Duchenne is a type of muscular dystrophy that gradually weakens and degrades the muscle tissues of the body, eventually leading to heart muscle failure and death. / 2020-09-08
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Iran's Cultural Consulate Holds Daughters' Day Celebration in Ashgabat

Attended by Iranian and Turkmen girls, the celebration of Hazrat Masumeh (s.a.) and Daughters' Day was held at Iran Cultural Consulate in Ashgabat.

According to ECI public relations quoting the public relations of Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, Iran cultural consulate in Turkmenistan organized a ceremony on the occasion of Hazrat Masumeh (s.a.) birthday and Daughters' Day at the conference center of the consulate which was participated by Iranian and Turkmen girls.

At the event, Reza Khanian, Iran's cultural counselor in Turkmenistan, delivered a speech congratulating the Daughters' Day and said: "Today is the birthday of Hazrat Masumeh (s.a.), the esteemed sister of Imam Reza (s.a.), whom the Turkmens call Qezel Imam".

In order to honor girls, today is declared as Daughters' Day in Iran. On the other hand, in Turkmenistan we see that Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov, the president of Turkmenistan, well notes the role of women, particularly girls, in Turkmen society and in this framework, the role of Turkmen girls is becoming more important, he added. Sheida Asgharzadeh, the cultural expert of the consulate, was the next speaker who talked about the active role of girls in both Iran and Turkmenistan.

Other parts of the event included a comedy theater performance by the theater group of Iran's cultural consulate, a competition followed by awards ceremony and screening three video clips made by the consulate on the occasion about Iranian and Turkmen girls. / 2020-06-28

Persian language Summer Course Begins in Turkmenistan

The Persian language training course was opened at the Iranian Cultural Center and Saadi Foundation's branch in Ashgabat.

According to ECI public relations quoting the public relations of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, the Persian language training course began with a speech by Reza Khanian, Iran's cultural counselor in Turkmenistan.

Moreover, at this ceremony, the Persian students who had completed their training courses showed their language skills for the new students through speaking in Persian/Turkmen languages and their translation. It is worth mentioning that with the new plans made, the Persian language students of Iran Cultural Center will not only learn Persian language but will also become acquainted with Iranian music and movies. / 2020-06-29

1st Performance of "The Noble Boy" Theater Play in Ashgabat

The theater play "The Noble Boy" was staged for the first time at Magtymguly Musical and Drama Theater in Ashgabat.

According to ECI public relations quoting turkmenistan.gov.tm, the play narrates the history of Turkmen music and the services rendered by
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traditional narrators called 'Bakhshi' and portrays the efforts made by the country's artists to revive and preserve this art.

In his book 'Turkmenistan's Culture', the Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov, points out to the lofty position of music as the spiritual heritage of Turkmen people and underscores the distinctiveness of any work of art that indicates a nation's spirit and worldview.

The play has been staged taking into account the historical roots yet hoping for a brighter future for the art of the Bakhshis. / 2020-07-01

Culture & Media Activists Honored in Ashgabat

A great ceremony was organized in Ashgabat city to honor and award the activists in the fields of arts and culture.

According to ECI public relations quoting turkmenistan.gov.tm, the ceremony was held at Mizan Cultural Center in Ashgabat where a number of artists were awarded Turkmen government prizes and winners of 'Türkməniň Altyn aşyrý' (Golden Age of Turkmens) contest were announced. This year's event was held on Arts and Culture Day and Makhtum-Qoli Firaqi's Poems day, which created an emotional atmosphere in the country. The audience eagerly listened to the message of the Turkmen President, Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov, and then artists were awarded.

Elsewhere at the event, leaders of art groups, poets and writers, singers and musicians, masters of art and representatives of media took the stage to express their gratitude to Turkmenistan President for providing favorable conditions for the development of art in this country. At the end, a music performance was staged for the audience. / 2020-07-01

Turkmenistan Awards 'Honored Artist of Turkmenistan' Title to Uzbekistan Minister of Culture

Gurbanguly Berdimukhamedov, Turkmenistan President, signed a decree awarding Ozodbek Nazarbekov, Minister of Culture of Uzbekistan, the title of 'Honored Artist of Turkmenistan'.

According to ECI public relations quoting Turkmenistan the Golden Age, Ozodbek Nazarbekov was given the title due to his great merits in strengthening friendly, fraternal, good-neighbourly and partnership relations between the two countries, promoting long-term Turkmen-Uzbek cultural and humanitarian cooperation, as well as his achievements in the development of professional musical skills.

It is worth mentioning that Ozodbek Nazarbekov was appointed as Uzbekistan's minister of culture in January 2020 and is at the same the president of Yunus Rajabi Music University. / 2020-07-08

'Garahaly' Carpet Exhbitied at Turkmenbashı History Museum

An exhibition of Turkmen carpets and rugs of the Caspian Sea coastal areas was mounted at the Turkmenbashi Museum of History and Geography, Turkmenistan.
According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting turkmenportal.com, the exhibition showcased rare Turkmen carpets including 'Garahaly' carpet measuring 5 by 2 meters which has been created using unique colors such as the thick purple ink of the southern night with the emerald-shade of a stormy sea.

Color holds a special place in the beliefs of Turkmen people and represent hope and faith and a symbol of eternity. According to scholars, 'Anchor' motif used in Turkmen kilims represent kings of Parthian dynasty and the artists portray the rich national, historical memory of Turkmens within these motifs.

Part of this exhibit belongs to the works by Ataev family from Ashgabat city who have created some works on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Turkmenbashi city. / 2020-07-15

Turkmenabat City Holds Comedy Contest

Turkmenabat's Seytnazar Sadi State Musical Drama Theater hosted provincial contest of comedy.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute quoting turkmenportal.com, the staff members of culture departments of different cities and counties participated and presented comic songs, dances, pantomime, comic sketches and songs.

The winners of the competition were Ainabat Durdyeva from the culture department of the city of Karabekaul, Khalach etrap; Oguljan Yagmyrova and Agamammet Rozymammedov from the department of culture of the Sayat etrap and Farukh Zakirov from the House of Culture of Isbaz village of Deinau etrap.

It is worth mentioning that the contest was held at the initiative of the Culture Department of Lebap province. / 2020-07-19

Ashgabat to Open Modern Carpet Museum

Iran-Turkmenistan Joint Chamber of Commerce has set intentions to produce 1650 square meters of carpets and respective products annually.

According to ECI public relations quoting Iran-Turkmenistan Joint Chamber of Commerce website, the production center will be constructed by experts on the site of an old carpet factory built in the mid-20th century following the devastating 1948 earthquake in Ashgabat.

The new building shall provide all necessary conditions for 200 carpet weavers and handmade carpets will be produced in a workshop covering an area of 1000 square meters.

According to the complex manager, the carpet store will be located on the first floor with the theater, conference hall and administrative offices on the second floor. There will also be a laboratory for dyeing the raw materials and their storage.

Other modern carpet production sites will soon open in Akhal, Dash Aghuz, Mari and Lebap provinces. / 2020-07-20

Russia Makes Documentary on the life of Turkmens

The Russian TV channel 'Kultura' is making a documentary on the life of the Turkmens in Stavropol, Russia.
According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting turkmenportal.com, in order to study the life, customs and traditions of Stavropol Turkmens, the program ‘The Land of the People’ of ‘Culture’ TV channel has traveled to this region. They are supposed to make films on life in Turkmen, Blagodar and Neftikum regions.

Representative of the National Organization of Stavropol Turkmens, Is’haq Mohammadov, said that the movie contains beautiful and informative scenes. The network also has decided to make a trilogy of this documentary series. Earlier, the network had made separate films on the life of the Greeks and the Nogians in this country.

The project 'The Land of the People' will cover lives of the Russian minorities and has so far produced 22 films on the minorities of Altai, Kuban, Kamchatka, Dagestan, Buryatia and Kuril of Russia. / 2020-07-26

Turkmenistan National Carpet Museum Possesses 2000 Exquisite Carpets

Located in Ashgabat, the National Carpet Museum of Turkmenistan holds more than 2,000 types of carpets.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute, quoting turkmenportal.com, these unique carpets range from the smallest carpets to the largest one with a total area of 301 sqm. This large carpet was woven in 2001 and was registered at the Guinness Book of Records two years later.

Rare examples of handicrafts from around the world are also kept in museum collections. Moreover, the museum has a repairing unit wherein professionals attend to repairing old carpets, some of which have 1,350,000 knots per sqm. Through the experts’ efforts thousands of old carpets have been repaired in this workshop.

According to UNESCO professionals, the Turkmen carpet weaving tradition is one of the greatest achievements of the world, which has been included in UNESCO intangible heritage list and has been recognized as a symbol of Turkmen art. As a reservoir of cultural and spiritual heritage, the Turkmen Carpet Museum preserves the oldest and best examples of handicrafts of this territory. / 2020-08-06

Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov & Ashraf Ghani emphasized in a Telephone Conversation:

Development of Friendly Relations between Turkmenistan & Afghanistan

During a telephone conversation, the Presidents of Turkmenistan and Afghanistan discussed the development of bilateral cooperation.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Fars News Agency correspondent in Bishkek, Turkmenistan President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov and Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani had a telephone conversation. Beginning the conversation, the leaders of the two countries congratulated each other on the occasion of Eid al-Adha and underscored the development of friendly relations as well as unity in the Islamic world. Pointing to the fact that bilateral cooperation between Afghanistan and Turkmenistan boosts on the basis of the principles of neighborliness, friendship and equality, Ashraf Ghani highlighted Berdimuhamedov’s great role in the development of relations between the two countries. The two sides then exchanged views on global and regional issues, such as the Corona virus epidemic.

During the talks, Berdimuhamedov expressed full support of Turkmenistan government of the international community’s efforts to fight Covid-19 and stressed the need to implement coordinated measures at international level to successfully overcome this challenge. Moreover, Turkmenistan
President pointed to the key role of the new project 'Lapis Lazuli' transit and transport corridor which is being established by Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey. Launching this corridor will help increase trade between the countries of Central Asia, South Asia and Europe, and will contribute to the development of trade and economic relations between the countries of the Eurasian continent. Berdimuhamedov also reiterated that the trilateral video conference of the Presidents of Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and Afghanistan was a significant step in the implementation of this project and had positively affected the development of cooperation in this field.

Also during the conversation, issues of mutual cooperation in the fields of energy, transport and internet were discussed among which were the construction of the transnational gas pipeline of Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) and the laying of a high-voltage power line and fiber-optic communication along Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan route. In conclusion, Presidents Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov and Mohammad Ashraf Ghani once again exchanged good wishes to each other and the peoples of the two countries.

Turkmenistan, the mayor's office of the municipality of Karei and the art gallery of the castle "Károlyi".

Among the exhibits are photographs and ethnographic items from the private collection of Deputy Istvan-Janos Antal, as well as objects of the national cultural heritage of Turkmenistan from the collection of the Embassy. The opening ceremony was attended by representatives of the local community and media, scientific and cultural figures, as well as residents and guests of the Satu Mare region.

