



مؤسسہ فرهنگی اے کو

ECO CULTURAL INSTITUTE

@ecieco_org

2024



E.C.O
CULTURAL
INSTITUTE

Specialized Agency of
ECONOMIC COOPERATION ORGANIZATION

ANNUAL REPORT



www.ecieco.org



ECO CULTURAL INSTITUTE

Specialized Agency of
Economic Cooperation Organization

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES IN THE YEAR

2024













Headquarters -Tehran

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	4	IX. Lorestan Province	112
Details of E.C.O Region	6	X. Gilan Province	113
Permanent & Observer Member States	7		
About Us	8	PART-C: Activities in E.C.I Member States (Other than IRAN)	115
Change of Leadership E.C.O Secretary General	10	I. Republic of Tajikistan	116
Message of E.C.I President	12	II. Islamic Republic of Pakistan	118
Message of ECOSF President	16	III. & IV. Republic of Türkiye	124
Message of ECOEI President	17		
Our Administrative Team	18	PART-D: Administrative, Reform & PR initiatives	131
Our Cultural Team	19	I. Coordination With E.C.O and Sister Agencies	132
		II. E.C.I Reform Process	136
Annual Report 2024	21	III. Welcome & Farewell for E.C.O Ambassadors	139
Background Overview	22		
	22	PART-E: Cultural Diplomacy Initiatives and Meetings	141
PART-A: Cultural & Literary Activities at the Tehran headquarters	25	PART-F: E.C.O Visibility and Information Initiatives	161
I- Cultural Nights & Music	26	PART-G: E.C.I Publications Division Activities	173
II- Celebrating Traditional Festivals	36	I- Book Publishing	174
III- Drama & Theatre Arts	40	II- Journal Publications	176
IV- Fashion, Food and Culinary Diplomacy	44	III- E.C.O Cultural Calendars	177
V- Exhibitions of Arts & Artworks	48	IV- Translations	178
VI- Academic Events	64	V- Book of Proverbs of E.C.O Languages	179
VII- Poetry Sessions From Across E.C.O Poets	86		
VIII- Training Courses Held By E.C.I	92	PART-H: Future & Ongoing Initiatives	181
IX- Participation in Tehran Int'l Book Fair	96	I. E.C.O Corners in Leading Libraries	182
X- Cultural Events for Non-E.C.O States	98	II. Commissioning Artworks Depicting E.C.O Region	183
		III. Discussions on E.C.O-Wide Musical Initiatives	186
PART-B: Activities in the Islamic Republic of Iran	103	IV. Short-Term Projects in Pipeline (Planned in 01 Year)	188
I. Yazd Province	104	V. Mid-Term Projects in Pipeline (Planned in 2-5 Years)	190
II. Isfahan Province	105	VI. Long-Term Projects in Pipeline (Planned in 5-10 years)	192
III. Kashan Region	106		
IV. Khorasan Province	107		
V. Sistan-Baluchistan Province	108		
VI. Kermanshah Province	109		
VII. Qom Region	110		
VIII. Kish Island (Persian Gulf)	111		



Details of E.C.O Region

Country	Capital	Area	Population	GDP
 Afghanistan	Kabul	652,867	42,239,000	20,136
 Azerbaijan	Baku	86,600	10,430,185	70,030
 Iran	Tehran	1,648,196	85,399,952	345,000
 Kazakhstan	Astana	2,724,900	19,563,749	245,695
 Kyrgyzstan	Bishkek	199,951	6,769,864	12,309
 Pakistan	Islamabad	881,912	242,474,743	376,493
 Tajikistan	Dushanbe	143,100	10,158,345	12,796
 Türkiye	Ankara	783,562	84,874,273	1,029,303
 Turkmenistan	Ashgabat	448,100	6,550,500	83,649
 Uzbekistan	Tashkent	447,400	35,184,000	92,332

Permanent & Observer Member States

The latest status of the Institute’s membership is as follows:

- The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of Tajikistan, and the Republic of Türkiye have ratified the ECI Charter and are full members.



- The Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Kazakhstan, and the Republic of Turkmenistan have signed the ECI, but not ratified it to date, and hence enjoy the status of Observer States.



- Efforts are underway that Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Uzbekistan, the only two ECO member states outside ECI, join the Institute as members in due course of time.



About Us

In conformity with the endorsement of the Heads of the ECO Member States regarding the establishment of ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) as stated in the Istanbul Declaration, the former R.C.D. Cultural Institute which was active for 17 years from 1966 till 1983 has been revitalized under the name of "ECO Cultural Institute" with the objective to consolidate cultural affinities and spiritual and fraternal ties that bind the peoples of ECO region through social and cultural channels of thought and action.

Upon the reappraisal and modification of the Treaty of Izmir providing a proper legal foundation for RCD's transition to ECO, Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) was restructured and revived under its present name of "Economic Cooperation Organization" (ECO).

Subsequently, RCD Cultural Institute was revised under the name of "ECO Cultural Institute" (ECI). ECI's Charter was approved at the 5th ECO Council of Ministers held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan (March, 1994) and finally launched its activities in 1995 with an exclusive Charter and financial regulation as a Regional Cultural Institute. As per the Charter, the perennial Headquarter of the ECO Cultural Institute is located in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mission

The ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) is an initiating, coordinating, financing, and monitoring agency which undertakes cultural activities to foster and promote closer association and cooperation among the people in the Region, in general, and mass media, intellectuals and artists, in particular. (Retrieved from ECI Charter).

Objectives

According to the ECI Charter, some of the main objectives of the Institute are, among others, as follow:

- To publish studies in form of books, monographs and periodicals in English, and in the languages of the Region (as far as possible).
- To make arrangements for the teaching of the languages of the Region in the Institute and its branches if possible, as well as to adopt effective measures for promotion of these languages in the universities and of the languages institutes of the Region.
- To promote cooperation amongst the universities and other cultural institutions of the Region.
- To organize exhibitions of folk, traditional and modern arts.
- To make arrangements for the exchange of documentary feature films and radio/ TV package programs related to the life, customs and social activities of the Region.
- To promote cooperation in the field of history, demography, anthropology, archaeology and preservation and restoration of the common cultural and architectural heritage of the Region.
- To establish network connection among cultural centers, national libraries and museums of the region to exchange books, manuscripts and valuable pieces of arts, slides/microfilms of the old books.
- To promote regional cooperation pertaining to the sports.
- To publish a quarterly journal in English and to the extent possible in national languages of the Region in local branches to and Farsi in Headquarters to promote further understanding amongst the people of the Region; focusing on literature, folklore, traditional music and national customs of the Member States, as well as to disseminate the news of the cultural events in the Region.

Change of Leadership ECO Secretary General:
His Excellency Dr. Asad M. Khan

H.E. Amb. Dr. Asad M. Khan (Pakistani national) took over as the new ECO Secretary General. He is the 14th Secretary General of the ECO who started his tenure in August 2024.

H.E. Ambassador Dr. Asad M. Khan is an accomplished diplomat and scholar, currently serving as the 14th Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) since August 2024. He holds a Doctorate in International Economic and Business Law (LL.D.) from Kyushu University, Japan, with a specialization in WTO dispute settlement and anti-dumping practices. In addition to his diplomatic career, he has contributed to academia as a resource person at leading universities and training institutions in Pakistan. With over 35 years of experience in international diplomacy and foreign policy, Dr. Khan has held key leadership roles in Pakistan's Foreign Service and multilateral organizations. He served as Pakistan's 31st Foreign Secretary, playing a crucial role in shaping the country's

foreign relations. His distinguished diplomatic career includes ambassadorial assignments in the United States, the European Union, Japan, and Belgium, along with non-resident appointments in Luxembourg, Jamaica, and the Bahamas. Dr. Khan has also played a significant role in global diplomatic efforts through his work at the United Nations, serving in various high-profile positions, including Chef de Cabinet for ECOSOC, Sherpa for Pakistan's Prime Minister, and Vice Chair for the Rio+20 Conference. As the Secretary General of ECO, Dr. Khan is responsible for leading the organization's strategic initiatives, ensuring the effective implementation of its policies, and fostering economic cooperation, regional connectivity, and sustainable development among member states.



MESSAGE OF ECI PRESIDENT *His Excellency* **Dr. Saad S. Khan**

Statement read at 28th ECO Council of Ministers

As the top cultural diplomat of the ECO region, it is an immense honour to stand before you today to share the significant strides made by the ECO Cultural Institute since the hon'able Ministers last met in Shusha at the 27th COM of ECO last year. Since we believe, and I trust, all of you in this august gathering share the belief, that cultural cohesion is the key to political, diplomatic and economic cooperation, this Institution has been diligently working to foster cultural exchange and cooperation among the ECO member states, aligning with the broader objectives of the ECO.

This year, we have witnessed remarkable initiatives aimed at enriching our cultural heritage and strengthening the bonds that unite us. From vibrant art exhibitions to engaging literary seminars and culinary celebrations, our efforts have celebrated the rich diversity of our shared traditions. Each event has served as a testament to our commitment to preserving and promoting the unique identities that characterize our region. Since the Institute's Annual Report of Activities has already been circulated among the Member States, I do not intend to repeat the content here. I just highlight our most important activities.

