

News in Brief

IRIB Responds to Shahriar's Family



Deputy head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) said that the changes made in the TV serial 'Shahriar', which deals with the life of contemporary Iranian poet Mohammad Hossein Behjat-Tabrizi, had no impact on the dramatic or educational aspects of the production.

Morteza Mir-Baqeri referred to criticisms by Shahriar's family about the serial and said, "When a TV serial is made, the issue at stake is not that it should be one hundred percent accurate. This serial is a TV show and hence it needed some kind of background on Shahriar's biography."

"Our main objective in this serial was to give the impression that Shahriar as a prominent poet is a distinguished national figure," he said.

According to Fars news agency, Shahriar's daughter, Maryam Behjat-Tabrizi, had said earlier that the serial had nothing to do with her father.

"The serial contains certain episodes that do not convey the realities of my father's life and distort his actual social and literary status. Furthermore," she noted.

Niavaran to Host Ferdowsi Congress



The third congress on renowned Iranian poet Abolqasem Ferdowsi will be held at Niavaran Cultural Complex on May 14.

Literary figures, including Mir Jalaeddin Kazzazi, Mohammad Hossein Tousivand, Hassan Anousheh and Jamileh Akhiani will deliver lectures at the event.

The event will be held in cooperation with Ferdowsi Foundation, ISNA said.

Meanwhile, the complex is to hold a five-day festival from May 14-18 to commemorate the great poet.

Sculptures featuring mythical figures in Shahnameh (Book of the King), an epic by Ferdowsi, will be unveiled at the festival.

An exhibition of teahouse paintings by Mansour Vafaei as well as performance of music and Shahnameh recitation sessions, will be held on the sidelines.

Monet Fetches Record Price



An early work by French impressionist Claude Monet sold for a record \$41.4 million in New York late Tuesday at an auction that nevertheless suggested the art market is feeling the effects of the stuttering US economy.

'Le Pont du chemin de fer a Argenteuil', an 1873 painting of a railway bridge spanning the Seine near Paris was bought by an anonymous telephone bidder, AFP reported.

"We will not see another one this good for a long while, I don't suppose, unless this one lures a few out," Christie's honorary chairman and the evening's auctioneer, Christopher Burge, said.

The previous record for the artist stood at \$36.5 million. However, two other works by Monet failed to find buyers, adding fuel to concerns that the art market is feeling the pinch of the US housing and credit crises.

Burge gave an upbeat picture of the sale, describing the market for good impressionist works as 'alive and well', despite the total sales falling just below the auction house's low estimate of 287 million dollars.

Concerns have been rising for months that the effect of the US housing crisis and credit crunch could stall the art market.

Salour to Join UN Film Project



Prominent Iranian filmmaker Saman Salour is to participate in an international film project sponsored by the United Nations.

Salour will be one of the 30 international filmmakers who will take part in the project, each presenting a 3 to 5-minute film. The films should be based on seven chapters of the UN charter and the filmmakers will be given a free hand in the choice of plot. The films will then be screened internationally as one feature-length film, pressv reported. Salour's 'Lonely Tune of Tehran' has been selected for the upcoming 61st Cannes Film Festival.

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A view from the exhibit 'The Pen's Orient' under way at Tehran's Imam Ali (AS) Religious Arts Museum. The event, featuring calligraphy and painting by Iranian and Japanese artists, will run until May 10. (Photo by Ali Hassanpour)



Lotfi Plans to Compose Music on Prophet

A noted Iranian composer has said that he will "compose a piece in praise of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)" when the conditions are appropriate. "I respect people who charge huge amounts to compose music, but even if somebody offers me 10 billion rials to write a song, I can't. I believe that music and arts in general depend on your feelings and inspirations," Mohammad Reza Lotfi told Fars news agency.

Lotfi is also a distinguished musician who plays the traditional string instrument 'Tar' and conducts the Sheida musical group.

"I believe that music comes to you. I never decide to write a song but rather a special mood motivates me to compose something," he said.

On religious-oriented music, he said, "Devotional music has a special line of thought and also application in the world and in Iran. When an artist for example mentions the name of the first infallible Imam of the household of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Imam Ali (AS), his or her mood must change with this utterance as otherwise the piece that he or she composes will not be an artistic endeavor."



> Mohammad Reza Lotfi

ECI to Honor Iqbal

Tehran-based ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) plans to commemorate prominent Muslim poet and philosopher Allama Muhammad Iqbal Lahori on May 8 at the ongoing Tehran International Book Fair.

For the first time all ten member states of the entity are participating in the fair, according to a fax sent to Iran Daily by ECI Public Relations Department.

The event will be held on Thursday in the fair's Men of Letters session from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.

At the gathering, noted researchers on the works of Iqbal are to review the personality of the great poet.

Each of the ECI member states will hold their national day functions at the fair which has been received with enthusiasm by visitors.

Iqbal (1877-1938) was born in Punjab in British India (now in Pakistan). He is acknowledged as the spiritual father of Pakistan, a country that was born several years after his death.

Iqbal's message was not for any particular ethnic or linguistic group, but for the Muslim Ummah as a whole. For the same reason, he chose Persian poetry as the vehicle for conveying his thoughts to a greater number of Muslims, besides his native Urdu. As a poet of high caliber, he filled the hearts of Muslims with the zeal of life and inspired them to fight for self-reform and self-realization.



> Allama Muhammad Iqbal Lahori

>>> Weather



Abadan



Gorgan



Ilam



Iranshahr



Kashan

27 ^
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Tehran



Kuala Lumpur



Kuwait City



New Delhi



Sanaa



Sofia