The opening ceremony was attended by: mayor of Karelia Eugen Kovacs, Deputy Istvan-Janost antal, Director of the Satu Mare Region Museum Attila Nandor Hago, adviser to the Cultural and tourist center "County of Karoi" Adrian Shtefianutz.

All speakers stressed that the organized event will make a significant contribution to strengthening and expanding cultural and humanitarian cooperation between the friendly peoples of Turkmenistan and Romania.

The exhibition will run until the beginning of September 2020.

Turkmenistan's Ethnographic Exhibition Opens in Romania

The opening of an exhibition of photographs and ethnographic objects of Turkmenistan took place in the Romanian city of Karei.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Turkmenistan.ru, the exhibition, dedicated to the celebration of the anniversary of permanent neutrality of Turkmenistan, was organized by the Embassy of Turkmenistan in Romania with the assistance of Istvan-Janost Antal - Deputy, Chairman of the Interparliamentary friendship group Romania - Turkmenistan, the mayor's office of the municipality of Karei and the art gallery of the castle "Károlyi".

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the status of permanent neutrality of Turkmenistan, the digital library of Turkmenistan president was launched.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Fars news agency correspondent in Bishkek, the digital library of Turkmenistan president has been launched. According to this report, the library has been launched on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Turkmenistan's neutrality and holds translation of Turkmenistan president's books into 20 languages.

Moreover, the website hosts online exhibition on the same occasion and displays all Turkmenistan's
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achievements in the fields of energy, transportation, commerce, education, healthcare, sports, agriculture, culture and others.

Berdimuhamedov has so far written more than 35 books.  /2020-08-23

**With the decision of the President: The Structure of the Ministry of Culture of Turkmenistan to Transform**

Proposals to improve the management system and transform the structure of the Ministry of culture and its subordinate institutions were presented to the President of Turkmenistan at a meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers.

Deputy Prime Minister G. Mushshikov said that these changes are necessary to create opportunities to improve the main financial and economic indicators and improve the efficiency of cultural institutions.

President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov approved the proposals, focusing on the need to take comprehensive measures to solve the challenges, and addressed instructions to the Deputy Prime Minister on implementing the plans with the use of advanced techniques and modern technologies, the state news Agency of Turkmenistan reports.  /2020-09-02

**Turkmen Artists Participate in CIS Countries Music Festival**

Turkmen artists participated in online music festival of CIS countries.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Turkmenportal, the festival was held in August 2020 as part of the proclamation of the city of Shymkent in Kazakhstan as the cultural capital of the CIS countries.

Concurrently, "My Kazakhstan" music Festival was held on the occasion of the 90th birth anniversary of the well-known Kazakh composer, Shamshi Kaldayakov.  / 2020-09-07

**Italy to Host Exhibition of Turkmenistan's Archaeological Artifacts**

President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov voiced a proposal to organize an exhibition in Italy with archaeological artifacts from Margiana and Ancient Parthia during a telephone conversation with Italian leader Sergio Mattarella.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting turkmenportal.com, the exhibition "Margiana - the kingdom of the Bronze Age on the territory of Turkmenistan" was already held in Germany, but the idea of organizing an exposition of artifacts of ancient Parthia has not yet been implemented in Europe. The Turkmen leader stressed that Italy and Turkmenistan have a rich historical and cultural heritage, which provides good prerequisites for deepening a fruitful dialogue, which includes regular holding of various events, as well as many years of work of Italian specialists on a number of architectural monuments of our country.

It was noted that this activity, which should be further developed consistently, is carried out within the framework of relevant bilateral agreements with the leading scientific and educational centers of Italy: the University of Bologna and the Turin Center for Archaeological Research and Excavations.  /2020-09-14
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Any Tourist that Gets Sick, Receives $3,000 in Compensation."

Uzbekistan's Measures to Promote Tourism against Corona Pandemic

The Uzbek government has announced that any foreign tourist that gets sick with Corona virus in this country will receive $ 3,000 in compensation.

According to ECI public relations quoting gazeta.uz, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, Uzbekistan's President, has issued the decree taking a significant step in ensuring the safety of foreign tourists travelling to Uzbekistan and improving facilities for them.

It is worth mentioning that in the same lines, recently Tourists Safety Foundation has been established in the country which has been assessed by Ravshan Izamov, Head of the National Chamber of Innovative Healthcare of Uzbekistan, to ensure the safety of local and foreign tourists. / 2020-06-22

Uzbekistan & Azerbaijan Discover Young Talents

Uzbekistan is participating in the project introduced by Heydar Aliyev Cultural Center of the Republic of Azerbaijan to discover young talents.

According to ECI public relations quoting kultura.uz, the International Festival "In Search of Talented Kids” will be held in Uzbekistan on July 11, 2020. The main goal of the online festival is to identify young talents, demonstrate their abilities and encourage them to gain new achievements.

Those wishing to take part in the online festival should register online. After confirming the application documents by Heydar Aliyev Cultural Center, the contestants will be permitted to participate in the festival.

Students who show their best at the festival will be awarded with honorary diplomas and gifts by Heydar Aliyev Cultural Center. / 2020-07-07

Virtual Training of Persian Language & Literature Teachers in Tashkent

In collaboration with Saadi Foundation, Allameh Tabatabai University of Tehran and Tashkent University of Oriental Studies, Iran Cultural Center in Uzbekistan held the first virtual training course for teachers of Persian language and literature.

According to ECI public relations quoting the public relations of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, Mohsen Pourmohseni, Iran cultural councilor in Uzbekistan, said: "In this course, listening, writing, reading, speaking, grammar skills and Persian language testing methods will be taught to teachers in 20 sessions. "In the last three years, this is the fourth Persian language training course for Uzbek Persian language teachers which is held by Iran Cultural Center.

The first series was held in autumn 2018 attended by 40 of professors of Tashkent University of Oriental Sciences. The second course held in the summer of the same year in Tehran and was attended by 9 people. The third training course was held for 22 days in summer 2019 with 16 participants in Tehran. Over 3,000 Persian language students study in universities and educational centers of Uzbekistan", He added. / 2020-07-12
Rustam Sagdiev's Makes 'Baron 2'

Well-known Uzbek director Rustam Sagdiev has said he will make the second part of 'Baron' by the end of the year. According to the ECI public relations quoting podrobnou.uz, the director has mentioned that the production of the second part of the movie 'Baron 2' is one of the major measures taken by the new president of Uzbekkino and further emphasized that an MoU has been signed in this regard with the Russian partners. According to the film director, the movie will pave the ground for their entry to cinema market.

It is worth mentioning that the first part of the movie 'Baron' was made by Inferno Center in Russia and featured Uzbek, Russian and Kazakh artists, as well as actors from Belarus, Turkey, Egypt and Syria. The first part of the movie was dedicated to the fight against drug trafficking, and the main roles were played by Jawaher Zakirov, Ulugbek Kadyrov, Bihzod Hamrayev, Delnaze Kobayova, Andrei Semlyakov, Pavel Prilocheny and Viktor Verzhbitsky.

'Colorless Dreams' on the Way to Int'l Festivals

Created by Uzbek director, Ayub Shahobiddinov, the movie 'Colorless Dreams' will participate at two international film festivals. According to ECI public relations quoting banya.uz, the film has been included in the main selection programs of the 16th Kazan International Muslim Film Festival and the Fresco International Film Festival in Yerevan.

In 2013, Shahobiddinov's other film 'Parizod' was screened at the special section of Kazan International Muslim Film Festival and now, another movie of this director will be displayed at international festivals. 'Colorless Dreams' will compete with the best films from Iran, Turkey, Russia, China, Canada and other countries.

Kazan International Film Festival, being held since 2005, as well as Yerevan International Film Festival will be held with the participation of spectators. / 2020-07-14

Uzbekistan Academy of Arts Holds 'Our Heritage' Exhibition

Displaying works by Andrey Krikis, a famous artist and painter, the solo exhibition 'Our Heritage' was held at Uzbekistan Academy of Arts.

Andrey Krikis was born in the Russian city of Yaroslavl to a family of archaeologists. His father moved to Tashkent and was then transferred to Samarkand. The artist's first exhibition was held in 1986 and the last in 1994.

So far, Krikis has created over 500 works which have been exhibited in Irkutsk, Kazan (Russia), Riga, Moscow, Delhi, Stockholm, Bengal, and San Francisco. Some of his works are kept at museums in the U.K., Germany, Greece, the United States, Russia, Thailand, France and Sweden.

This year marks the 70th birth anniversary of the artist and the current exhibition has been mounted aiming to familiarize the young generation with the artist's activities.
The exposition displays more than 20 works from the personal collection of the artist at the repository of the Directorate of Art Exhibitions of Uzbekistan's Academy of Arts. / 2020-07-14

**Uzbek Kino Makes Movie on Mahmoud Khwaja Behboodi**

Uzbekistan is taking final steps in filming a movie on the life and works of Mahmood Khwaja Behboodi. According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting Sputnik, the filming of Behboodi's life in prison and his final days is going on in Bukhara while other parts of the film were shot in Samarkand and Tashkent. The Uzbek National Cinema Company 'Uzbek Kino' recently began producing a documentary on the life and works of Mahmoud Khwaja Behboodi, a historical figure and the founder of Uzbek drama. The events of the film are based on historical events of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The film directors, Baqa and Ulughbek Sadeqov have said that the movie is being made on the occasion of the 145th birth anniversary of this intellectual. / 2020-07-16

**Uzbekistan Culture Minister Sings about Corona**

Ozodbek Nazarbekov, Minister of Culture of the Republic of Uzbekistan, sang the song 'Forgive Us Our Lord' for the corona days. According to ECI public relations quoting Ifilm2, Uzbek Minister of Culture Ozodbek Nazarbekov has recently sung a poem titled 'Forgive Us our Lord' for the corona pandemic days, which is very informative. The lyricist has taken a theological standpoint regarding the causes of the corona virus pandemic and considers it to be the result of forgetting God and becoming drowned in the world of materialism in some way.

The song was performed by Ozodbek Nazarbekov, an Uzbek singer who is now Uzbekistan's Minister of Culture, and has been well received by Uzbek people. / 2020-07-20

**To be Held in Autumn 2020: Uzbekistan Cultural Week in Russia**

Uzbekistan Cultural Week will be held in Russia. According to the ECO Cultural Institute, quoting uz.sputniknews.ru, the subject was raised during a meeting held between Botirjon Asadov, Uzbekistan Ambassador to Russia and Russian Deputy Minister of Culture, Ella Manilova. At the meeting, it was also decided that Uzbekistan stand will also be mounted at the exhibition of National Economic Achievements of Russia which will be visited by Uzbekistan President Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

The parties also agreed upon organizing a music program, a conference, a round table focusing on the cultural unity of the two countries, and also mounting a photo exhibition within the framework of a cultural week.