Excellencies,

Among our notable and ground breaking achievements this year was the expansion of activities much beyond the ECI head office in Tehran. In three expanding geographical layers; first layer was our activities within Tehran but outside ECI head office; the second outer layer was participation or collaboration in activities within Iran but other than Tehran such as holding a poetry event in Qom, joining Shahnameh reading festival in Kermanshah or participating in Monsoon seasonal festival in Chabahar. In the third and outermost geographical layer, we held a poetry event in Dushanbe, we held an international research conference in Lahore, an ECO-wide photographic exhibition that was supposed to take place today (3rd December in Ankara) has been postponed for same day, same time and same venue for the next week. This exhibition will showcase stunning shots captured by photographers from the ECO region. Efforts and discussions are underway to have a handicrafts exhibition in Nacchivan and Azernegari (drawing impressions with fire or heat) in Istanbul and a film festival maybe in Ashgabat in the coming months. The concerned governments will be contacted as and when the necessary logistic details and costs are worked out.



MESSAGE OF ECI PRESIDENT

Ladies and gentlemen,

The ECI has proactively continued its efforts at cultural diplomacy with high level engagements with the Deputy Prime Ministers, the Culture Ministers, the heads of television agencies, literary councils and cultural agencies of the ECO member countries. More than 40 cultural meetings took place within Iran with the concerned personalities and agencies while an equal number took place in ECI delegation level visits to Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Pakistan and Türkiye. All these visits have sparked dynamic discussions with cultural leaders, paving the way for collaborative initiatives that promise to enrich our shared cultural heritage. The events that are being held abroad are the outcome of these visits. The ECI is making efforts to have at least once cultural agency in each member state to be designated as Coordination Unit of ECI, as mandated under its Charter.

Excellencies, there are too many ongoing initiatives in the pipeline, such as raising an ECO Orchestra, establishing ECO corners in public libraries, reviving ECI Youth Awards for culture etc, to be recounted in a four minutes speech.

Hon'able Ministers, ladies and gentlemen, the ECI is working for promotion of culture of all ten ECO States but we are being financed with contributions from only five member states that ratified the ECI Charter. We urge the three observer states of ECI, namely, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan to join as full members before the next ECO heads of

state meeting and urge Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan to consider expediting the dialogue to join the ECI.

The meagre annual budget of around half a million dollars of the ECI for a teeming population of 550 million comes to around one tenth of a cent per year per person. Let us endeavour to increase our cultural spending to at least ten cents per capita by 2030 through the ECI.

Honorable Ministers,

In closing, I want to express my deepest gratitude to all the member states for their dedication and commitment to the ECI's mission. The achievements we have celebrated together this year are a testament to our collective efforts and shared vision for cultural exchange and cooperation.

As we reflect on our successful initiatives, let us recognize that these accomplishments are stepping stones toward a more interconnected and harmonious future. Each event has served as a reminder of the power of culture to transcend borders, foster understanding, and build lasting friendships among our nations. As we embark on this journey, I encourage all the member states to remain engaged, share their ideas, and support the ECI as we strive to achieve our common goals.

Thank you once again for your invaluable contributions and support. Together, we can build a brighter future for our peoples, rooted shared cultural heritage.





MESSAGE

His Excellency **Prof. Seyed Komail Tayebi**
President of E.C.O Science Foundation

I am delighted to know that the Annual Report of the ECO Cultural Institute for the year 2024 is being brought out. The ECI is the oldest of the specialized agencies of the Economic Cooperation Organization. In my view, cultural cooperation is the key to other avenues of cooperation between the member states. The ten member states of the ECO, namely, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkiye, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, share a rich civilization, common history and cultural festivals.

I look forward to cooperation between our ECO Specialized Agencies in the fields of education, science, technology, innovation and culture.

The ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) is mandated

to promote Scientific, Technological and Innovative (STI) research, capacity building and other relevant activities among the Member States to augment the socio-economic development. ECOSF also pursues the goal of promoting research and technological development for sustainability through the development of human resource capacity and strengthening institutional capacity in STI in the ECO region

I am happy to note that the ECI has expanded its scope of activities to beyond the host state of Iran and is organizing cultural and literary events across the region and we look forward to working closely with them.

I wish the ECI all the success in their endeavors.



MESSAGE

His Excellency **Prof. Mehmet Akif Kireççi**
President of E.C.O Educational Institute

It gives me great pleasure to witness the publication of the Annual Report of the ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) for the year 2024. I am especially pleased to note that the ECI has expanded its activities across the ECO region, organizing cultural and literary events that bring member states closer together. As the oldest of the specialized agencies of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the ECI has consistently played a pivotal role in fostering cultural collaboration among member states and promoting the shared heritage of our region.

Cultural cooperation is a cornerstone for unlocking broader avenues of collaboration among member states. The ten ECO countries—Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkiye, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan—are united by a rich civilization, a shared history, and common values. These deep connections provide a strong foundation for strengthening bonds and advancing cooperation across various fields.

At the ECO Educational Institute (ECOEI), we deeply value the interconnectedness between culture and education, as they are essential components for fostering mutual understanding and regional

integration. This vision has guided our efforts in numerous initiatives that highlight the synergy between these two pillars.

Through language teaching and learning workshops, we have worked to promote the teaching of ECO member state languages, facilitating collaborative efforts to address the challenges and opportunities associated with language learning. In addition, our Symposium on Common History, Language, Culture, Education, and Civilization offered a unique platform for exploring and deepening the historical, cultural, and educational ties that unite the ECO region, while celebrating the rich traditions we collectively share. These initiatives reflect our dedication to building bridges between education and culture, and we look forward to deepening our collaboration with the ECI and other ECO specialized agencies to further these shared objectives. Together, we aim to enhance the cultural and educational landscape of the ECO region, ensuring a brighter, more interconnected future for all member states. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the ECI for its remarkable achievements and wish them continued success in their noble endeavors to enrich the cultural fabric of the ECO region and strengthen regional ties.

OUR ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM



**MOHSEN
ESMAEILY FARD**

Executive Director-Iran



**SHABNAM
TARIGHATI**

Documentation Officer-Iran



**FIROUZEH
MOHAMMADINIA**

English Translator-Iran



SEDIGHE EBRAHIMI

Graphic Designer-Afghanistan



MUTAHHAR ALI

Accountant-Pakistan



**MOHAMMAD
OROZGANI**

Gallery In charge-Afghanistan



MOHAMMAD FARAJI

Technician -Iran



**MUBASHIR HASSAN
KAZMI**

Urdu Translator-Pakistan



JAVAD JAVADI

Driver - Iran



**MOHAMMAD ALI
SOHRABI**

Driver - Iran



**MOHAMMAD
MOHAMMADI**

Services-Afghanistan



ASHKAN SOLTANI

Security - Iran

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

SUPPORT STAFF

OUR CULTURAL TEAM



MAHTAB SAHEL

Cultural Expert-Afghanistan



SALMAN ROSTAMI

Cultural Expert-Iran



**SAMANA ABID
DAWOODANI**

Cultural Expert-Pakistan



SHAH MANSOUR KHJEV

Cultural Expert-Tajikistan



YAGMUR EZRAK

Cultural Expert-Türkiye



ROJA KOUZEGAR

Media Officer-Iran
Focal Person-Azerbaijan



MARYAM SHAYEGAN

Executive Secretary-Iran
Focal Person-Turkmenistan



ZAHRA ASLANI

Librarian-Iran
Focal Person-Kazakhstan



**AHMAD REZA
NASROLLAHI**

IT Technician-Iran
Coordinator-Kyrgyzstan



**MAHDI
OMRANINEJAD**

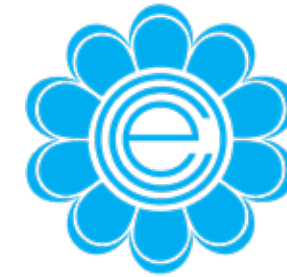
English Translator-Iran
Coordinator-Uzbekistan

CULTURAL EXPERTS

FOCAL PERSONS

COORDINATORS

WELCOME



ANNUAL
REPORT

2024

E.C.O CULTURAL INSTITUTE



BACKGROUND

The ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) is the successor organization of Regional Cultural Institute (RCI) that used to function under the erstwhile Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD). The RCD remained in operation from 1964 up to 1979, however, the RCI—its cultural arm— remained in existence from 1966 to 1983. Following RCD's replacement by the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and its emergence as a viable regional organization bringing together the ten states of the region with common culture and shared history, the need for the revival of the erstwhile Regional Cultural Institute was felt by the leadership across the ten ECO member states. Revival of the Cultural Institute was visualized in Article II of the Treaty of Izmir, with the objective “[t]o consolidate cultural affinities and spiritual and fraternal ties that bind the people of the Member States through social and cultural channels of thought and action”. The formal endorsement of

the revival of the Cultural Institute under its present name was finally manifested through the signing of its Charter at the third ECO Summit Meeting held on 14-15 March 1995 at Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan. Since its inception, and in order to realize the goals and objectives set in its Charter, ECI has hosted a large number of literary and cultural functions, organized exhibitions of folk, traditional and modern arts, taken measures to promote regional cooperation through organizing major sports events, published materials in English and other major languages of the region on the common cultural heritage of its Member States to promote further understanding amongst its people, stimulate the interest of the people of the Member Countries towards the existing cultural, educational and social problems of the region and disseminate information on the cultural events of the region.

