

Iran's Stand Steals Show at Minsk Int'l Book Fair



MINSK (BNN Breaking) -- At the heart of Belarus, an international gathering unfolds, bringing together literature and culture enthusiasts from around the globe.

The 31st edition of the Minsk International Book Fair, a prestigious event held from March 14-17, 2024, has Iran playing a pivotal role, not just as a participant but as a beacon of cultural exchange and dialogue.

With Iran's Vice President Muhammad Mokhber, Intelligence Minister Esmail Khatib, and the Iran Ambassador in Minsk delivering speeches at the opening ceremony, the stage was set for a profound expression of Iran's rich cultural heritage and intellectual prowess.

Commanding attention and admiration, Iran's stand at the fair is a testament to the country's commitment to cultural diplomacy and intellectual exchange.

Having clinched the award for the best booth at last year's exhibition, expectations were high, and Iran did not disappoint.

Over 500 books translated into Russian span a wide array of subjects, including art, literature, history, and culture, offering fair-goers a glimpse into Iran's diverse and rich heritage. This robust participation underscores Iran's role as a key player in the realm of international book fairs and cultural festivals.

Beyond the pages of books, the fair attendees are treated to an immersive experience of Iran's cultural offerings through displayed handicrafts and tourist attractions.

These exhibits serve not just as a showcase of Iran's artistic and historical significance but also as a bridge

fostering cultural understanding and appreciation among the fair's international audience.

This blend of literary and cultural exhibition highlights the multifaceted nature of Iran's participation, aimed at promoting cultural dialogue and showcasing the country's contributions to the arts and humanities.

The Minsk International Book Fair is not just a platform for showcasing literary works but a melting pot of cultures, with about 20 countries featured in its 31st edition.

The international participation enhances the fair's significance as a venue for cross-cultural exchange and intellectual dialogue. Iran's standout presence, coupled with its award-winning booth, sets a high standard for cultural representation and engagement, contributing to a richer, more diverse fair experience for visitors and participants alike.

As the curtains draw on the 31st Minsk International Book Fair, reflections on Iran's significant role and its cultural showcase linger.

Through literature, art, and dialogue, Iran has not only showcased its rich cultural tapestry but has also sown seeds of understanding and appreciation among the international community.

The fair, in its essence, goes beyond the celebration of books and literature; it's a tribute to the power of culture in bridging gaps and building connections across borders.

Iran's prominent participation in this year's edition not only highlights its cultural depth but also reinforces the importance of cultural diplomacy in today's interconnected world.

Iranian Specialists Use Unity Tech to Produce 2D, 3D Adventure Games



TEHRAN -- Iranian specialists at a knowledge-based company have designed and produced 2D and 3D adventure graphic games by using Unity and Blockchain technologies.

2D and 3D graphic games produced in the knowledge-based JAPCO company are mainly designed with the theme of entertainment and education and have the essence of adventure and competition.

Game engines like Unity and Unreal Engine can accurately implement the laws of physics in a video game.

"The game industry in Iran is a growing and promising industry. This industry has countless fans in Iran, and at present 64% of the Iranian population are members of

the video game community. Considering that this group is mostly under 35 years of age, there is a lot of potential for the growth of this industry, specially for young people," said Nasser Mahmoudi, the managing-director of the knowledge-based company.

"Among the other applications of gamification is its use in e-learning, e-exam and competition among the learners, which is very useful in the field of education," he added.

In October, an Iranian start-up company active in the field of computer games had also been able to design and produce psychological games for five to seven-year-old children that directly and indirectly enhance their IQ.

Ex-Korean Singer Recounts Story of Conversion to Islam

TEHRAN -- Daud Kim, a famous South Korean pop singer and YouTuber, has shared the story of his conversion to Islam in a Ramadan-special TV show.

Speaking on Mahfel TV, Kim said mainstream media in South Korea talks about Islam in a "bad way".

"When I was young I also thought Islam is kind of dangerous thing," he said.

Practicing music and K-Pop gave him a chance to perform in other countries and his trip to Indonesia was his first "real" encounter with Muslims, he said.

His growing interest in Islam made him study more about the religion upon his arrival at home. "So I read the Qur'an. I tried to pray and fast."



"When I read the Qur'an, I found something that really impressed me," he said, pointing to the concept of monotheism that is highlighted in the Holy Quran.