The two sides considered the measure significant in light of the 150th anniversary of the Russian Orthodox Church in Uzbekistan, which will be celebrated in 2021. The Russian Cultural Week will be held in Uzbekistan this year. / 2020-07-27
A young Uzbek director intends to make a movie on female crane operator.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute, quoting uz.sputniknews.ru, Anvar Muhammad Rahimov is a young director who went to the United States 18 years ago and graduated in directing from the New York Film Academy. At the Holy short film festival, his film won in the category "Young directors", the jury recognized his film as the best among 4,000 entries.

He has also worked with different filmmaking companies but has now decided to make a film on the life of Nargiz Arslonova, a girl who works as a tower crane operator at the Tashkent City construction site.

According to Muhammad Rahimov, this woman is a clear example of a hero of our time and her life is worthy of screening in cinemas. Tashkent Municipality will support the making of this film.

Anvar Muhammad Rahimov is set to use all his experiences to contribute to the development of his country's cinema, and the current CEO of Uzbek Kino film company is seeking to cooperate with the director. / 2020-07-29

Uzbekkino & Russia's MIR Interstate TV & Radio Company to Produce Documentary on Uzbekistan

Uzbek Kino and the Russian radio and television network 'MIR' intend to co-produce a documentary film on Uzbekistan.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute quoting uza.uz, the 50-minute film is set to be produced on the occasion of Uzbekistan's chairmanship in the CIS in 2020. To carry out this joint project, Video conferences were held with participation of the Deputy Chairman of MIR Irina Kuzminskaya, Director General of Uzbekkino National Agency Firdavs Abdukhalikov, Director of the State Unitary Enterprise "Film Studio of Documentary and Chronicle" Bakhodir Adilov, media consultant Andrey Teshayev, as well as representatives of the project's creative and technical team within the framework of preparation for the implementation of the project.

The purpose of the joint project is to demonstrate the achievements of the new, developing Uzbekistan in all spheres of life, as well as to strengthen and expand integration with CIS countries. According to the preliminary agreements, the objects of filming will be both large industrial centers and private enterprises, business entities and artisans. Main attention will be paid to significant historical moments - veterans of the Second World War, as well as eyewitnesses of Tashkent earthquake, will take part in the film.

The film will be screened at the Summit of the Commonwealth of Independent States on October 16, 2020 in Tashkent. / 2020-07-30

Abai's 'Book of Words' Published in Uzbekistan

At the initiative of Uzbekistan Writers Association and Noor Foundation in Hakiman Publishing House, 'The Book of Words' of Abai Kunanbayev, the great Kazakh poet and thinker, has been published in Uzbek language.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, quoting inform.kz, Qaderjan Niyazov, a professor at Namangan State University who has translated the book, has written in the book's introduction:
"Publishing and translating the works of authors from around the world has always been a priority for Uzbek cultural figures. Moreover, the publication of such works is of great importance for strengthening relations between nations.

In March 2018, Uzbekistan government issued an instruction, necessitating teaching and promotion of the works of the great Kazakh poet, Abai, and the current measure has been taken to comply with the same instruction. This year marks 175th anniversary of this great Kazakh scholar whose enlightening works are of great value not only to the Kazakh nation but to all the peoples of Central Asia. In the present book, Professor Niyazov has endeavored to shed light on Abai's role in the history and literature of Kazakhstan and also deliberate upon the importance of his works for modern generations.

Love, philanthropy, tolerance, and coexistence are the key themes of Abai's poems and the poet has underscored such issues throughout his poems. / 2020-08-04

Tashkent University Hosts a Pedagogical Webinar on Persian Language

Tashkent state university has hosted a pedagogical webinar on "Teaching Persian to Speakers of Other Languages" co-organized together with Allameh Tabatabai University and Sa'adi Foundation, emphasizing the continuation of Iran- Uzbekistan scientific and academic cooperation.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute, quoting the public relations of Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO), the webinar started with a speech by Ms. Gulchehre Ruskiova, Head of the University of Oriental Studies. At her remarks she said: "We are grateful for the cooperation of Iran's Cultural Attaché to Tashkent and Allameh Tabatabai University of Iran, that have held several training courses for professors and students of Oriental Studies as the pandemic context has prevented many world events to convene and forced the academic communities to build different types of connections, and such collaborations will lead to optimize Persian language teaching."

Speaking at the webinar, Mohsen Pourmohseni, Iran's Cultural Attaché to Tashkent expressed satisfaction with the growing cooperation between the scientific and educational centers and institutes of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the universities of Uzbekistan.

To continue the cooperation between the University of Oriental Studies and Allameh Tabatabai University, he suggested holding an online meeting among the heads of the two universities and Sa'adi Foundation in the near future and said: "by the end of September, pedagogical courses focusing on the educational themes of interest for the scholars of Persian Language and Iranology of Uzbekistan universities are to be held in accordance with the pandemic context."

He added: "If the online learning goes on in Uzbek universities due to outbreak of coronavirus, the administration of the department of Persian Language and Literature in the University of Oriental Studies will plan six-month educational programs to meet the academic progress requirements."

At the webinar, some 8 scholars of Persian language and Iranology at the University of Oriental Studies presented their articles on the webinar theme. / 2020-08-04

Initiative of Uzbekistan Youth against Corona

The Youth Theater of Uzbekistan has posted its play "Tartuffe" on YouTube.
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According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting nuz.uz, due to corona virus pandemic, the Youth Theater of Uzbekistan switched to online touring mode, posting on YouTube a recording of its play "Tartuffe". Nabi Abdurakhmanov, the famous Uzbek artist and director of the play, has also posted it on his personal page. In addition, the actors of the play are holding an online conference in Zoom, to which anyone can join. / 2020-08-06

Uzbekistan Deputy Prime Minister Emphasized: "Spiritual Commonalities Provide Opportunities for Development of Tehran-Tashkent Relations"

Speaking to the Vice President for Economic Affairs of I.R. Iran, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan discussed issues of mutual cooperation to mitigate the consequences of corona virus pandemic on the economies of the two countries which was widely reflected in Uzbekistan's media.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting IRNA, during the videoconference held on Saturday July 25, 2020 between Umurzakov Sardor Uktamovich, Uzbekistan's Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade, and Mohammad Nahavandian significant emphasis was placed on expanding investment cooperation. An agreement was reached on the active involvement of potential Uzbekistan and Iranian partners in industrial cooperation in such areas as agriculture, power generation, chemical and petrochemical industries.

While pointing to the Iranian experts' capabilities and experiences in the technical and engineering fields, Mohammad Nahavandian said that Tehran is ready to share its experiences with Uzbekistan in all fields. Tashkent Times newspaper of Uzbekistan also covered the videoconference and wrote: Nahavandian also pointed to the historical, cultural, and religious commonalities between Iran and Uzbekistan and said: "With the firm resolution of the two governments, Tehran-Tashkent ties are rapidly expanding which has materialized in the 40% growth of trade exchange volume between the two countries during 2019 and such development is to the benefit of both the nations and the region".

Pointing to the fact that after the meeting of the two presidents, positive and constructive developments have taken place in bilateral relations, Nahavandian added that in addition to being neighbors, Tehran and Tashkent have a rich historical, cultural and religious commonalities, and the use of such capacities will greatly contribute to the strengthening of bilateral relations and cooperation between the two countries in various fields, particularly the economic areas, to the interest of the two nations.

Moreover, Uzbekistan Daily newspaper also covered the news of such negotiation particularly during the time of COVID-19 pandemic and wrote: "Iran's Vice-President in Economic Affairs also pointed to the impact of the coronavirus outbreak on reducing the volume of economic exchanges between the two countries in recent months and stated that there are various ways to overcome the existing obstacles and compensate the shortcomings.

According to this newspaper, Nahavandian has also underscored the expertise and experiences of Iranian professionals in different technical and engineering fields saying that Tehran is ready to share its experiences with Tashkent in all fields and in this regard, supporting the close cooperation between the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the two countries and their private sector, Tehran-Tashkent relations will be developed faster.

The report also highlighted that at this videoconference, Uzbekistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade underscored that Iran is a major trade partner of his country and added: "We are determined to promote cooperation between the two countries in various fields, particularly in the field of economy and trade and devise a bright future for the development of transport sector between the two countries".
"We believe that geographical proximity and spiritual commonalities are a good opportunity that can be used to increase the level of economic relations between the two countries," he underlined. Expressing pleasure over Iranian companies' activities in Uzbekistan, Umurzakov said that Tashkent welcomes the presence of Iranian investors and technical engineering companies in the economic and development projects and is interested in the expansion of scientific and technical cooperation between the two countries.

During the meeting, the two sides agreed to start expert negotiations on renewing the preferential trade agreement in this week, and also on holding the meeting of Iran-Uzbekistan Joint Economic Committee in the second half of 2020.

The meeting has been widely covered both in the news media of Uzbekistan and the region.

Through a Film on 25,000 Captured Japanese Soldiers:
Uzbekistan-Japan to Cooperate in the Field of Cinema

The Uzbekkino national cinema agency is set to make a film on the life of the Japanese soldiers captured during the WW II who were moved to Uzbekistan.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting kultura.uz, Uzbekkino national agency has recently reviewed and approved the script of Akbar Bekturdiyev's film "Sakura Scent" dedicated to the fate of Japanese soldiers who were captured during World War II and who remained forever in Uzbekistan. Right now, the agency is working on making the film in cooperation with the Japanese embassy in Uzbekistan and the film "Sakura Scent" will be made based on historical documents.

In the autumn of 1945, by order of the Soviet government, thousands of captured Japanese soldiers were sent to remote areas of the Union, including Uzbekistan (approximately 25,000). Japanese prisoners of war at the time were actively involved in the construction of many places and structures in the city of Tashkent and the provinces. For example, they also participated in the construction of the famous Alisher Navoi State Academic Theatre in Tashkent.

It is worth mentioning that on the occasion of the victory of the Soviet Union over Germany, the Uzbek directors presented three films to the audience on August 9, 2020. One of the films titled '101' was about the life of 101 people from Uzbekistan who were captured by the fascists in the Battle of Smolensk during the WW II. They were then put into jail for two months and were later transferred to Amersfoort camp.

Samarkand to Host 2nd Forum on Human Rights

Samarkand Forum on Human Rights "Youth 2020: Global Solidarity, Sustainable Development and Human Rights" will be held on August 12-13, 2020, Uzbekistan's National Center for Human Rights reports.

The forum is held as part of the UN75 initiative to discuss the important and positive role of youth in sustainable development, preventing crises and ensuring gender equality, realizing human rights and building a culture of peace.

The main goal of Samarkand Forum is to discuss improvements on existing international and regional instruments and mechanisms for the protection and promotion of youth rights, as well as the role of youth in the implementation of the UN Sustainable
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Development Goals and the UN World Program on Human Rights Education.

During the Samarkand Forum plans has also been made to discuss the draft Convention on the Rights of Youth, which is a new document reflecting the specific rights of youth that are necessary for recognition in the modern world.