In addition to the cultural and literary activities, the ECI also has moved ahead very fast on the cultural diplomacy front with establishing close liaison with the ECI Member States as well as those ECO member states which are not full members of the ECI. The ECI accepted invitations from the Republic of Uzbekistan to attend the celebrations declaring Shakhrisabz as tourism capital of ECI, from Turkmenistan to attend 300th anniversary celebrations of poet Magdumguly Pragi, from Islamic Republic of Pakistan to attend the International Iqbal Lahore Conference, and from the Republic of Kazakhstan to attend the 5th international nomad games. Except the last mentioned event which the ECI delegation could not attend, due to shortage of time between the invitation and the departure, the ECI delegations accepted other invitations and set up a series of meetings with the host authorities to establish strong cultural collaborations.

The proactive cultural diplomacy within the host state, namely, the Islamic Republic of Iran also continued with the meetings of the President ECI and his team with high profile cultural dignitaries including Dr Mehdi Ismaili, the Minister for Culture and Islamic Guidance; Hojjatul Islam Emanipour, the head of the Islamic Cultural and Relations Organization (ICRO); Ayatollah Khusropanah, the head of the Supreme Council of Islamic Revolution; Hujjatol Islam Hassan Khomeini, the head of the Imam Khomeini Complex and grandson of the founder of the Islamic Republic; Dr Golamali Haddad Adel, the Chairman of the Saadi Foundation, and more than 40 other cultural organizations and cultural dignitaries of the Islamic Republic.

The ECI also maintained close relations with the ECO main Secretariat as well as the three sister

organizations including visits and formal meetings with the Presidents of ECO Trade and Development Bank (ETDB), the ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) and the ECO Education Institute (ECOEI) at Istanbul, Islamabad, and Ankara, respectively. Pertinently enough, the ECI also arranged activities or coordinated with other agencies to arrange events and activities related to non-ECO states in order to bring the nations of the ECO closer to other regions of the world, through cultural affinities. From a theatre drama arranged by the Embassy of Switzerland, to the Bengali cultural night arranged by the Embassy of Bangladesh to a two week photographic exhibition organized by the Embassy of Slovakia, to a number of activities on the endangered (and destroyed) cultural heritage of Palestine, the ECI continued to make its mark beyond the ECO region.

The ECI considers itself having the same relationship with the ECO as the UNESCO has with the United Nations. The ECI tries its best to promote the art and culture of the ECO region to other regions of the world. It has also maintained coordination with the cultural agencies of the neighboring regional organizations such as ASEAN, Organization of Turkic States, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) etc.

The ECI has also started a reform process and various proposals in the form of concept notes are under review by the competent forums and the especially-created Working Group.

A very brief review of the ECI activities in 2024 is in order. Due to the large volume of activities undertaken, only the most important activities under every head have been mentioned in the present Report.



OVERVIEW

The ECI has sufficient in-house facilities for cultural activities including: firstly, an auditorium-cum-roofed amphitheater with a capacity of 240-seats; secondly, an Art gallery for art exhibitions like paintings, photographs, sculptures, calligraphy with a capacity up to 42-artworks at a time; thirdly, three seminar-cum-meeting rooms with a capacity varying between 10 to 40 persons for training courses, meetings, seminars, webinars and book launches; and fourthly, a lush green lawn for garden parties, diplomatic get togethers or food festivals. All these facilities give a boost to the ECI to carry out a very large number

of activities despite its meagre financial resources. For quite some time, most activities of the ECI were limited to its own facilities. However, as directed by the ECI Council of Permanent Representatives, the Institute decided to expand the scope of its activities much beyond the ECI head office in three outwards expanding geographical layers:

- ✓ Activities within Tehran but outside the ECI head office facilities
- ✓ Activities within Iran but outside Tehran
- ✓ Activities in ECO Member States other than the host state



PART-A

Cultural & Literary Activities at Tehran Headquarters

The ECI activities at the headquarters include cultural nights of the member states through musical events; observing traditional folk festivals like Nowruz and Yalda; dramas and theatres; food and culinary diplomacy; exhibitions of arts and artworks like painting, photography, calligraphy, miniature and architecture; holding of seminars, conferences, workshops and book launches; publications and translations, training courses etc.

CULTURAL NIGHTS & MUSIC

(Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Turkiye)

Throughout the whole year, the music of the host state, Iran, was celebrated in many events including the Nowruz celebrations marking the Iranian new year, where traditional Iranian folk musicians were invited to perform. Similar performances were arranged at the farewell reception of outgoing ECO Secretary General and the official visit of the new Secretary General, as well as many other cultural occasions.

The President ECI also visited Tehran's national level Symphony Orchestras including the Tehran State Symphony Orchestra and the IRIB Symphony Orchestra who organized performances for the ECI President and his delegations. However, the ECI also took measures to celebrate the musical traditions of all other Member States of the ECI. Some of the important activities is as follows:

Afghanistan Cultural Night:

The year started with the new year night (1st January) featuring a musical evening from the artists, singers and musicians from Afghanistan. The ceremony took place at the ECO Cultural Institute, brought together prominent Afghan poets. The event welcomed approximately 250 guests from the cultural communities of both Iran and Afghanistan. The musical performances were led by Mr. Habib Mansouri, a celebrated Afghan singer, who captivated the audience with seven enchanting pieces. As the ceremony

concluded, certificates of appreciation were awarded to the participating poets and artists by the president of the ECO Cultural Institute. Notable attendees included Master Abutalib Mozaffari, Master Kazem Kazemi, Master Ali Madad Rezvani, Zahra Hosseinzadeh, Zainab Bayat, Zahra Zahedi, Mojgan Faramanesh, Tahmasbi Khorasani, and Ehsan Badakhshani. Attendees were treated to the inauguration ceremony of Afghan calligrapher couple Mr. & Mrs Mirzaei (details in the relevant section below).



Tajikistan Traditional Music Night:

On 22 February 2022 by the celebration of traditional music of Tajikistan in an event titled “Tajikistan Traditional Music Night.” The event aimed to promote peace, friendship, and kindness through the performances of Tajik musicians and artists. Prominent figures such as Shahram Nazeri and Hossein Alizadeh attended the event, adding to its splendor. The event was graced by the presence of Mr. Davlat Safarzoda, Deputy Minister of Culture of Tajikistan. The ceremony also commemorated the memory of the late singer and artist Davlatmand Khalof, highlighting his collaboration with Iranian artists as a symbol of cultural interactions between Iran and Tajikistan. The celebration focused on two musical achievements in Tajikistan’s history: “Shash Maqam” and “Falak,” which have been inscribed on the UNESCO World Intangible Heritage List.



Performance of the Turkish Choir:

The third major event for promotion of music of ECI Member States was held in April 2024 on 14 March 2024. It was the performance of Turkish School Choir, conducted by Zohreh Abdoli ,in collaboration with the Yunus Imre Institute, where children mesmerized the audience by melodious Turkish songs.



Cultural and Musical Night for commemoration of Maulana Rumi:

A significant cultural event titled “Reunion Night” took place at the ECO Cultural Institute on December 22, 2024, organized in collaboration with the Yunus Emre Institute to honor the 751st death anniversary of the esteemed poet and philosopher, Mawlana Jalaluddin Balkhi, known as Rumi.

The evening featured a mesmerizing Mevlevi music performance by renowned Turkish instrumentalists Nurullah Kanık and Bekir Sahin Baloglu. Their enchanting melodies transported attendees into the spiritual world of Rumi, celebrating the profound impact of his teachings and artistry.

The event was graced by the presence of distinguished guests, including the Honorable Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to the Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E. Mr. Hicabi Kirlangıç, and Mr. Ali Özgündüz, the former head of the Türkiye-Iran Parliamentary Friendship Group and a member of the Yunus Emre Institute's Supervisory Board, who delivered inspiring speeches emphasizing the importance of Rumi's legacy in fostering cultural ties and understanding among nations.



