

Fajr Music Festival Honors Veteran Iranian Musicians



TEHRAN -- The 39th Fajr International Music Festival (FIMF) has come to an end, awarding winners in different categories.

The closing ceremony honored three Iranian veteran musicians at Vahdat Hall, iFilm reported.

The honorees were Kamancheh virtuoso and composer Darvish Reza Monazami, master of violin, santur and composer Fazlollah Tavakol, and composer and conductor Homayoun Rahimian.

More than 70 works, including pop, folk, traditional, and international music,

were performed at seven venues in Tehran, and other provinces.

Musicians and bands from the Netherlands, Germany, India, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and Uzbekistan performed during the festival.

Organized by the Music Office of the Deputy for Artistic Affairs of Iran's Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, the 39th FIMF was held on February 12-17.

The festival encompassed different sections, including the competitive (Barbad Award), non-competitive, and research sessions.

Muslim Journalists Hail Iran's Support for Resistance

TEHRAN -- A Yemeni journalist on Monday praised the Islamic Republic's media outlets for supporting the Axis of Resistance, saying the move distinguishes the country from other Islamic states.

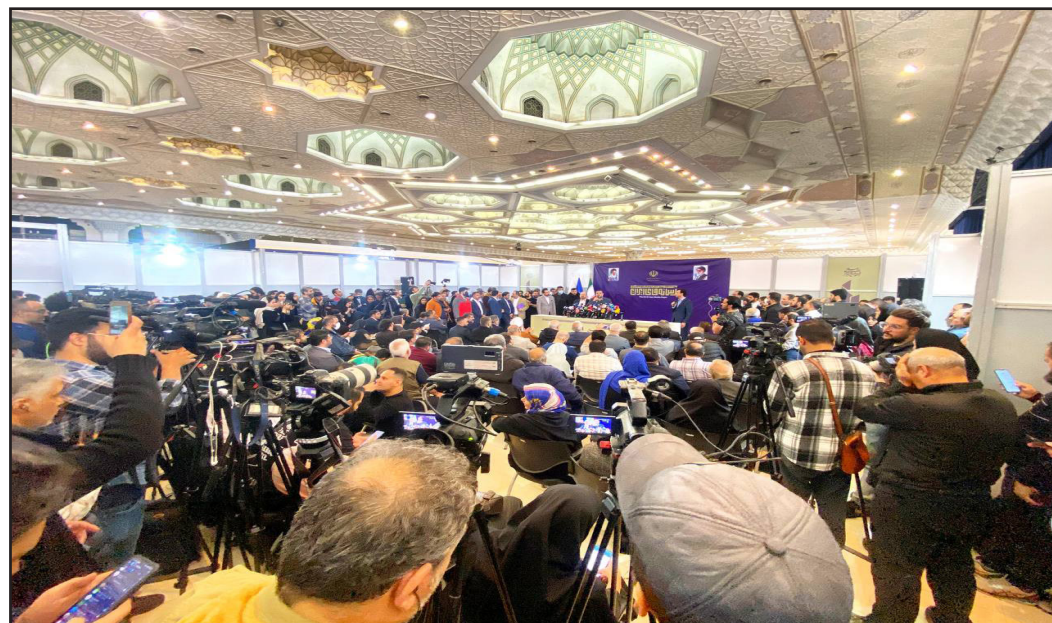
"Iran's support for the Axis of Resistance has been continuous since the beginning of the victory of the Islamic Revolution, but the support of other countries for the Palestinian cause has never been permanent and continuous, and this fact distinguishes the Islamic Republic of Iran from other Islamic countries," Muhammad al-Zubaidi, the head of the political desk of Yemen's Al-Masira television network, told IRNA on the sidelines of the 24th Iran Media Expo here.

He touched on the Zionist regime's targeting of journalists in the Gaza Strip, saying the Zionists kill journalists because they fear the truth.

A Palestinian media figure also hailed Iran's stance on the Palestinian cause, saying the Islamic Republic is an inspiration for all Palestinian supporters worldwide.

Sayf al-Din Mo'ed, who is the director of Palestine Alyoum TV channel, said, "The freedom of Palestine is the issue of the day for the Arab and Islamic Ummah and all freedom-seekers in the world."

"Today we are witnessing the maximum support of all the free nations of the world for the Palestinian people," he told IRNA, pointing to the ongoing pro-Palestinian marches across the world.



Journalists attend the opening of the 24th Iran Media Expo in Tehran.