This event will become the second international forum aimed at strengthening international and regional cooperation of Uzbekistan in the field of human rights. The first forum was held on November 22-23, 2018. As a result, the Samarkand Declaration on Human Rights was adopted, approved by the General Assembly on February 6, 2019 as a document of the 73rd UN session. / 2020-09-02

To be Registered in World Heritage List: Uzbekistan Presents Seven Historical Monuments of Bukhara to UNESCO

According to a Fars News Agency correspondent in Tashkent, seven cultural monuments of Bukhara will be presented for inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Ministry of Culture of Uzbekistan, Uzbekistan National Commission for UNESCO, Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the International Institute for Central Asian Studies will prepare documents for the registration of “Silk Road: Zarafshan - Karakoram Corridor” (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan) Chor Bakr Memorial Complex and Bahoutdin Naqshbandi Architectural Complex, architectural monuments such as Vobkent Minaret and Chashma-Ayub Mausoleum as well as three ancient cities of Bukhara Province” on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

This will not only increase the number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Uzbekistan but also contribute to the promotion of tourism in the country. There are currently 829 tangible and cultural heritages in Bukhara Province under the auspices of the government which include 287 archeological works, 507 architectural works, 17 sculptures and 18 tourist attractions. / 2020-09-02

Tribute Paid to the Memory of the First President of Uzbekistan

On September 2, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev laid a wreath at the Islam Karimov Monument in Tashkent and paid tribute to the blessed memory of the First President of Uzbekistan.

In accordance with the resolution of 25 January 2017, September 2 was declared as the Day of Remembrance of the First President. Respect for the history of the country, honoring Islam Karimov's merits serves to increase the spirituality of Uzbek people, especially youth.

In his speech at the festive event dedicated to the twenty-ninth anniversary of Uzbekistan's independence, Shavkat Mirziyoyev noted that the achievement of state independence under the leadership of the First President was an event of exceptional significance that made the centuries-old dream come true.

Surahs from the Quran were recited at the Islam Karimov Scientific and Enlightenment Memorial Complex. Members of the Senate and the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis, representatives of the Presidential Administration, Cabinet of Ministers, ministries and other government agencies and the public of the capital also laid flowers at the monument.

Similar ceremonies have also taken place at Islam Karimov monuments in Samarkand and Karshi. / 2020-09-03
Uzbekistan Lifts Quarantine Restrictions: Tanzila Narbayeva's Account of Life with Corona

"The quarantine restrictions will be gradually lifted in the country", the Chairperson of Uzbekistan Senate said.

According to Fars News Agency quoting Tajiki Section of Sedaye Khorasan Radio, the Uzbek Senate Speaker, Tanzila Narbayeva, told the sixth session of the parliament: "We should encourage a healthy lifestyle among the people and lead a normal life while treating patients suffering from Corona virus. We should return to the development of the country's economy."

"We must adapt all areas to such a situation and learn to live and work in these difficult conditions", Narbayeva stressed.

The Uzbek government had recently extended the quarantine conditions in the country until August 15.

Signing a MoU of Agricultural Development: Uzbekistan to Expand Joint Cooperation with FAO

Minister of Agriculture of Uzbekistan and the FAO Subregional Coordinator for Central Asia and FAO Representative in Uzbekistan virtually signed project agreements.

According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting uzdaily, a ceremony of signing project agreements was held between the Minister of Agriculture of Uzbekistan Jamshid Khodjaev and the FAO Subregional Coordinator for Central Asia and FAO Representative in Uzbekistan, Viorel Gutsu.

The implementation of new regional projects of FAO together with Uzbek partners is aimed at increasing the sustainability and efficiency of agriculture, improving the living standards of the rural population. In particular, the signed agreements provide for the introduction of the latest technologies in the greenhouse industry, strengthening pest control, adaptation to new realities in a pandemic.

1. "Smart farming for the next generation". The project will be implemented in two countries (Vietnam and Uzbekistan) and is designed for 4 years, with a total budget of US$3.4 million. The financial partner is the government of the Republic of Korea. The overall goal is to initiate and promote smart and sustainable production, post-harvest handling and marketing of greenhouse crops. The project will provide an opportunity for specialists in the field and small landowners to master advanced production technologies, to learn high-quality and safe marketing of agricultural products. The introduction of new technologies in greenhouse gardening will increase yields and profits.

2. Project to improve locust control (Phase II). The project document has been prepared by FAO in close collaboration with six countries (Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) and the financial partner - Japan Cooperation Agency (JICA). The project is designed for five years, with a total budget of US$7.3 million. The result will be improved locust control at the national and regional levels in the Central Asian countries through the implementation of sustainable regional cooperation and effective preventive pest management strategies, as well as increased knowledge and best practices in the field.

As a reminder, the first phase of the project to improve locust control was successfully implemented by FAO and JICA in 2015-2019. in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Given the success and lessons learned, as well as the specific needs of countries in the region, it was decided to expand the support provided.
Exporting More than 11 t.: Uzbekistan Becomes World's Biggest Gold Seller

Uzbekistan sold 11.6 tonnes of gold in June 2020. According to ECO Cultural Institute quoting akipress, After Uzbekistan, Mongolia holds the second place with Russia and Germany standing third. Meanwhile, Turkey ranks first in the world in gold purchases with 19.4 tonnes.

Qatar, India, Kazakhstan and Ukraine are the next countries making the largest amount of gold purchase in the world after Turkey.

Uzbekistan plans to invest about $ 230 million in the search, evaluation and exploration of new gold reserves between 2020 and 2024. / 2020-09-09
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At the Meeting of Sarvar Bakhti with Alireza Tabesh was Emphasized:
Joint Cinema Productions in ECO Region to Increase

On Monday June 29, 2020, Sarvar Bakhti, the ECI president, met with Alireza Tabesh, director of Farabi Cinema Foundation, at the headquarters of this international organization.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, at the meeting Sarvar Bakhti emphasized on the continuation of the previous productive cooperation between the two organizations and expressed hope that the mutual collaborations resumes through fresh channels. At the meeting, the director of Farabi Cinema Foundation welcomed the idea of ECI president on defining 'fresh channels for cooperation'. He then pointed out to the corona virus pandemic and said: "The internet helps cultural activities survive and some programs such as expert panels, workshops and even festivals may be planned and organized online".

Further, the two sides agreed upon signing an MoU so that different activities such as producing film on the luminaries of ECO region, organizing virtual workshops, holing ECO Film Festival, etc. could be carried out in this framework. / 2020-07-01

ECI President Underscores in the Meeting with I.R.I. Deputy Minister of Culture:
"It Is Time to Take More Practical Steps for the Realization of Cultural Commonality"

On Wednesday July 1, 2020, Sarvar Bakhti, the ECI President, met and talked with Mohsen Javadi, Deputy I.R.I. Minister for Cultural Affairs, at the premises of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, at the meeting, which was attended by some of the representatives of ECO Cultural Institute, directors of the department of Deputy Minister for Cultural Affairs and other affiliated organizations and institutions of Ministry of Culture, different aspects of joint cooperation were reviewed and discussed.

According to the same report, at the meeting, the Deputy Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance for Cultural Affairs once again congratulated Sarvar Bakhti, one of the prominent cultural dignitaries of Tajikistan, for his appointment as ECI president and expressed hope that during his tenure, the ECO region will notice great developments in the field of culture.

Further, Sarvar Bakhti expressed gratitude to Mohsen Javadi and pointed out that during his meeting with H.E. Iranian Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, a general framework for cooperation with different deputies of the Ministry was outlined and that now it is time to take more practical steps to realize such cooperation in different fields of culture.

It is worth mentioning that at the meeting, the two sides highlighted the need for avoiding unrealistic ideas and take faster practical steps. It was also agreed that all areas of cooperation should be clarified through signing a MoU. One of the areas of cooperation discussed was the commemoration the luminaries of the ECO region, and since the year 2020 marks the 700th birth anniversary of Kamal Khujandi, the 8th century mystic and poet, the two sides emphasized that a ceremony should be organized to commemorate this celebrated mystic. / 2020-07-02

ECI Publishes the Book:
"Life & Works of Kamal Khujandi"
The ECO Cultural Institute has published the book titled "Life & Works of Kamal Khujandi" in 296 pages.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, concurrent with the 700th anniversary of the birth of Sheikh Kamal Khujandi and also in order to introduce the cultural and artistic assets of the ECO member states, the ECO Cultural Institute has transcribed and published the book "Life and Works of Kamal Khujandi".

Kamal Khujandi is the renowned poet and mystic of the 8th century who was born in Khujand and died Tabriz. "The Life and Works of Kamal Khujandi" has been written by Dr. Badruddin Maghsoudzada, with introductions by Sarvar Bakhti, the ECI President, as well as Dr. Nizamuddin Zohedi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Tajikistan to Iran. Dr. Maghsoudzoda, a scholar and professor of the National University of Tajikistan, is one of the leading Kamal Khujandi scholars who has devoted three decades of his scientific and research activities to the study of the life and works of this literary figure and has played a substantial role in better introducing Kamal.

Transcribed into Persian by Shohmansoor Shohmirzo Khojaev, Tajikistan's cultural expert at ECI, for the first time, the book has been edited and laid out by Zahra Aslani. To purchase the book, please contact Ms. Aslani, director of the Diplomatic Library of the ECO Cultural Institute.

Tel: +98-21-27673246 / 2020-07-28

ECI to Hold:
Virtual Meeting with the Active Publishers of the ECO Region

The 2nd of the series of meetings with the active publishers of the ECO region will be held ONLINE on Wednesday, July 15, 2020.

According to ECI public relations, at the second session to be inaugurated with the message of Sarvar Bakhti, the ECI president, cultural figures such as Hassan Gharibi, head of the International Relations office of Iranian Academy of Persian Language and Literature; Dr. Hajir Tehrani, vice-president of Iran-Tajikistan Friendship Association; Shahmansoor Khajaev, Tajikistan Cultural Expert at ECI; Dr. Majid Asadi, author and scholar of Tajikistan studies as well as Soheila Yousefi, director-in-charge of Kheradgan publications will deliver speeches and deliberate upon some of the works by the authors and translators of the ECO region published by Kheradgan publications.

At the online meeting, six new titles published by Kheradgan publications will be launched with the authors and translators of the books providing comprehensive information on the specific features of each book.

During these series of events, ECO Cultural Institute intends to provide proper ground for the development of the art of translation and publication of books, creation of an atmosphere for the exchange of ideas among the publishers and link ECI with other international publishers. Those interested may watch the live event at ECTs Instagram page on 'ecieco.org' at 14:00 hours. / 2020-07-13

Sarvar Bakhti & Director of Roudaki Foundation Discussed
"All Languages of the ECO Region Should be Respected"

On Tuesday July 14, 2020, Sarvar Bakhti, the ECI president, met with Seyed Mohammad Mojtaba Hosseini, Deputy Iranian Minister of Culture for Art
According to ECO Cultural Institute, during the meeting held between Sarvar Bakhti and Seyed Mohammad Mojtaba Hosseini, the two parts underlined the necessity for developing a draft MoU covering all areas of joint cooperation.