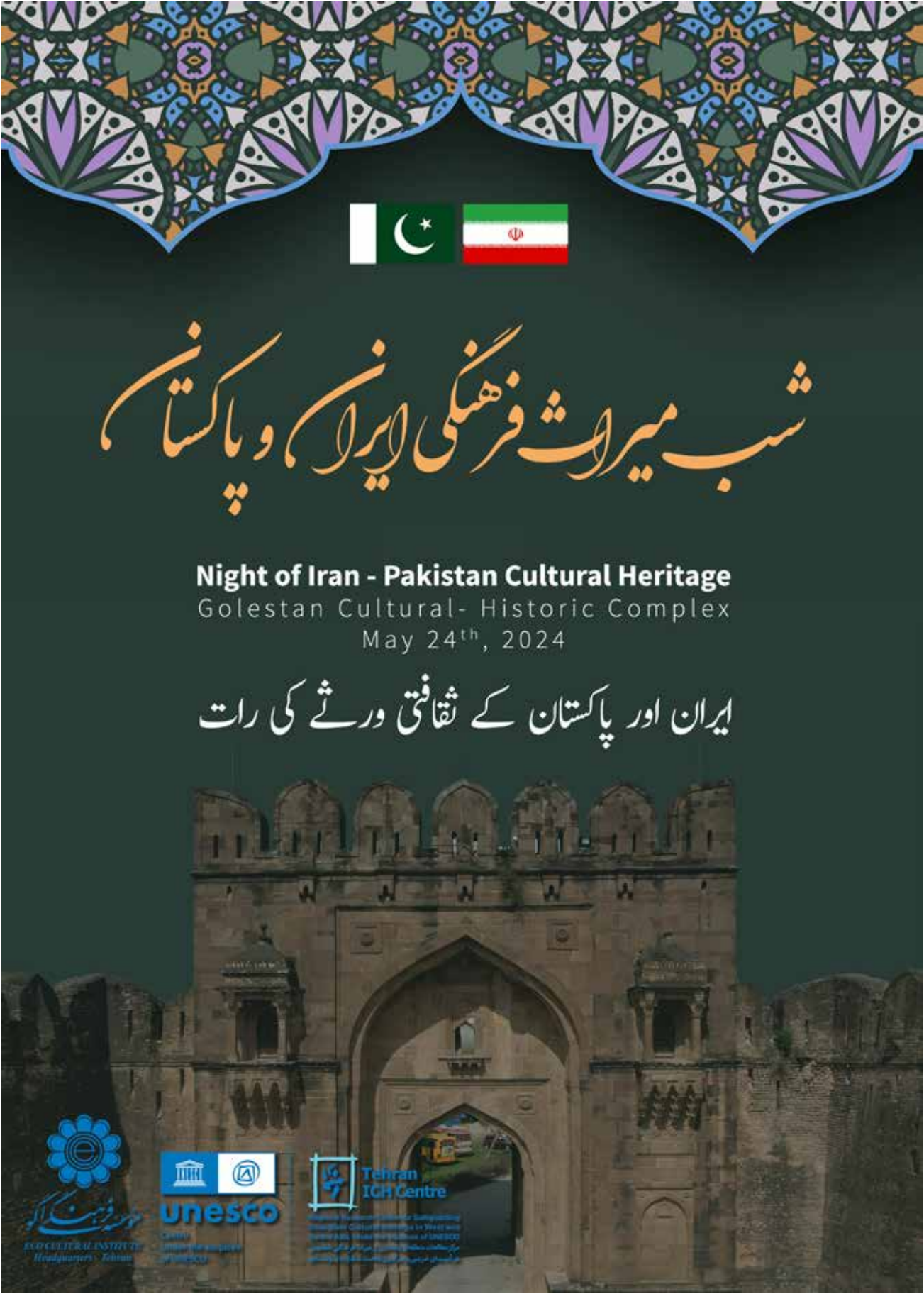
New year party-cum-Afghan Musical Night:

The ECO Cultural Institute's Headquarters hosted a vibrant Afghanistan Cultural Night and celebration of the arrival of New Year 2025 on 30 December 2024, featuring a rich tapestry of Afghan culture, showcasing art, poetry, and music. The evening commenced with the opening of a calligraphy exhibition by renowned artist Mr. Mohammad HussienAhmadi, alongside a handicraft exhibition that highlighted the exquisite craftsmanship of Afghan artisans. Attendees were captivated by the beauty and intricacy of the displayed works. Prominent Afghan poets took the stage for a poetry reading, enchanting the audience with their heartfelt verses. Notable poets included Mohsen Saeedi, Zahra Hossainzade, and Ehsan Badakhshani, who shared their reflections on culture, identity, and resilience. The night was filled with musical performances that resonated with the spirit of celebration. Talented artists Mr. Ali Daryab Bandari, Mr. Habib Mansouri, and Mr. Nesar Delahang entertained guests with traditional Afghan music, creating an atmosphere of joy and unity. The Musical Night commemorated the New Year and the President ECI along with the diplomats cut the



multi-storey New Year Cake at the ECI head office. The event was followed by the inauguration of Calligraphy Exhibition by Mohammad Hussain Ahmadi. (see the sub section on Exhibitions below for further details) Renowned educationist from the state of Jammu & Kashmir, Iftikhar Hossein Kazemi, was the chief guest.





Pakistan-Iran friendship Cultural Night:

The fourth event, in cooperation with the Tehran Intangible Cultural Heritage Center, was the Pakistan Iran Friendship and Cultural Heritage Night, where famous Pakistani pop singer Sahir Hasan's services were hired and his songs recorded. The night was scheduled at Golestan Palace for 24th May 2024 but had to be postponed due to the tragic demise of the then President of Iran in a helicopter accident. The new date is being finalized for early 2025.



Compilation of Audio Files of Nowruz Songs from across ECO:

The flagship program of the ECI related to MUSIC in 2024 was the year-long efforts to compile Audio Albums on Nowruz songs from all ten ECO Member Countries. Almost 90% of the work has been compiled and the ECI will try to upload the information on our new dynamic ECI website before the end of the January 2025.

CELEBRATING TRADITIONAL FESTIVALS

Nowruz, Yalda night & Sadeh festival

The ECI celebrates many local and traditional functions and festivals at its premises that are famous within the ECO member states such as Nowruz, Yalda, and Sadeh etc.

ECI & AMF Joint Celebrations of Nowruz and Arbor Day:

A harmonious blend of tradition and environmental consciousness marked the ancient Nowruz Celebration and Arbor Day tree planting. This significant event was orchestrated by the ECO Cultural Institute, Tehran Municipality's Center of International Communication, Asian Mayors' Forums, Abbasabad Renovation Company, and the Diplomatic Ladies Association. The ceremony was graced by the honorable spouse of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, along with foreign ambassadors, their spouses, and representatives from various international organizations.

The event featured distinguished speakers like Dr. Saad S. Khan, President ECI; Sayed Mohammad Hossein Hejazi, CEO, Abbasabad Renovation Company; Mohammad Mokhtari, CEO, Tehran



Parks Organization; and Hamid Reza Gholamzadeh, Secretary General, Asian Mayors' Forums.

In addition to the ceremonial aspects, the event showcased the Nowruz and Haft Sin exhibition, representing the ECO Member Countries and various Iranian cities. Post-exhibition, guests engaged in planting saplings and erecting placards adorned with their national flags.

This memorable ceremony took place on Monday, March 4, 2024, at ECO Park in Tehran, symbolizing a commitment to cultural heritage and the greening of our planet.

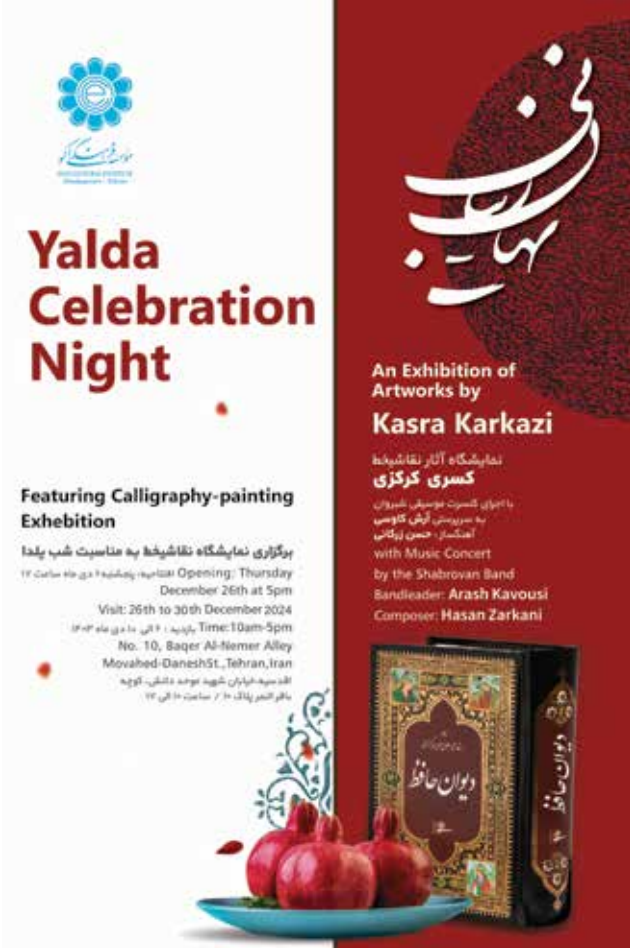
Heavenly Nowruz Celebration in ECI:

The ECO Cultural Institute hosted the Heavenly Nowruz Celebration on March 10, 2024, coinciding with the blessed month of Ramadan. The celebration was attended by high-ranking diplomats from the ECO region, including His Excellency Dr. Khusrav Noziri, the Honorable Secretary General of ECO, Dr. Huseyin Avni Bicakli, Deputy Secretary General of ECO, and His Excellency Mr. Nizomiddin Zohidi, the distinguished Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan to Iran. The event featured captivating performances of traditional music and spirited playing by Sorna and Dohol instruments. The celebration focused on the ancient Persian New Year, Nowruz, a celebration of new outlook, new thinking, sacrifice, and forgiveness.