Mo'ed highlighted the role of the media in the Palestinian struggle against the Israeli occupation and said Palestinian resistance fighters owe their accomplishments on the battlefield to the success of their media campaign.

"Victory in the military front is not possible without victory in the media front," he noted, adding that the media can distort the truth by

making a victory appear as a defeat in the eyes of the public opinion.

The Palestinian activist said the Iranian government and nation are the most prominent supporters of the Palestinian cause in the world.

"Today, the Islamic Republic is at the forefront of the fight against the occupiers and is an inspiration for all fighters," he said.

Official: Iran Ready to Host Saudi Cultural Week

TEHRAN -- Head of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO) Muhammad Mehdi Imanipour has said that Tehran is ready to host Saudi Arabia's cultural week.

In a meeting with Saudi Arabia's Ambassador to Iran Abdullah bin Saud Al-Anzi here, Imanipour emphasized the importance of cultural and scientific ties between Iran and Saudi Arabia, stating that cultural ties serve as the safest way to bring the two nations closer to each other.

He said both countries face the common issue of Islamophobia, and that the world is grappling with double standards when it comes to diplomacy and media activ-

ities.

A prime example of those double standards is the ongoing war in Gaza, the Iranian official said, adding that if any other party had been involved in crimes like those happening in Gaza, it would have been dealt with seriously.

Al-Anzi acknowledged the shared values between the two neighboring and brotherly countries, stating that their relations are based on mutual respect and good neighborliness.

He emphasized the significant role of both countries in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and called for the acceleration of cultural cooperation between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Minister Condolences Passing of Prominent Tajik Artist



TEHRAN -- Iranian Minister of Culture and the Islamic Guidance Muhammad Mehdi Esmaili on Monday extended condolences to the nation and government of Tajikistan over the death of prominent Tajik artist Davlatmand Kholov.

The songs he chose to sing proved his attachment to the Persian language, Esmaili said in his message of condolence.

Born in 1950, Kholov gained his fame after performing a music track called In This Sec-

tion of Paradise which was in praise of Imam Reza (AS) -- the eighth Imam of Shia Muslims.

According to the culture minister, Kholov had been honored at the Imam Reza international festival last year when he was granted a plaque of devotion.

Also, Iran's Ambassador to Tajikistan Ali Reza Haqiqian paid a visit to the family of the deceased singer in the Tajik capital of Dushanbe to offer his condolences.

Omid the Crane Skips Winter Voyage to Iran

TEHRAN -- The only survivor of a flock of Siberian cranes, named Omid or hope in Persian, has not returned to Iran this year to its winter refuge, the head of Iran's Environment Protection Organization says.

"Unfortunately, we didn't attach a tracker to Omid and we didn't have a special tracker due to the sanctions, so we don't have any information about the bird," Hassan Akbari told Iran's Mehr news agency during a visit to the Iranian media press exhibition here.

Every year, the rare bird spends the cold season in its refuge in the wetlands in the northern Iranian cities of Fereydunkenar and Sorkhrud.

"It has happened in the past years that Omid would not come to Iran," Akbari also said, adding the absence this year might be due to the warm winter in Iran.

In the past, Omid flew all the way from Siberia to Mazandaran province over a distance of 5,000 kilometers along with his mate, Arezoo. After his mate died, Omid

ha kept coming to the Iranian wetlands for 15 years alone.

Siberian cranes migrate to the lagoons from their natural habitat in Siberia after flying across Russia, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan before arriving in Iran.



Picture of the Day



The remains of 34 recently exhumed martyrs of the 1980-1988 Holy Defense were repatriated from the Shalamchek border on Monday morning and received by families of martyrs, war veterans and Iranians from all walks of life.

Photo by ISNA

'Beautiful Lies' to Premiere in Bangladesh

TEHRAN -- The Iranian film "Beautiful Lies" is set to premiere in Bangladesh, with a subsequent dubbed version to be released in Iran.

"Due to the presence of Bangladeshi cinema stars in this film, we plan to premiere it first in Bangladesh, with a contract signed with one of the best distribution companies," the film's director and producer Morteza Atash Zamzam said.

"For the release in Iran's theaters, Khosro Khosroshahi has dubbed the film, and whenever we decide to premiere it in Iran, this version will be shown in our country," he noted.

Atash Zamzam presented the film as a joint production with Bangladesh at the 42nd Fajr Film Festival.

The social melodrama 'Beautiful Lies' features famous Bangladeshi actress Jaya Ahsan and some popular actors from the country.

The flick was filmed in the Bangladeshi cities of Dhaka and Gazipur.