In another meeting held between the ECI president and Mahdi Afzali, the director of the Roudaki Foundation, the two sides agreed upon joint collaborations for arranging events to preserve Persian language such as the virtual performance of ECO member states' symphony, holding a puppet theater to promote the history, culture and literature of the ECO region as well as organizing cultural weeks. Elsewhere at this meeting, the ECI president also highlighted that while assisting in the promotion, training and development of the ancient Persian language, the ECO Cultural Institute respects other languages of the ECO region as well.

The meetings concluded with the visit of the ECI president and his accompanying delegation to Vahdat Hall complex, the Puppet Theater Museum and the behind-the-scenes section of puppet theaters.

/ 2020-07-16

ECI Holds:
2nd Meeting with Active Publishers of the ECO Region

The second of the series of 'Meeting with Active Publishers of the ECO Region' was held virtually on Wednesday July 15, 2020 at ECI diplomatic conference hall to introduce some of the books published by 'Kheradgan' publications and brief the audience on its activities.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, ECI held the second of the series of the meetings titled 'Meeting with Active Publishers of the ECO Region' to brief the audience on the activities of Kheradgan publications and launch six of its latest publications. Present at the meeting were intellectuals from different fields of arts, culture, literature and science and also members of diplomatic missions of Pakistan and Tajikistan, Head of International Relations department of the Academy of Persian Language and Literature, Vice-President of Iran-Tajikistan Friendship Association, a member of Delkhoda Dictionary authors board, director-in-charge of Kheradgan publications and a number of cultural and academic figures. The meeting was inaugurated with the message of Sarvar Bakhti, ECI president, which was presented to the audience by Shoh Mansoor Shohmirza, expert of Tajikistan Desk at ECI. Then the session continued with speeches delivered by Dr. Hajir Tehrani, the Vice-President of the Iran-Tajikistan Friendship Association and Hassan Gharibi, the head of the International Relations department of the Academy of Persian Language and Literature.

Then, Shoh Mansoor Shohmirza, author and expert of Tajikistan Desk at ECI, briefed the audience on 'The Book of Words' by Abai Qunanbaev and 'Gray Wolf' by Mukhtar Auezov, both pioneer Kazakh literary figures, that have been translated from Russian to Persian by Dr. Safar Abdollah, the permanent member of Academy of Persian Language and Literature. He further deliberated upon the book 'Seyhoun's Blue Dream' written by Dr. Soraya Hassan Soltan, Tajik poetess and journalist, in terms of subject matter and language as well as stylistic and literary features.

In another part of the live event streamed through ECI Instagram page, Soheila Yousefi, director-in-charge of 'Kheradgan' publications appreciated ECI for hosting the event and went on briefing the spectators on different aspects of objectives and activities of Kheradgan publications.

Finally, Dr. Majid Asadi, the author of the book 'Winner', comprehensively talked about the features of his book.
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Video clips of speeches by Dr. Mohammad Jafar Yahaghi, Dr. Safar Abdollah, Shahzadeh Samarkandi, Talib Azarakhsh, Dr. Soraya Hassan Soltan and Bahmanyar were also broadcasted at different intervals during the program. / 2020-07-19

ECI to Hold Free, Virtual Workshops on Written Heritage

The ECO Cultural Institute will hold the series of online workshops on written heritage in collaboration with Allameh Tabatabai University for the first time.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, the Institute, in cooperation with Allameh Tabatabai University, will hold a series of online training workshops on written heritage. These workshops shall deliver upon topics such as 'An Introduction to Historical Documents and Diplomats', 'Sigillography and Stamping in Historical Documents and Manuscripts', 'Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature' and 'Practical Techniques for Correcting Manuscripts' which will be taught online for free.

The inaugural of the workshops will be held on Thursday at 10:00 a.m. Tehran time and features talks by Sarvar Bakhti, the President of the ECO Cultural Institute, and Dr. Iranzadeh, dean of the Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages of Allameh Tabatabai University.

The workshops are mainly intended for the researchers of national libraries and archives, document centers, academies of science of member states, institutes of Oriental studies and others interested in the field.

Those interested may attend the workshops on the specified dates and times through the following link or scan the QR code below. / 2020-07-28

In a joint meeting with Pakistan Ambassador & CEO of Farabi Foundation was announced:
ECI President Supports Making a Film on Iqbal

On Thursday, July 30, 2020, a joint meeting was held at ECI headquarters between Sarvar Bakhti, the ECI president and H.E. Rahim Hayat Qureshi, Ambassador of Pakistan to Iran, as well as Alireza Tabesh, CEO of Farabi Cinema Foundation.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, at the meeting, the CEO of Farabi Cinema Foundation presented a comprehensive report on the process of the making of a film on Allama Iqbal in cooperation with Iran and Pakistan.

Tabesh went on to praise the character of Iqbal, a poet, philosopher and a Muslim intellectual of the ECO region, whose thoughts and ideas are still resonating throughout the world. "The professionals of the field in Iran and Pakistan are well working on the project of making Iqbal's film; however, the assistance and willingness of governments contributes to the advancement of this great project and the acceleration of its progress", he said.

In his remarks, Sarvar Bakhti, the ECI president, also expressed gratitude to the CEO of Farabi Cinema Foundation for presenting a report on the joint project of making Iqbal's film by 'two founding members of ECO Cultural Institute' and emphasized: "In line with our mission to promote the common cultural heritage of the peoples of the ECO region to the world, we will do our best to make this important cultural project happen."

Bakhti concluded his remarks expressing ECI's all-out support for the production of Iqbal's film during all stages of production.

Elsewhere at the meeting, H.E. Mr. Rahim Hayat Qureshi, the Ambassador of Pakistan, appreciated the President of the ECO Cultural Institute for his support...
and thanked Farabi Cinema Foundation for their cooperation in advancing the project. He further expressed readiness to facilitate the production of this film and said: "Pakistan and Iran governments are evidently very willing to accomplish this significant cultural project."

Iqbal Lahori's film is in pre-production stage, and Bahram Tavakoli, the Iranian director, has been assigned with the task of writing the script and directing of the film.

It is worth mentioning that supporting the production of joint movies between ECO member states is one of the main programs on the agenda of Sarvar Bakhti during this period of the administration of ECO Cultural Institute. To this end, ECI has taken several steps during the last seven months which include holding this meeting to coordinate the production of Iqbal's film, launching of the screenplay of 'Aydeniz' movie as the first joint product of all the ECO member countries and also completing the writing of the screenplay of the movie 'Shi Ni' as the first joint product of the three Persian-speaking countries (Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan). / 2020-08-02

At the Meeting of ECI President & CEO of Abbasabad Renovation Company Was Agreed: Promotion of ECO's Virtual Tourism during Corona Pandemic

On Wednesday, August 5, 2020, the President of ECO Cultural Institute, Sarvar Bakhti, visited the huge Abbasabad arts, culture and tourism complex at the invitation of Seyed Mohammad Hossein Hejazi, CEO of Abbasabad Renovation Company.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, Sarvar Bakhti, Mohammad Hossein Hejazi and several managers of Abbasabad complex, which is the international tourism hub of Tehran, visited the Water and Fire Park, Gonbad-e Mina, Norouz Park and ECO Park.

According to the same report, during a meeting held on the sidelines of the visit, the CEO of Abbasabad Renovation Company welcomed the president of ECO Cultural Institute and highlighted the capacities of the two organizations focusing on tourism. He further called for the expansion of international cooperation between the two sides.

Moreover, Hejazi made some suggestions on joint cooperation which were welcomed by Sarvar Bakhti. These suggestions included organizing arts and cultural exhibitions, holding cultural weeks of ECO member states and literature and poetry nights at the Poetry and Literature House, as well as more participation of ECO member states in ECO Park. While expressing his gratitude for the invitation of the CEO of Abbasabad Renovation Company, the ECI president reiterated that he will do his best so that the ECO countries could make maximum use of the arts, cultural and tourism capacities of such an organization that has international standards.

The meeting concluded with both sides agreeing upon the expansion of joint cooperation for the promotion of virtual tourism of the ECO countries during the Corona virus pandemic. They further announced their readiness to conclude and sign a memorandum of joint cooperation in the near future. / 2020-08-10

Message of Condolence of ECI President:
On the Demise of Gulnazar Keldi

The sad news of the demise of Gulnazar, the national poet of Tajikistan, the author of the national anthem of the Republic of Tajikistan, a member of the Union of
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Writers and holder of Rudaki State Prize, deeply saddened the cultural community of ECO member states.

In 1969, Gulnazar appeared on the scene of Tajikistan literature with a poetry book titled "Rasmi Sarbozi" ("Self-sacrifice") and with the same book, he proved to that he has fresh things to say. During the years to come, the novel poet published other books including Dastarkhon, Nardbon, Agba, Pahno, Langar, Pay Daryo, Chashmi nigin, Tabhol, To va Khoobi va Ranai and several others which were warmly welcomed by literary circles both within Tajikistan and abroad. His poems have been translated to many world languages and published in different countries. His 'Zabone Oshiqi' (the language of love) was published in Tehran a few years ago.

This 75-year-old, outstanding, eloquent poet, author of brilliant poems and the true heir of contemporary luminaries, passed away today.

I would like to express my heartfelt condolences to all the cultural community of Tajikistan and his fans. My thoughts and prayers are with his family members and relatives in their time of grief. May the deceased rest in peace.

Sarvar Bakhti
President of ECO Cultural Institute / 2020-08-18

'A Review of the Intellectual and Scholarly Legacy of Mohammad Ibn Zakariya Razi'

Within the framework of the series of events to commemorate the luminaries of the ECO region, a program titled 'A Review of the Intellectual and Scholarly Legacy of Mohammad Ibn Zakariya Razi' will be held by ECO Cultural Institute on Thursday, August 25, 2020 at 08:00 PM.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, concurrent with the commemoration of Mohammad Ibn Zakariya Razi and National Pharmacist Day, the ECO Cultural Institute will hold a program titled 'A Review of the Intellectual and Scholarly Legacy of Mohammad Ibn Zakariya Razi'.

At the online session, Dr. Seyyed Hojjat-ul-Haq Hosseini, a university professor and researcher of the history of science, as well as Dr. Ehsan Moqaddas, a prominent Razi scholar, will elaborate upon the life and works of Mohammad Ibn Zakariya Razi, one of the most influential masterminds in the history of science, wisdom and culture of the ECO region.