Yalda Night Festival
at ECI:

A great musical evening was arranged in connection with the Yalda night (the longest night of the year) which is a customary celebration not only in Iran but across the ECO region. The event took place on 26th December 2024. The Shabrovan Music Band delivered a captivating music performance that resonated throughout the venue. Under the leadership of bandleader Arash Kavousi, the ensemble brought a fusion of traditional and contemporary sounds to life, enchanting the audience. The harmonious blend of music and art elevated the atmosphere, inviting guests to immerse themselves in the spirit of Yalda Night. The event was followed by the inauguration of Calligraphy Exhibition by Kasra Karkazi in which 17 pieces of his art were displayed. (see the sub section on Exhibitions below for further details)





DRAMA & THEATRE ARTS

The ECI arranged a number of well attended theatre performances throughout the year including:

Performance Taaziyah Theatre:



The ECI organized a theatre performance on August 26, 2024 for Taaziyah as part of its efforts at preserving the theatre traditions unique to Iran and the adjoining parts of the ECO region, during the lunar months of Moharram and Safar. The performance was liked by the attendees who found it impressive and unparalleled elsewhere in the world.



Isfahan Theatre Group Performance:



There was a unique musical and theatre group performance done by the Isfahan Theatre Group on 24 September 2024 with reference to the Yalda night while the second part was more related to the contemporary history of Iran. Diplomats from Arab, South Asian and European nations attended and appreciated the event.

Switzerland Solo Theatre Performance:

The Swiss Embassy in Tehran requested the ECI premises for a theater performance in its amphitheater on 15 April 2024 that lasted for two consecutive days and was well attended by diplomatic and non diplomatic participants.

The Arrangements for Iranian Women Theatre Performance competition are well underway and the event is likely to take place in ECI Amphitheatre from early to mid January 2025.



IV

FASHION, FOOD AND CULINARY DIPLOMACY

The ECI is keen on food and culinary diplomacy and warmly welcomes embassies and the diplomatic missions to host their traditional food and gourmet galas in our premises.

World Chef Day celebrations:

World Chef Day was held in collaboration with Cultural Coordination Center (CCC) of the Asian Cooperation for Dialogue (ACD) at the ECO Cultural Institute on 28 October 2024. There was an impressive participation of forty four (44) leading chefs from all across Iran in the celebrations. Diplomatic community from Tehran participated in the event and prizes and gifts were given to the outstanding chefs.



PIS&C Tehran's International Food Festival:

The ECO Cultural Institute hosted the food festival organized by the Pakistan International School & College (PIS&C), Tehran, on 22nd January 2024 showcasing a variety of Pakistani and international cuisines. The event aimed to promote cultural exchange and provide a platform for students and the wider community to come together and enjoy different culinary delights.

The festival featured a diverse range of food stalls, offering traditional Pakistani dishes such as biryani, samosas, and kebabs, as well as international favorites like pizza, pasta, and burgers. The students demonstrated support for the oppressed students of Palestine by wearing caps and sashes in the colors of Palestinian flags.



Lately, the Iran-Mexico Friendship Association has requested the venue for Mexican and **Latin American Food Festival**. Subject to concurrence by the Mexican Embassy in Tehran, permission will be granted to host the gourmet festival.

Pakistan Ladies Fashion and Clothing Exhibition:

An exhibition of Pakistani clothing and traditional dresses, especially focusing on ladies fashion, was organized on 31 October 2024. The event was attended by the spouses of the diplomatic community based in Tehran. Fashion designers from the University of Tehran including Ms Bintul Huda Naqavi organized the event where latest designs of female dressing of Pakistan & South Asia were showcased. The Wife of the Ambassador of Pakistan, Mrs Fatima Mudasser Tipu, graced the occasion as the chief guest for the event.



V

EXHIBITIONS OF ARTS & ARTWORKS

Calligraphy, Photography, Paintings, Miniatures & Architecture

The ECI portfolio of holding exhibitions to promote the arts such as traditional painting, miniature painting, Koranic and poetic calligraphy, photography, architecture and carpet weaving etc is fairly wide. Exhibitions on thematic areas such as environment, peace, tomb architecture etc and complimented by exhibitions featuring the works of one or more individual artists or calligraphers. Some of the important exhibitions held in ECI in 2024 include the following:

Afghan Calligraphers Exhibition:

The ECO Cultural Institute hosted an exhibition of calligraphy by three Afghan artists Mr Mehdi Meerzai, his wife Shakeela Alami and another artist Mr Salmanali Orozgani that started on 1st January 2024 and lasted for one week.



“Golden Nights”, an exhibition of calligraphy painting:

The ECO Cultural Institute hosted “Golden Nights,” an exhibition of calligraphy painting by renowned Iranian calligrapher Master Abbas Rahimi. The event took place on February 29, 2024, and was attended by diplomatic and cultural officials, art professors, and enthusiasts of calligraphy and painting. The exhibition showcased Mr. Rahimi’s masterpieces and included a live music performance and a Shahnameh reading by a young artist.







Visual Arts Exhibition on Unsafe Habitat to Raise Environmental Awareness:

Qermagnis exerat cuser magnis parum sincian dipsape rferum nosaperumquo bearion sectate nis delese nime dem fugit, delendanda sam, num sum rero estionse nem doluptiore veriasp erfero mos ent quatus, suntota as si omnisimpore nus earchic idisto maxim expero optasin re iniminis dicat quam suntota sit, nonsequam ut voluptam renis sam evelleset.



Turkmeni handicrafts exhibition:

The year 2024 has been declared the year of “Magtymguly Pyragy’s Fount of Mind,” with events planned both domestically and internationally to honour his legacy. The ECO published its special issue of its flagship publication “ECO Heritage” with cover story on Magtymguly Pyragi, provided by the Embassy of Turkmenistan.

The year was also celebrated by a seminar (See below in the relevant section of this Report) and on its side lines a one day exhibition of Turkmen handicrafts and one of photographs from Turkmenistan was held at the ECI on 12 March 2024. H E the President of ECI wore traditional Turkmen dress including Red cloak and white fur cap to mark the occasion.



“Bridging Cultures” Photography Exhibition Highlighted Ties Between Pakistan and Iran:

The ECI hosted a photography exhibition titled “Bridging Cultures” on 13 May 2024 to promote tourism in Pakistan and Iran. Featuring 60 photos by Pakistani artist Muzammil Hussain Toori, the exhibition showcased cultural ties between the two countries. Distinguished speakers, including Dr Haddad Adel, the ex Speaker of Iranian Majlis and the Chairman of the Saadi Foundation and Pakistan’s Ambassador to



the Islamic Republic of Iran, H E Mudassir Tipu discussed the importance of culture and tourism in the ECO region. The event also included a poetry recitation and a video message from the Managing Director of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation. The exhibition aimed to highlight the cultural nuances of Pakistan and Iran and inspire tourism in the region.



Carpet Pattern Exhibition:

A Carpet Pattern Exhibition showcasing the works of renowned carpet artist and restorer, Mr. Amiri opened at the ECI art gallery on June 16, 2024. The exhibition featured the hand-woven representation of Cyrus’ Cylinder by the Afghan artist. The exhibition highlighted Techniques and Traditions of Weaving. The opening ceremony included speeches by distinguished speakers, including Mr. Mazinani from the Tehran Carpet Restorers Association, Mr. Yusuf Samadi Bahrami, Mr. Ebrahim Heydari, Director of the Asian Association, and Mr. Amiri, provided insights into various aspects of carpet artistry. Their discussions covered topics such as the evolution of carpet restoration, diverse restoration techniques, preservation techniques for hand-woven carpets, weaving and dyeing methodologies, and the societal respect accorded to carpet restorers.





ECI’s ‘Cheragh Afrooz-e Chashm’--A Showcase of Miniature Persian Art and Tradition:

The exhibition ‘Cheragh Afrooz-e Chashm’ (Illuminating Vision), featuring artworks by four top women artists including Soraya Asgari, Farideh Ashrafi, Nassim Barati and Saba Sohbati, was held at the ECI’s art gallery from September 15 to 19, 2024. The event offered an opportunity to explore the enchanting world of Persian traditional art through a stunning display of miniature painting, tadhīb (Islamic illumination), and the nightingale and flower motif.



ECI Art Gallery Unveiled ‘Karshio’--A Minimalistic Journey Through ECO Architecture

The ECI’s art gallery hosted a painting exhibition titled “Karshio” from September 9 to 12, 2024. This exhibition showcased 42 minimalistic paintings by Iranian artist Rashid Keyvani, focusing on the architecture of ECO member countries.