"There is a thing that makes us

happy and peaceful, and the purpose of your life is obeying Allah, and through obeying Allah it gives you true happiness and true peace in your mind," Kim noted.

This was the thing "that I really

needed," he reminded. "The thing that makes me happy and peaceful."

That was when he said Shahada and became a Muslim. Kim, who used to go by the name Jay Kim, embraced Islam in September 2019 and announced his conversion in a YouTube video.

Muslims are a minority in South Korea, making up less than 1 percent of the population. Most of them are foreigners, such as migrant workers and international students.

The first mosque in South Korea, the Seoul Central Mosque, was built in 1976. Since then, 15 more mosques have been officially registered across the country, along with 150 to 200 musalla, or smaller places of worship.

WHO Endorses Iran's Pioneering Family Health Program



TEHRAN -- The World Health Organization (WHO) has formally acknowledged Iran's innovative 'Family Health Program,' registering it as a pioneering Iranian initiative.

This notable recognition high-

lights Iran's strides in healthcare, emphasizing the program's role in establishing a comprehensive electronic health record system for its citizens based on their national identity number.

Launched across Iran last year,

the Family Health Program is designed to streamline patient care by assigning each Iranian an electronic healthcare file.

The digital dossier compiles all health-related information for an individual, accessible exclusively by medical professionals.

The initiative, covering 27 million Iranians, aims to facilitate a smoother transition of patient information from general practitioners to specialists, ensuring timely and efficient medical treatment.

Iran's Health Minister Bahram Eynollahi shared the program's success and its international endorsement at a meeting with counterparts from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Astana, Kazakhstan.

Eynollahi's presentation underscored the program's significance as the cornerstone of Iran's healthcare sector, receiving praise and calls for increased cooperation in university education, pharmaceuticals, and medical equipment from SCO member countries.

The WHO registration not only marks a significant milestone for Iran's healthcare system but also sets a precedent for global health initiatives.

By integrating technology into the core of public health strategies, Iran's Family Health Program offers a model that could inspire similar healthcare reforms worldwide, enhancing the quality and accessibility of medical care on a global scale.

Aras Pollution Needs Urgent Attention

TEHRAN (BNN Breaking) -- Armenia's disposal of industrial and nuclear waste into the Aras River, originating from the Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant and Kajaran mine, raises severe environmental and health concerns across the South Caucasus.

The discharge, affecting millions in Iran, Azerbaijan, Türkiye, Georgia, and Armenia, poses a dire threat to the region's ecological balance and public health, despite international calls for the plant's closure.

The Aras River, a crucial lifeline for over 20 million people in the South Caucasus, has become a dumping ground for hazardous waste from Armenia's industrial operations.

Notably, the Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant, recognized as one of the world's most dangerous reactors, and the non-standard operation of regional mines, compromise the environmental integrity and safety of the waterway.

Despite the plant exceeding its operational lifespan in 2005, Armenian authorities have resisted international pressures, including from the European Union, to shut it down.

The situation is further exacerbated by the contamination of the river with heavy metals and toxic substances from Armenia's mining activities, posing significant health risks to the population and jeopardizing the region's agriculture and water supplies.

Reports indicate an alarming increase in cancer cases among populations along the Aras River, correlating with the pollution levels.

Studies have identified dangerously high concentrations of metals

such as lead, exceeding both global and Iranian safety standards by significant margins.

The presence of radioactive substances in the river, stemming from Metsamor's waste discharge, adds a layer of nuclear threat to the environmental crisis.

Despite recent acknowledgments of the issue by Iranian officials and proposed collaborative efforts between Iran and Armenia, tangible

actions to mitigate the pollution and its consequences have been minimal.

While the establishment of working groups between Iran and Armenia marks a step towards addressing the Aras River pollution, the effectiveness of these measures remains to be seen.

The health implications for the local population and the ecological damage incurred necessitate urgent and comprehensive action.

The international community's role in pressuring for the closure of the Metsamor plant and ensuring the adoption of environmentally sustainable practices by all stakeholders involved is crucial.

As the crisis unfolds, the future of the South Caucasus's environmental health and the well-being of its inhabitants hang in the balance, calling for immediate and decisive intervention.

Picture of the Day



A carnival welcoming the spring and Nowruz paraded from Haft Tir Square to Laleh Park in Tehran on Friday. Photo by Tasnim News