"The Origin of Razi's Thoughts and the Foundations of his Ideas and Philosophy", "Bibliography, Codicology and Review and Analysis of Razi's Works and Writings", "Razi's Position in Chemistry and Pharmacy Sciences" and "Razi's Role in the Traditional Iranian Medicine" are among the topics to be discussed at the session. The session will be broadcasted at 08:00 pm at the Instagram and Aparat pages, Telegram channel and the website of the ECO Cultural Institute at ecieco_org / 2020-08-27

To Be Held by ECO Cultural Institute:
'Art of Illumination' Online Training Program

ECO Cultural Institute is going to launch a series of online training workshops of the art of Illumination as one of the common arts of the ECO region.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute, the history of the art of illumination dates back to the Sassanid era. After the arrival of Islam in this region, this art became to serve the Islamic governments and was then included in the Islamic arts. During the Seljuks
rule, Qur'an and other religious books were decorated with illumination by artists with religious orientations. However, the zenith of the flourishing of the art goes back to the Timurid era. During this period, by the order of the central government, the illumination artists began doing illumination and gilding in the royal libraries and decorated copies of Qur'an as well as books of science, literature, and so on.

In general, the art of illumination includes a set of astonishingly beautiful patterns that painters and religious people used to decorate books, particularly Qur'an.

In order to promote this sacred art of the ECO region, the ECO Cultural Institute has organized free, online training workshops of illumination.

Starting on September 2, 2020, those interested may watch workshop videos every Wednesday at 07:00 PM Tehran time on the Instagram page of the ECO Cultural Institute (@ecieco_org). 2020-08-27

ECI Holds Series of Free Virtual Workshops in the field of Written Heritage

A series of online training workshops in the field of written heritage was held for the first time by the ECO Cultural Institute and Allameh Tabatabai University from July 30 to August 27, 2020.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, ECI held a series of online training workshops in cooperation with Allameh Tabatabai University in the field of written heritage. At the opening of the program held on Thursday, July 30, 2020, Sarvar Bakhit, the President of the ECO Cultural Institute; Dr. Nematollah Iranzadeh, dean of the Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages of Allameh Tabatabai University, and Dr. Mandana Tishehyar, Director of International Academic Cooperation of Allameh Tabatabai University participated.

During the free online workshops, professors such as Dr. Saeed Anwari, Dr. Abdollah Albogish and Dr. Seyed Mohammad Sadeq Ebrahimimian deliberated upon topics such as 'An Introduction to Historical Documents and Diplomats', 'Sigillography and Stamping in Historical Documents and Manuscripts', 'Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature' and 'Practical Techniques for Correcting Manuscripts'. Workshop participants included scholars and university professors from Afghanistan, Iran, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Iraq, India, Pakistan, Canada and Netherlands.

The workshops intended to add to the knowledge and skills of those interested in the field of written heritage in the region and to make optimal use of opportunities offered by cyberspace in the field of distance education. / 2020-07-28

On the occasion of the Independence Day of the two countries:

ECI Holds: 'A Review of the Intellectual and Scholarly Legacy of Mohammad Ibn Zakariya Razi'


According to ECO Cultural Institute, in this specialized meeting, Dr. Seyed Hojjat-ul-Haq Hosseini, the Scientific Advisor of UNESCO in Asia, talked about the lofty intellectual and philosophical position of Razi as well as the significance of basic sciences, particularly chemistry, for Zakaria Razi. Speaking about Razi studies conducted by European Orientalists and later intellectuals, Hosseini added: "Razi was mainly focused on empiricism. He is of the opinion that a philosopher must be an example and a
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role model for the society.” The head of the Department of Science and Technology at the General Directorate of Manuscripts and Rare Books of the National Library and Archives of Iran continued to review the sources and manuscripts of Zakaria Razi’s works and concepts such as the pillars of philosophical cosmology of Razi, the foundations of his rationalism and empiricism as well as Razi’s achievements in medicine and chemistry.

Further at the meeting, Dr. Ehsan Moghaddas, a Razi scholar and a researcher of the history of medicine, appreciated ECI for hosting the event and discussed different aspects of Razi’s life and works. He then enumerated some of Razi’s most important personality traits such as trustworthiness and philanthropy and stated that he has observed this feature in compiling his catalogue of Razi's Works. He then expressed hope that a catalogue of works of other intellectuals of the region will also be developed and published by the researchers in the future. It is worth mentioning that his series of book titled 'Razi's Works' include a collection of treatises, articles and books by Razi, which has been compiled and corrected by Dr. Moghaddas based on the surviving manuscripts of Razi's works in the fields of medicine, alchemy and philosophy. The 14-volume collection was published in 2019 by Safir Ardahal Publications in collaboration with Nilo Barg Publications.

At the end of the meeting, the catalogue of 'Razi's Works' was donated to the Diplomatic Library of the ECO Cultural Institute by Hossein Abedini, Director in Charge of Safir Ardehal Publications. / 2020-08-27

Sarvar Bakhti Sends Congratulation Messages to Ambassadors of Kyrgyzstan & Uzbekistan

On Monday, September 31, 2020, Sarvar Bakhti, the ECI President, sent separate messages of congratulation to the ambassadors of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in Tehran on the occasion of the national day of their countries.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, in the note to the Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic, H.E. Mr. Avazbek I. Abdurazakov, the ECI President congratulated H.E. Ambassador on the occasion of Kyrgyzstan's Independence Day on August 31st. In another note, the president of the ECO Cultural Institute also congratulated H.E. Mr. Bakhodir Abdullahev, the Ambassador of Uzbekistan to the Islamic Republic of Iran, on the occasion of the anniversary of his country's independence on September 1. / 2020-09-02

In the meeting between Ghodratollah Norouzi & Sarvar Bakhti was emphasized:
Isfahan Municipality to Support ECO Cultural Programs

On the last day of his three-day trip to Isfahan province of Iran, Sarvar Bakhti, the ECI President, met with the Mayor of Isfahan, Dr. Ghodratollah Norouzi.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, while welcoming the ECI president, Isfahan's mayor expressed his support for organizing joint cultural programs with this international organization.

Further at the meeting, he pointed to the initiative of Isfahan Municipality in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in holding a video conference of the mayors of ECO member states and added: "Necessary measures are being taken to organize the meeting for the exchange of experiences in the fight against the corona crisis."

Isfahan's Mayor also suggested to hold cultural weeks of ECO member countries in cooperation with Isfahan Municipality at its headquarters and said: "Isfahan International Conference Hall can host various meetings of high-level officials of ECO
countries and the ECO Cultural Institute can plan for programs to be carried out at this center”.

According to the same report, at this meeting, Sarvar Bakhti, the president of the ECO Cultural Institute, expressed his earnest willingness to revive the ECI branch office in Isfahan and said: The Institute has an idea called "ECO Art" on its agenda aiming to declare a city as the 'handicrafts capital of the ECO region' and thus carry out activities in this regard.

He continued his remarks saying: "At first, Tehran, as the headquarters of the ECO Cultural Institute, was being considered for this title but now that I have traveled to Isfahan, taking into account the number of craftsmen of in this city and the two global brands of Isfahan in the field of handicrafts, including a UNESCO Creative City of handicrafts and folk arts, the nomination needs to be changed to Isfahan as the 'Handicrafts Capital of ECO Region'. Therefore, we will consider this change in our agenda”.

Concluding his remarks, the president of the ECO Cultural Institute expressed his gratitude for the warm welcome of Isfahan officials and artists and hoped that in the near future, a large number of tourists from ECO member countries could see Isfahan. It is worth mentioning that holding the joint video conference of the mayors of ECO member states, initiated by Isfahan Municipality, expanding cooperation in the field of cultural and health tourism as well as holding the event "Borderless Norouz" to be hosted by Isfahan and to be attended by the ambassadors of ECO countries residing in Iran were other proposals raised at this meeting which will be examined by the professionals of the fields for implementation. / 2020-09-03

ECI President's Visit to Isfahan:
A New Chapter in ECO Region-Islfahan Tourism Cooperation

'Isfahan is brimming with potential to become the tourist capital of the ECO region, and it could be exploited as an opportunity to develop cultural relations in this region which is the cradle of an ancient civilization.' said the ECI President on Wednesday, August 26, 2020, addressing the officials and tourism and handicrafts workers of Isfahan province.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute, quoting IRNA, during the meeting, held in the Chehel Sotoun Garden Museum, Sarvar Bakhti added: 'Isfahan is one of the most spectacular cities in the world with high potentials and many tourist attractions, which leaves a lasting memory with the visitors of the city.

He also proposed that arts and crafts exhibitions and supply stores of the ten ECO member countries could be launched in Isfahan, and said: 'This would be an opportunity for more cultural interactions between ECO countries and increase their income, especially in the private sector.'

Noting that Tajikistan is fully prepared to establish tourism ties and joint activities with Isfahan for further encouragement of the other ECO countries, Bakhti declared: "Isfahan enjoys tremendous potential in the field of health tourism, which can be used to develop the industry in Interaction with the ECO member countries.'

Adding that the people of Tajikistan are very interested in traveling to the city of Isfahan, he said: "Tajiks consider themselves part of this culture and if facilities were available, they could have many trips to Iran and Isfahan."

Stating that Iranian hospitals are well-known in countries such as Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, he said: "If we take strong steps in joint cooperation [in this regard], it will be beneficial to all ECO member countries.”

Bakhti further elaborated that the first step in establishing such cooperation is to dispatch a delegation from Isfahan's tourism, handicrafts and investment sector to Tajikistan and the cities of Dushanbe and Khujand to identify areas of joint cooperation.

Noting that the outbreak of Corona has affected the tourism industry in all countries, he said: "Tajikistan and other ECO member states are working to attract
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tourists to their countries by observing health protocols," he said.

Director General, Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism of Isfahan Province, highlighted the common history, cultural and religious background of the people of the ECO member countries and said: "Despite these considerable potentials, such commonalities are not well recognized stressing that the relations between the cultural authorities of these countries are not as it deserves to be, Fereydoun Allah Yari, added: 'ECO member countries were located in a large civilization area and have many common historical attractions; cities like Isfahan, Bukhara, Samarkand and Herat have left historical memories, but these opportunities and potentials have remained untapped.' He pointed out that Isfahan's tourism is largely based on the city's cultural attractions and the 10 countries with the most travelers to Isfahan are European, however, in recent years Iraq and China have been added to them, most of tourists are interested in history and culture and some in the scenery of the city.

Speaking of the steps taken in the past three years to develop tourism ties with the East and Central Asian countries, Allah Yari said: "To develop tourism ties among ECO member countries, it is essential to establish committees on investment, tourism, handicrafts and arts and the relevant mandates to be determined.

Seyed Hassan Ghazi Asgar, Deputy Governor of Isfahan for Coordination of Economic Affairs, announced Isfahan's readiness to develop tourism ties with the ECO member countries and stressed that: "The related committees need to be formed by November this year to pursue issues such as sisterhood with historic cities and the establishment of a permanent handicraft exhibition.'

It is worth mentioning that the two-day visit of the ECI President to Isfahan, which was warmly welcomed by the officials and artists of this historic city, has raised hope for the realization of a new chapter in comprehensive tourism cooperation between Isfahan and the ECO member countries. / 2020-09-03

Signing an MoU by Sarvar Bakhti & Ebadreza Eslami:
New Chapter of ECI & Niavaran Cultural Center Collaborations Begins

In order to facilitate, strengthen and expand arts and cultural and interactions between the two organizations, a new chapter of cooperation between the ECO Cultural Institute and Niavaran Cultural Center commenced on Wednesday, September 2, 2020 with the signing of an MoU by Sarvar Bakhti and Ebadreza Eslami Kolai at the headquarters of this international organization.