Calligraphy Exhibition by Kasra Karkazi:

The inauguration of Calligraphy Exhibition by Kasra Karkazi in which 17 pieces of his art were displayed was held on 26 December 2024 right after Yalda Night musical evening (see the previous section. Karkazi’s exhibition beautifully blended the traditional art of calligraphy with contemporary painting techniques, creating a unique visual experience. His artworks are characterized by intricate designs, inviting viewers to immerse themselves in the beauty of the written word. Each piece serves as a testament to his exceptional skill and creativity, reflecting the rich cultural heritage of the ECO region.



Ink And Diplomacy: Prestigious International Calligraphy Exhibition

An art exhibition titled “Poetic Strokes Exhibition: Bridging Cultures Through Persian Calligraphy” was held on June 22, 2024 at the ECI art gallery highlighting the significant role of cultural diplomacy in modern international relations. The event showcased calligraphic artwork of poetry by artists from various regions, emphasizing the unifying power of art. Keynote speaker of the event was H.E. Dr. Danvivathana, Secretary General of Asian Cooperation Dialogue who underscored the importance of art in fostering dialogue among nations. The ceremony was well-attended by diplomats, art lovers, and citizens, reflecting the proactive efforts of the ECO Cultural Institute in promoting cultural exchange.



Calligraphy Exhibition by Mohammad Hussain Ahmadi:

The New year party plus Afghan cultural night celebrations in the ECI was followed by calligraphy exhibition of Afghan Artist Mohammad Hussain Ahmadi in which 40 pieces of his calligraphic work were displayed. Ahmadi is recognized as a prominent master of Afghan calligraphy, whose art embodies the rich cultural heritage of Afghanistan. Attendees engaged with Ahmadi, gaining insights into his creative process and inspirations. The exhibition highlighted his brilliant talent and celebrated Afghan culture through the art of calligraphy. Ahmadi's works continue to inspire, affirming his significance in the artistic landscape of Afghanistan.

Renowned educationist from the state of Jammu & Kashmir, Iftikhar Hossein Kazemi, was the chief guest.



VI

ACADEMIC EVENTS

Conferences, Seminars, Webinars, Book Launches etc

The ECI, like in past years, actively participated in the 35th Tehran International Book Fair, and organized, co-organized or participated in literary events related to Mawlana Rumi, Saadi Shirazi, Allama Iqbal (Lahori), Abol Hakeem Ferdowsi, and on other literary luminaries across the ECO region. The ECI also arranged a well attended seminar on the importance of translations.

There were many other research and academic seminars on wide ranging topics including anti human trafficking endeavours, research on museums and a host of training activities on linguistics, arts and design.

The ECI also arranged book launches of books from Iran, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Pakistan etc.

Due to brevity of space, only the most important events are recounted below:

Book launch of “Laili and Majnoon”:

The book launch of two editions of “Laili and Majnun”: one authored by Shahin Bukharaee and translated into Persian by Dr. Reza Kiani, and the other written by Shah-Karim Khayberdi and translated into Persian by Ms. Gaukhar Omarkhanva was the hallmark of the Nizami Ganjavi event. The seminar of March 11, 2024 was wrapped up by the unveiling of above two books.

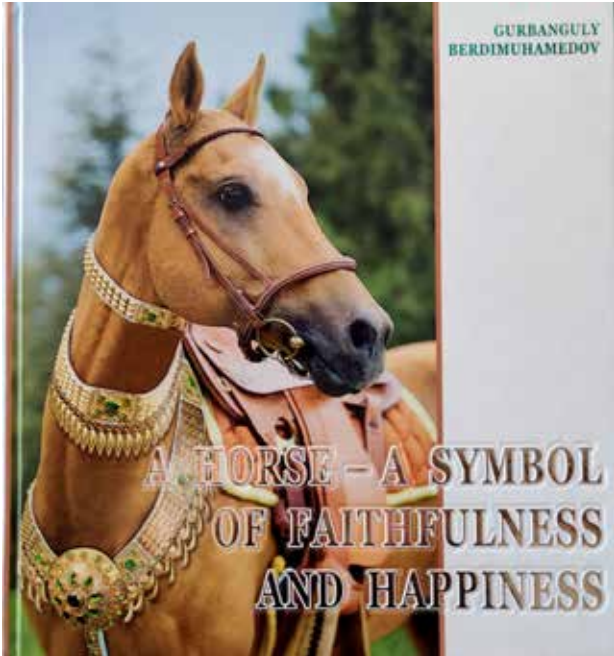
A Legacy of Literature-- Marking 300 Years of Magtymguly Pyragi:

The ECO Cultural Institute in collaboration with Embassy of Turkmenistan in Tehran, organized a ceremony on March 12, 2024, at the ECI’s Headquarters, celebrating the 300th anniversary of poet Magtymguly Pyragi. At the event, speakers from the ECO region discussed Magtymguly’s works and recited his poems.



**Launch of Book written
by PRESIDENT OF
TURKMENISTAN:**

The book “Youth - the support of the Motherland”, by President Serdar Berdimuhamedov, was launched on 12 March 2024 during the seminar on Magdumguly Pyragy. The speakers highlighted the wisdom of the young President Serdar Berdimuhamedov and highlighted his thoughts and ideas. The President ECI offered the ECI platform to unveil other books written by the Turkmen national leader (and father of the incumbent President) Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov in all ECO member states through the good offices of the Institute.



**“Nazm-e Del with
Nezami”-- A Tribute to the
Legendary Poet:**

The ECO Cultural Institute hosted an international seminar titled “Nazm-e Del with Nezami” on March 11, 2024, at its Headquarters to celebrate the literary contributions of Nezami Ganjavi, a distinguished poet and storyteller from the ECO region. Various speakers from ECO countries addressed the importance of cultural figures in fostering friendships among member states, promoting cultural heritage, and the impact of Nezami’s poetry on regional unity.



President attended event in Islamabad on Abai book:

The President ECI was the guest of honor at the Book and translations launch ceremony of the Kazakhstan national poet Ibrahim Abai held at Islamabad on 10 April 2024 jointly organized by the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Islamabad and the National University of Modern Languages of Pakistan.

Four translations of the epoch-making book of Ibrahim Abai, named The Advice, was translated into the four regional languages of Pakistan, namely, Punjabi, Pushto, Sindhi and Balochi. The four translated books were unveiled at the ceremony. In his speech President ECI, His Excellency Dr Saad S Khan underscored the similarity in messages of Ibrahim Abai and Allama Iqbal.



ECI Seminar on the importance of translations:

On the sidelines of the 35th Tehran International Book Fair, the ECI hosted a Seminar on the importance of Translations on May 13, 2024. Several dignitaries, including Dr. Alireza Ghazveh, Head of the Office of Poetry and Music of the Radio and TV Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Dr. Ali Bayat, Assistant Professor of Tehran University, and others, discussed the significance of translating literary works from ECO countries. They highlighted the role of translation in strengthening friendship, promoting cultural heritage, fostering interactions, and understanding between people of the region.



International Seminar on Pakistan and Urdu Studies in Iran:

On the occasion of the death anniversary of Allama Mohammad Iqbal, also known as Iqbal Lahori, the ECI and Faculty of Literature and Humanities of Tehran University, jointly organized an international seminar on "Pakistan and Urdu Studies" in Iran on April 21, 2024 at the ECI Conference Hall.

At the opening of this Seminar, H E Dr. Saad S Khan emphasized the importance of deep connection between Persian and Urdu languages and Mr. Mohammad Muadaser Tipu, Honorable Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Dr. Abdulreza Saif, Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Literature and Humanities of Tehran University, expressed their views online about the importance and the need for paying further attention to the "Pakistan and Urdu Studies in

Iran".

Other speakers of Seminar included: Dr. Najeeba Arif, Dr. Mohammad Salim Mazhar, Mr. Mohammad Abbasi, Dr. Ali Shahidi, Dr. Ali Bayat, Dr. Ali Kavousi Nezhad, Dr. Saeed Shirazi and Dr. Vafa Yazdanmanesh.

During the Seminar, a documentary film on Pakistan's rich culture and its tourist attractions was broadcasted. The event also featured the Iranian students of Urdu language and literature performing a song by Allama Iqbal and Urdu poetry recitations.

The ECI also hosted a big international conference on Urdu and Pakistan Studies in Iran and it was followed by a series of seminars titled Mashal e Urdu (lit: the torch of Urdu) held throughout the year, some which are listed below within this section.



Saadi’s Wisdom as a Guiding Light for Countless Souls:

A ceremony titled “Saadi Treasure” was held on April 22, 2024, at the ECI Headquarters to commemorate Saadi Shirazi. The event was organized in partnership with the Society for Appreciation of Cultural Works and Dignitaries (SACWD), Tehran.

At the event, Dr. Saad S Khan, President ECI, extolled Saadi as a universal mentor whose insights have transcended time and borders. “Saadi Shirazi is not merely a poet; he is a scholar of life and a sage of ethics

whose wisdom has illuminated the path for countless souls,” Dr. Khan remarked. He emphasized the pivotal role played by cultural luminaries across the vast ECO region, in guiding humanity with their enlightened thoughts, with Saadi’s works being a cornerstone in this intellectual tapestry.