According to the ECO Cultural Institute, in his speech on the sidelines of the signing of this MoU, Sarvar Bakhti referred to the effective role of major arts and cultural centers of ECO member states in planning and organizing arts and cultural events at this international organization and said: "It is my pleasure that during my tenure at the ECO Cultural Institute, the first MoU of cooperation was signed with Niavaran Cultural Center which could pave the way for establishing extensive interactions among the artists of this ancient region".

Continuing his remarks, the president of the ECO Cultural Institute also stressed: "Our joint activities can contribute greatly to the stabilization of various arts and cultural activities among the ECO member states in the future."

Further at the meeting, Ebadreza Eslami Kolaei also emphasized that the Niavaran Cultural Center intends to organize events in the fields of arts, culture and history during the new chapter of its activities to be participated by the prominent artists of the ECO region and thus play a substantial role in cultural interactions of the ancient region. "I hope that such MoUs will result in the better promotion of the prominent contemporary figures of the ECO member.
countries in the fields of arts and culture across world”, he added.

It is worth mentioning that in addition to the president of the ECO Cultural Institute and the director of the Niavaran Cultural Center, Dr. Hassan Dolatabadi, a celebrated author and director of performing arts, was also present at the meeting.

Organizing webinars, conferences and joint arts and cultural meetings to be attended by arts and cultural figures, collaboration in holding educational workshops to be attended by the outstanding professors and teachers, carrying out joint arts and cultural weeks in Niavaran Cultural Center and also in the member states of ECO Cultural Institute, cooperation in the implementation of joint arts and cultural activities in the areas of literature, poetry, music, drama, visual arts, film as well as traditional handicrafts using the existing capacities to promote the cultural commonalities of the ECO countries were among the issues agreed upon for joint cooperation between ECO Cultural Institute and Niavaran Cultural Center. 2020-09-07

Through a Message Sent to the Embassy of this Country:
Sarvar Bakhti's Congratulation on the Occasion of Tajikistan Independence Day

Sarvar Bakhti, the President of the ECO Cultural Institute, issued a message congratulating September 9th as the anniversary of Tajikistan's independence.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, in this message, Sarvar Bakhti addressed Dr. Nizamuddin Zohedi, Ambassador of Tajikistan to Iran, congratulating him on the occasion of the anniversary of Tajikistan’s independence, wishing the peoples of the region particularly the great nation of Tajikistan, health and prosperity. 2020-09-09

Signing an MoU of Joint Cooperation:
A New Page in the Cooperation of ECI-Shahid Beheshti University Opened

On Tuesday, September 8, 2020, the ECO Cultural Institute and Shahid Beheshti University signed an MoU, opening a new chapter in their cultural and scientific collaborations. According to ECO Cultural Institute, at the signing ceremony attended by Sarvar Bakhti, the ECI president, and Dr. Nasiri Gheydari, the chancellor of Shahid Beheshti University, cooperation of ECO member states with Shahid Beheshti University for the promotion of cultural commonalities as well as carrying out scientific and scholarly exchanges were emphasized.

It is worth mentioning that present at the signing ceremony of the aforesaid MoU were heads of the two cultural and scientific organizations as well as a number of university professors and experts of international affairs. 2020-09-10

Underlined at the Virtual Event:
Sarvar Bakhti: "Abu Rayhan's Life, A Symbol of the Unity of ECO Countries"

Concurrent with the National Day of Commemoration of Abu Rayhan Biruni, the ECO Cultural Institute held a virtual meeting to recognize the heritage of Abu Rayhan Biruni's intellectual and scholarly legacy.
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At the virtual event held on Thursday, September 3, 2020, Sarvar Bakhti talked about Abu Rayhan's lasting works and his lofty position across the ECO region and said: "Numerous encyclopedic and academic articles have been written on Biruni and about him. Examination of these scholarly papers indicate that the influential personality of this renowned scholar and polymath has developed based on professional ethics and scientific methodology. While highlighting that the intellectuals of the ECO region play a special role in reflecting the common cultural identity of the ECO countries, the ECI president continued: "Biruni's most outstanding personality trait in the fields of science and culture is that he has lived in Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Iran and Afghanistan and in each of these countries of the ECO region, he has conducted research works. Today, Abu Rayhan Biruni is the center of convergence and increasing unity of the countries of ECO region.

The next speaker was Dr. Seyyed Hojjat ul-Haq Hosseini, a researcher and university professor, who talked about the style and characteristics of Biruni's language and discourse through elaborating upon his biography. Hosseini further said that specific features of Biruni's works such as their simplicity, conciseness and load of Persian words as compared to Arabic ones are the impressions of Pahlavi style and stated: "Using short phrases is one of the prominent features of the style of Biruni's works, the best example of which is the book 'Al-Tafhim'. Moreover, ‘Asar al-Baqiyya’ in the chronology of nations is a clear example of this.

Dr. Hosseini went on introducing scientists such as Jalal Homayi, Abolghasem Ghorbani, Parviz Azkaei, Ramzi Wright and Obaidullah Karimov, and other Biruni scholars and stated: "Biruni is the first person to provide a complete methodology for research in humanities and has presented it with a rational and analytical attitude.

Among Biruni's innovations in astronomy, astrology, depiction of the geometric shapes of flowers, building world globe stand, translation of works from Arabic into Sanskrit; calculation of comparative calendar and review of timing methods; anthropology and Biruni's sociology were among other concepts discussed in this specialized meeting. / 2020-09-03

ECI Publishes:
Issue 24 of ECO Heritage Journal:
Traditional Foods of the ECO Region

The 24th issue of the English-language quarterly magazine ‘ECO Heritage’ on the theme of traditional foods of the ECO Region was published by the ECO Cultural Institute.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, in this 86-page issue published in full colors, information has been provided on the traditional foods and drinks of ECO member countries, including Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. This issue of the magazine has been published under the supervision of Sarvar Bakhti, the president of the ECO Cultural Institute; Chief editor, Dr. Said Reza Huseini; executive manager, Parisa Firouzkouhi; internal affairs manager, Mohammad Mahmoudi and the graphic design of Ahmad Reza Nasrollahi.

The magazine also intends to introduce prominent cultural and artistic figures of the region in connection with the subject of the magazine in the new period of its publication.

The upcoming issues of the magazine will cover topics such as ancient petroglyphs, national / local celebrations and ceremonies, national costumes, and Nowruz in the ECO region. Those interested to present their English language articles on the aforementioned subjects for publication in this magazine, may enquire the terms and conditions through sending an email to info@ecieco.org. / 2020-09-11
Sarvar Bakhti at the Virtual Inaugural of Iranian Gilding Exhibition: 'The Art of Gilding Will Shine Forever'

At the virtual opening of the online exhibition of Iranian Gilding held on Saturday, September 12, 2020 and hosted by the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO in cooperation with the ECO Cultural Institute, Sarvar Bakhti, the ECI President, underscored: "I am sure that these activities will keep the art of gilding alive".

According to ECO Cultural Institute, at the beginning of this virtual event, Sarvar Bakhti, the president of this international organization, said: "The art of gilding is one of the subtle yet principal types of arts. Today, in many countries of the region, this art is facing ups and downs but the hard-working artists of the region are trying their best to keep it alive."

Having elaborated upon the nature and significance of this type of art, Bakhti continued his remarks saying: "ECO Cultural Institute in collaboration with Iranian National Commission to UNESCO is mounting the first virtual exhibition of this art, showcasing 27 exquisite artworks. I hope that this sets a new path for launching a new series of measures to promote other types of arts. I would like to express my gratitude to the esteemed masters of the art and Iranian National Commission to UNESCO, particularly its Secretary General, for their support and assistance aimed towards keeping the art alive. So far, we have organized several other substantial programs in collaboration with UNESCO and today, with the outbreak of Corona virus unfortunately prohibiting physical gatherings, we are organizing our programs in the cyberspace; one of which is the series of virtual exhibitions."

Next speakers of the opening were Hojatollah Ayoubi, Secretary General of the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO, and Mohammad Nabati, Master gilder and painter, who talked about Tajikistan and the Nowruz region, as well as the importance of the art of gilding.

Those interested may visit the virtual exhibition at https://gallery.irunesco.org. /2020-09-17

At the Meeting of Joint Cooperation was Approved: 'Cultural Tourism' on Isfahan-ECI Agenda

On Monday, September 14, 2020, the first meeting of the High Council for Joint Cooperation of ECI and Isfahan was held at the headquarters of ECO Cultural Institute.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, present at the meeting were Sarvar Bakhti, President of this international organization; Dr. Seyed Komail Tayebi, President of ECO Science Foundation; Seyed Hossein Ghazi Asgar, Deputy Governor of Isfahan for Coordination of Economic Affairs; Alireza Salarian, Representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs In Isfahan; Dr. Farahnaz Rafieh, President of Iran National Carpet Center; Ziaei, Chairman of the Joint ECI-Isfahan Committee for Tourism Cooperation; Iman Hojjati, Director of International Affairs of Isfahan Municipality; Representative of the Chairman of the Tourism Commission in Isfahan Chamber of Commerce and Heydar Sadeghi, Deputy to the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts & Tourism Organization.

During his speech at the meeting, Sarvar Bakhti, the President of this international organization, welcomed the members of the Council and elaborated upon the policies devised to develop cultural tourism among ECO member states during the incumbent tenure at the ECO Cultural Institute, and said: "As the first practical step in this respect, the next issue of the international magazine 'ECO Heritage' will be dedicated to the promotion of all tourism facilities in
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Isfahan”. Then Ghazi Asgar, Deputy Governor of Isfahan for Coordination of Economic Affairs, appreciated the initiative taken by Sarvar Bakhti for the development of cultural tourism among the ECO member countries, and underlined: “As a symbol of Iran's tourism, Isfahan is ready to fully cooperate with ECI in the framework of the Institute's tourism policies”.

In another part of the program, Tayebi, the president of the ECO Science Foundation, made some remarks expressing his support over ECI's plans and program for the development of cultural tourism among the member states. He then added: "The ECO Science Foundation is also ready for cooperation with ECI to promote scientific and academic tourism".

The next speaker of the meeting was Mr. Salarian, the Representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Isfahan, who appreciated Sarvar Bakhti's efforts for the expansion of activities in the framework of public diplomacy in ECO region and emphasized: "The Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs supports ECI's measures for the development of friendly interactions among the nations of the region based on cultural commonalities.” Dr. Farahnaz Rafesh, Head of Iran National Carpet Center, also spoke at the meeting on the necessity of devising some plans and programs focusing on carpet-related activities among ECO member countries and added: "Mr. Sarvar Bakhti's initiative for the development of cultural tourism is very promising." She went on saying that Iran National Carpet Center is ready to conduct joint programs with ECI.

It is worth mentioning that Mohammad Mahmoudi, the Media Advisor to the President of ECO Cultural Institute and the secretary of the meeting, and Dr. Ziaei, the Chairman of the Joint ECI-Isfahan Committee, presented comprehensive reports on the status of ongoing affairs and future plans which was followed by the unanimous approval of some practical measures.

Besides governmental authorities and state officials, present at the meeting were representatives of the private sector including heads of Isfahan hotels and handicrafts unions, travel agencies and service sectors as well as the founders of Isfahan Healthcare City and beauty tourism section. / 2020-09-17

Focusing on Persian Poetry & Cultural Tourism: Sarvar Bakhti's Sincere Conversation with Afshin A'laa

On September 15, 2020, Sarvar Bakhti, the President of the ECO Cultural Institute, met with Afshin A'laa, an outstanding Iranian poet and author.

According to ECO Cultural Institute, at the meeting held in a very cordial atmosphere, Afshin A'laa called Tajikistan 'his second home' and cherished the presence of Sarvar Bakhti as the president of the ECO Cultural Institute.

While appreciating Afshin A'laa's love towards Tajikistan, Sarvar Bakhti elaborate upon the interest of all nations of the ECO region in Persian poetry and literature and stated: "Literature is the historical bond of all the nations of the region". Elsewhere at the meeting, Afshin A'laa also welcomed ECI's plans and projects devised to expand cultural tourism among ECO member countries under the supervision of Mr. Sarvar Bakhti, and reiterated: "As a representative of the Deputy Minister for Tourism Affairs of Iran's Free Zones Organization, I support the expansion of cooperation among ECO countries to realize the concept of cultural tourism".

Further, the ECI president pointed to the significance of culture and tourism from the standpoint of promoting ‘cultural tourism' and added: "The role of prominent artists such as Mr. Afshin A'laa in tourism management can facilitate the development of cultural tourism in the Islamic Republic of Iran".

Elsewhere at the meeting, Afshin A'laa also welcomed ECI's plans and projects devised to expand cultural tourism among ECO member countries under the supervision of Mr. Sarvar Bakhti, and reiterated: "As a representative of the Deputy Minister for Tourism Affairs of Iran's Free Zones Organization, I support the expansion of cooperation among ECO countries to realize the concept of cultural tourism".

It is worth mentioning that in response to a question posed by the media advisor to ECI president on the reasons why the ECO countries, particularly the Persian-speaking ones, do not travel to one another countries, Afshin A'laa stated: "I am sure that if connections are established and information is
disseminated properly, the tourists from ECO member states, particularly the Persian-speaking ones, will definitely prefer to visit Iran’s tourist attractions rather than other places." / 2020-09-17

**Participated by Poets from Four Countries:**

ECI Holds Int'l Meeting 'Shahriyar in the Horizon of Literature & Poetry of ECO Region'

On Thursday, September 17, concurrent with the National Day of Persian Literature and Poetry and Seyyed Mohammad Hossein Shahriyar's commemoration, ECO Cultural Institute organized an international meeting titled "Shahriyar in the Horizon of Literature and Poetry of ECO Region".

According to ECO Cultural Institute, at the virtual meeting held at 20:00 PM, Sarvar Bakhti, the president of ECO Cultural Institute, termed Shahriyar one of the pioneers of Iran's literature and went on saying: "Shahriyar's works, particularly his odes and divans, have been translated and published in ECO countries many times. Those interested, read these works with love and passion while some musicians have composed pieces of music from his most passionate poems".

Bakhti further congratulated all the enthusiasts of literature and poetry around the world on this day, and said: "The literature and language of this territory is known from the east to the west and such fame has been an honor for it's people. All of the words of the celebrated personalities of the region reflect wisdom and common sense, benevolence, harmlessness, self-interest and caring for others' interest, prosperity, trust in a brighter future, good neighborliness and peaceful coexistence. These works have also left a positive, lasting effect on the culture of other regions."

The next speaker of the event was Askar Hakim, a celebrated poet of Tajikistan, who congratulated all world's Persian speakers on the occasion of the Persian language Day and stated: "Persian language holds a very lofty position in the spread and thriving of human culture; Therefore, it is dear to all the peoples of the world."

Further, Afshin Alaa, a well-known Iranian poet and author, called selecting Shahriyar's Day as the National Day of Poetry and Literature 'a good choice' and added: "I had the privilege to see the late Ms. Simin Behbahani, the lady of contemporary poetry and lyric, who considered the poem I had composed in mourning for my mother as similar to Master Shahriyar's poem 'Oh my mother'. Poetry is the great bond of all the poets of the ECO region, and the teachings of our great poets in each era convey messages." He then expressed hope that the sacred fire and the blazing flame of poetry would be kept burning through the unity of the poets of the ECO Region.

Seyed Ahmad Hosseini, known by his pen name 'Shahriyar', and one of the famous poets of Pakistan and lady Mahtaab Saahel, the renowned poetess of Afghanistan, also read poems at the program. / 2020-09-18
On the Occasion of September 4, 2020 & Dedication of Honouary Na’Dast Baqiqizadeh Prominent Persian-Speaking Poet of the ECO Region

Honorary Na’Dast Baqiqizadeh, a celebrated poet of ECO Region, was born in 1900 in Kabul. His father, Ghanam Damir Najafy, and his mother, Aideh Khadija Frak, played an important role in shaping of Lady Honorary’s artistic life and discovering her aptitude and inclinations to compose poetry.

Lady Honorary spent her school years in Kabul, Ganduz and Bamiyan. In 1922, she received her BA degree in administration and diplomacy from the Faculty of Law and Political Sciences of Kabul University and won her PhD dissertation titled “Genre of Persian Poetry since the Beginning to the Present Time” at the Faculty of Literature at Kabul University in the Herat capital.

After graduating, Dr. Honorary was employed by the Art and Literature Department of Afghanistan Radio and Television, where she wrote and produced programs such as ‘Goman-e Khatam’, ‘Gonadjak-e Sber’, ‘Zemindar-khane Siah’ and ‘Aideh Khadija Frak’. In 1952 and at the request of the Afghanistan’s Minister of Culture, she joined the newly established Young Authors Association as an instructor.

Mushana Abdul Haq
Architect of Pakistani Bengali Art, Author & Historian

Mushana Abdul Haq, the founder of Urdu Language and Literature, was born in 1878 in the Indian city of Hapur. He received his BA degree from Aligarh Muslim University at the age of 24. After graduation, he went to Hyderabad Deccan where he served as a translator for 12 years. Then he worked as a school teacher in Amraoti, Malwa, and afterwards he served at the Society for Development of Urdu in New Delhi. In 1912, he was elected chairman of the Society for Development of Urdu which totally changed the course of his life.

In fact, the Society for Development of Urdu and Abdul Haq are two names in one spirit. Prior to Abdul Haq’s appointment, the Society had not made any significant contributions. However, with Abdul Haq’s sincere and hard efforts, the Society turned into a great scientific center of the country in a short period of time and promoted it on a large scale in a way that humanitarian, authors, and intellectuals of the nation, such as Mushana Abdul Kahlan Azad, Muhammad Iqbal, Abdul Halim Sherr, and M. T. Bahadur drawer were contributed to the realization of its programs. Thus, the administrative affairs of the Society were regulated and he was able to publish magazines such as ‘Uchara’, ‘Sciences’, ‘Hasmat-e-Bahar’ as well as scientific, literary and historical books.

Today, Urdu language is indebted to Abdul Haq more than anyone. He was an accomplished linguist, a gifted author, an expert querist, a skilled historian, and a diligent researcher.

On the occasion of August 18, death Anniversary of Kamal-ol-Molk:
Picasso of Modern Painting in Iran

Mohammad Ghaffari, nicknamed Kamal-ol-Molk, one of the most famous and influential artists of the contemporary art history of Iran, was born in 1847 in a well-known family of artists in the city of Kashan. Mohammad’s gentle spirit and temperament along with the encouragement he received from his parents led him to practice painting. Art, and particularly painting, was of great significance to his family.

Upon completion of his primary education in Kashan, Mohammad Ghaffari moved to Tehran where he registered in Dar al-Funun School to further his studies. After three years in Dar al-Funun, when Nasir al-Din Shah visited this school, the king observed a piece of Mohammad Ghaffari’s painting at Emaar at Saatbarch which impressed him a lot. Thus, the king invited Mohammad to the court giving him the title ‘Naghib Bahar’ followed by ‘Kamal-ol-Molk’ (Mast of Perfection). During his time at the court, Kamal-ol-Molk painted 179 paintings, the most well-known of which is the ‘Hall of Mirrors’.

In 1857, Kamal-ol-Molk went to Europe to study and continue his academic endeavors in French language and painting. His trip to Europe inspired both his style and artistic vision. In 1902, he returned to Iran and continued working at the court.

Arzoozeh, Sage of the Milatnouns

Known as Arzoozeh al-Bozorg, Abu Ali Husein bin Asiah was born in 599 AH in Damascus and died in 620 in Hamadan. He was a physician, mathematician, astronomer, poet, philosopher, astronomy writer and one of the most renowned and influential world scientists. Arzoozeh was born in literature, jurisprudence and arithmetic from his father: logic, geometry and astronomy from Abu Abdullah Nahl, and afterwards, and used certain sciences, metaphysics and medicine.

Due to his genius and strong memory, he became proficient in various sciences at the beginning of his youth age. His dexterity was in the extent that the king of Meshkistan asked him to examine his sickness. He then found a way to the gene library of the Hamadan court where he studied different sciences, including philosophy, logic and mathematics.

He spent the best years of his life in Meshkistan, with the support of Abu al-Darda Bedri, with the help of his library, jurisprudence, philosophy, mystic, mathematical, natural, medical and musical knowledge. Two comprehensive scientific and philosophical encyclopedias named ‘The Book of Healing’ and the ‘Encyclopedia of All’ were also written by him. ‘The Book of Medicine’ (Al-Qown-e-Funun) are among his most well-known works which have been reviewed by great scholars such as Imam Tabik Faraz and Fereydoon Nada al-Din Fesal.

History & culture of marriage

On the Occasion of June 22:
National Marriage Day

Family is the initial center of the nation’s growth and civilization, the primary core of the society and one of the main factors in the transmission of customs, thoughts, ethos, traditions and values to the next generation. Family is considered as the principal and pivotal foundation of any society and the core for other social systems. Even the political rules, politicians, and innovative and capable administrators have been rated up in the warm arms of those parents within the family. Marriage is the prerequisite for the formation of a family, and due to the fundamental role of the family in the social and cultural dimensions, ensuring a successful family is of paramount significance.

During the 1st meeting with the Active Publishers of the ECO Region, the ECO Cultural Institute presented a book entitled “Marriage Customs & Rituals of the World” written by Kervan Parkhaver and published by Arsene Publishers. The third volume of the 36-page encyclopedia contains all the customs and rituals of marriage and weddings, including games, songs, beliefs and traditional plays, in some ECO member states such as Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.