The seminar also featured insights from Dr. Mahmoud Shalooei, Head of the Iranian Society for Appreciation of Cultural Works and Dignitaries, Mr. Abdolmehdi Mostakin, a renowned Iranian scholar and expert on Saadi’s oeuvre.

As the seminar unfolded, the enchanting melodies of Saadi’s poems filled the air. Mr. Mohsen Karimi and Mr. Ali Khodaei, Iranian singers and musicians, paid homage to Saadi’s timeless legacy through their performances.



Book launch of collection of Dr Ghazveh poetry:

On the sidelines of the 35th Tehran International Book Fair, the ECI hosted a literary event on May 13, 2024 that featured the launching of the book “Flowing Eyes in Euphrates,” a collection of poems by Dr. Alireza Ghazveh, translated into Urdu by Syed Ahmad Hussain. The book represents a collaboration between Iranian and Pakistani cultural figures. Its publication underscores the shared cultural heritage and the positive impact of translation in fostering regional understanding and collaboration within the ECO framework.



ECO-IOM Joint Seminar on human trafficking:

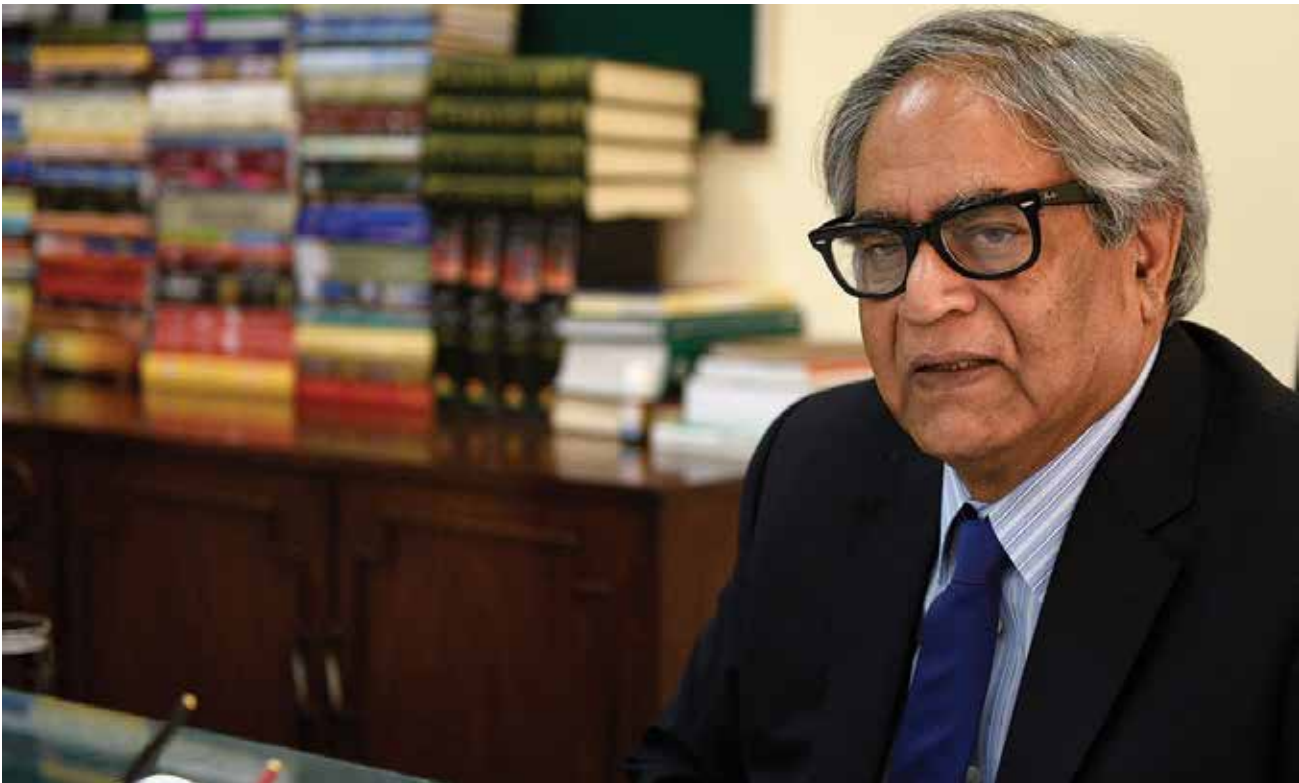
The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) jointly organized a two-day workshop on 29-30 July 2024 in Tehran on human trafficking in the region. The IOM and ECO requested the ECI to be allowed use of its premises for the concluding ceremony, the farewell dinner music show, and the exhibition on human trafficking. All the requests were acceded to by the ECI and arrangements were accordingly made.

Amongst the notable speakers were Khusrav Noziri, the Secretary General ECO, the President of ECI and the Country Director of IOM at the event which was widely attended and appreciated.



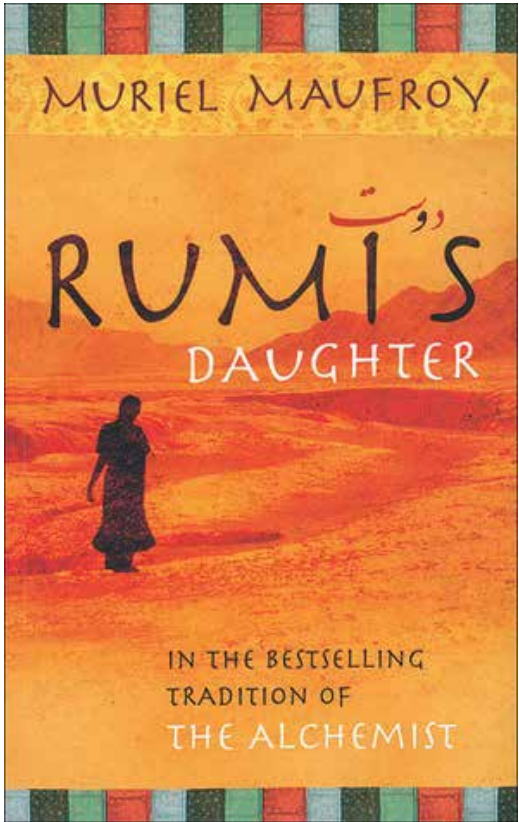
MASHAL E URDU-1
A Tribute to Iftikhar
Hussain Arif:

The ECI hosted a celebration of Urdu language and culture at its Headquarter on June 21, 2024. The event commemorated the life and work of renowned Pakistani poet and former ECI President Iftikhar Hussain Arif. Urdu language professors and students discussed Mr. Arif’s poetry and legacy, while speakers highlighted the importance of preserving and promoting the Urdu language. The event included poetry readings and cultural exchange.



MASHAL E URDU-2
Urdu Language Professors
Discuss ‘Rumi’s Daughter’:

The second installment of “Torch of Urdu in ECO Member Countries” literary series was convened on July 8, 2024 at the ECI Library to explore the novel “Rumi’s Daughter.” Translated into Urdu by Anam Nadeem, a talented Pakistani author, this book took center stage in the literary discourse. Urdu language professors, Urdu speakers and Persian and Urdu students participated in this literary event.



Cultural Exchange: Abai’s Poems Presented to ECI President:

Ms. Gaukhar Omarkhanova, a translator and representative of Kazakhstan’s cultural society, presented a book of Abai’s poems in English to Dr. Saad Khan, the President of the ECI, during their meeting on September 5, 2024, at the ECI .

During their meeting, they discussed launching the book “Laily and Majnoon” and organizing cultural events to promote joint cooperation. The book of Abai’s poems, which spans 152 pages, was translated into English and published in Kazakhstan in 2017.



MASHAL E URDU-3 Book Discussion Session on “Yeh jo Lahore se mohabbat hai”:

The ECI hosted the visiting Pakistani poet, who is also an established medical physician, Dr Samar Abbas, on 23 September 2024, for a discussion on his book Yeh jo Lahore se mohabbat hai. Several Urdu experts from the Islamic Republic of Iran spoke on the evolution of modern and comic poetry in Urdu language.



Celebrating Tajik Literature-- “Paris Diary”:

On November 5, 2024, the ECO Cultural Institute’s headquarters witnessed a celebration of Tajik literature with the launch of “Paris Diary,” a captivating work by Master Qutbi Kirom, the renowned People’s Poet of Tajikistan and winner of the prestigious Rudaki Literary Award. The event was attended by distinguished gathering of ambassadors, and prominent scholars from ECO member countries.

The launch not only highlighted the rich literary contributions of Tajikistan but also underscored the importance of cultural exchange among nations. With eloquent readings and insightful discussions, the evening celebrated the power of poetry to bridge cultures and foster deeper connections within the ECO community. The book launch was attended by diplomats from the European and the ECO nations.



International Event Celebrating “Abai’s Legacy, World Pride of Kazakhstan”:

The ECO Cultural Institute in collaboration with the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Tehran hosted an international event on August 15, 2024, titled “Abai’s Legacy, World Pride of Kazakhstan,” to celebrate the life and works of Abai, a renowned Kazakh poet, philosopher, and social reformer. The event took place at ECI’s auditorium and was attended by ambassadors from ECO member countries, officials, writers, and researchers. Notable speeches were delivered by H.E. Mr. Ontalap Onalbayev, the Ambassador of Kazakhstan, and Dr. Saad S. Khan, President of ECI, highlighting Abai’s global cultural impact and the importance of translating his works. The event featured speeches by Dr. Husayn Avni Bichakli,

Dr. Alireza Habibi, and Ms. Gaukhar Omarkhanova, moderated by Dr. Zahra Aslani. Videos of speeches by Mr. Hossein Aghazadeh, Dr. Safar Abdullah, Dr. Islam Chamani, Mrs. Bakytzhamal Ospanova, and Mrs. Murfugha Shapian were also broadcasted. The ceremony was further enriched by the unveiling of a woven tapestry depicting Abai’s image and the launch of a music album dedicated to him. Attendees also had the opportunity to view an exhibition of Kazakh handicrafts and browse books about Abai’s life and work. As a tribute to the rich cultural heritage of Kazakhstan, the President ECI attended the event, wearing the Kazakh traditional dress.



ECI Collaborated with ICOM to Promote Peace Through Cultural Diplomacy:

The ECO Cultural Institute in cooperation with International Council of Museums (ICOM), International Peace Heritage Institute and Iranian Peace Studies Scientific Association held a seminar on the role of cultural diplomacy in creating peace on 10 September 2024. The seminar featured key speakers including the ECI President, Chairman of Iran National Committee of Museums, former Head of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicraft Research Institute, and the Advisor to the Deputy Minister of Culture, Tourism and Handicrafts. The speakers emphasized the importance of cultural heritage and diplomacy in fostering understanding and peace among people in the region.



ECI organized two Essay Writing Competitions on Shayer e Mashriq (Poet of the East):

The ECI organized two essay writing competitions to celebrate the 147th birth anniversary celebrations of the Poet of the East, Allama Mohammad Iqbal, one each for the children/ school students and other for the university students and the adults in three languages: Turkish, Urdu and Persian. The top three prizes in both categories were awarded cash prized with appreciation certificates.





ECI organized Iqbal poetry recitation event at Ahle Bayt University on Birth Anniversary of Iqbal:

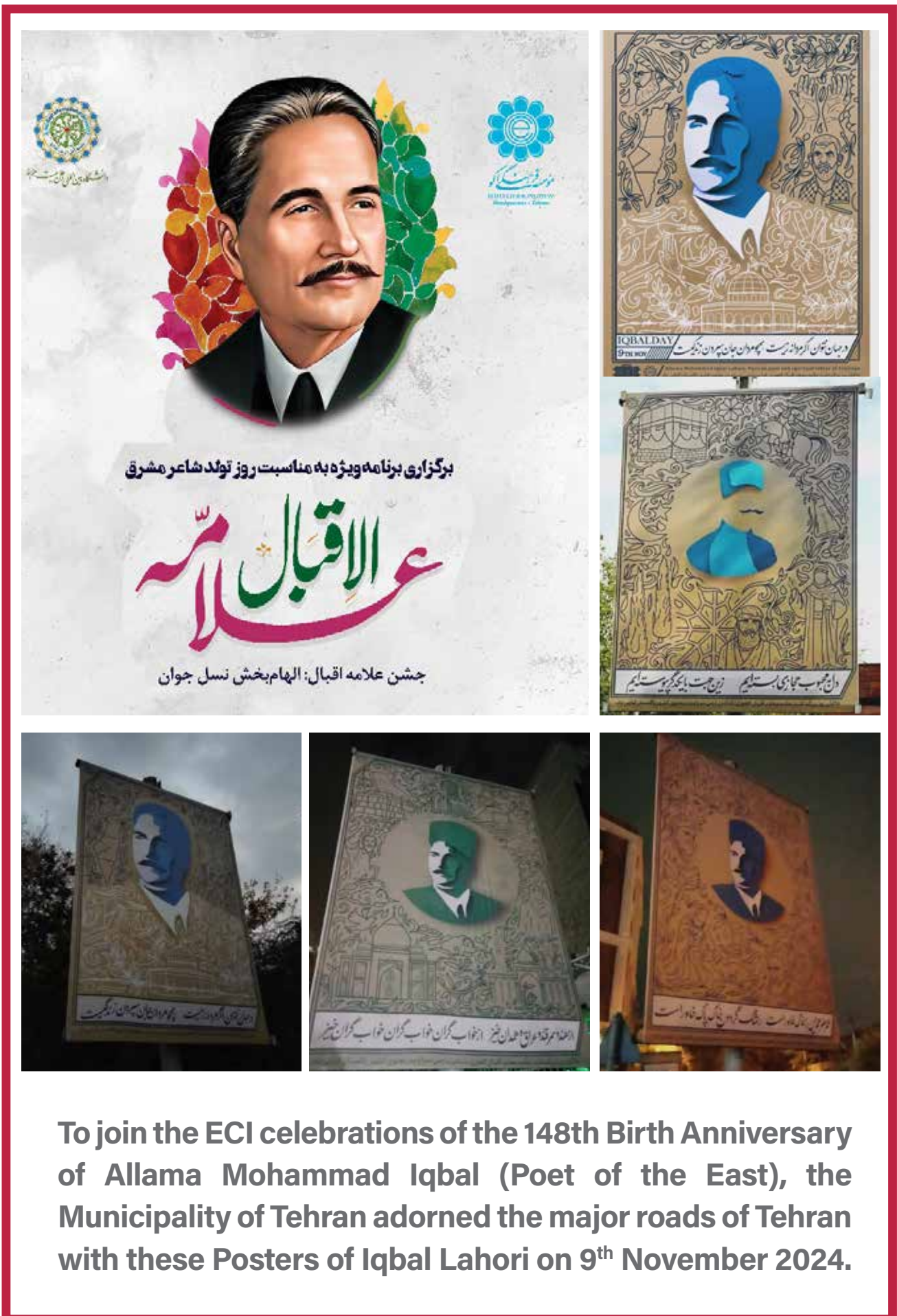
The ECI organized a big poetry recitation event on 9 Nov 2024 on the achievements of poet philosopher Allama Mohammad Iqbal in conjunction with the Students Association from Pakistan and India. The event was presided over by the Chancellor of the Ahl a Bayt University Dr Saeed Jazari, and was well attended. Student recited poetry of Allama Mohammad Iqbal and presented speeches on his life and works. This was followed by a dinner hosted by the ECI.



ECI participated in the Iqbal event jointly organized by Tehran University and the Embassy of Pakistan in Tehran:

The ECI participated in the Iqbal memorial seminar on 12 Nov 2024 at the Tehran University jointly organized by the Faculty of Languages and the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in Islamabad.

The event featured speeches from the President ECI H. E. Saad S. Khan, the Ambassador of Pakistan H E Mudasser Tipu, distinguished Pakistani professor Dr Zahid Munir Amir and the Dean of the Faculty of languages Prof Abdul Raza Saif on the life and achievements of Iqbal.



To join the ECI celebrations of the 148th Birth Anniversary of Allama Mohammad Iqbal (Poet of the East), the Municipality of Tehran adorned the major roads of Tehran with these Posters of Iqbal Lahori on 9th November 2024.

ECI International Literary Event to Promote Reading Culture:

An international literary event titled “Books: Borderless Ambassadors” was organized by the ECI at its Headquarters on Tuesday, November 19, 2024 coinciding with the commemoration of the 32nd Book Week of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The event was featuring launch of books by various authors from the ECO region. The Deputy Secretary General of the ECO H E Jandos Asanov graced the event with his presence. The event aimed to promote Reading Culture within the ECO region and to open new avenues for literary research by showcasing the works of prominent writers and poets from member countries. Among the notable works presented was “ECI Diplomatic Library: A Reflection of the Unity Among ECO Nations” by Dr. Zahra Aslani. From Afghanistan, Dr. Ahmad Zia Rafat showcased his poetry collection titled “Hamrang-e Khodat Bash.” In Iran, “Afsaneha-ye Zir-e

Chador,” authored by Sally Pomme Chyton aNational nd translated by Dr. Ali Malayjerdi, was highlighted. Pakistan was represented by a collaborative work, “Faghat Yek Mosht Ostekhan,” also translated by Dr. Ali Malayjerdi. Dr. Talib Karim Azarakhsh presented his poetry collection “Be Bahane-ye Baharan” from Tajikistan, with transliteration by Jalal Hojjati Fahim. Kazakhstan’s contributions included Maqpal Zhumabay’s poetry collection “Ashaar-e Mozun-e Maghpal,” translated by Gaukhar Omarkhanova, as well as “Abai’s Legacy, World Pride of Kazakhstan,” a collection of articles compiled by Dr. Zahra Aslani, also translated by Gaukhar Omarkhanova. Dr. Nurgul Shaidulaeva from Kyrgyzstan shared her work titled “Cultural - Literary Common Grounds of Iran and Kyrgyzstan.” Lastly, Dr. Ja’far Muhammad Termezi (Jafar Kholmuminov) represented Uzbekistan with his poetry collection “Abr-e Darya Del.”



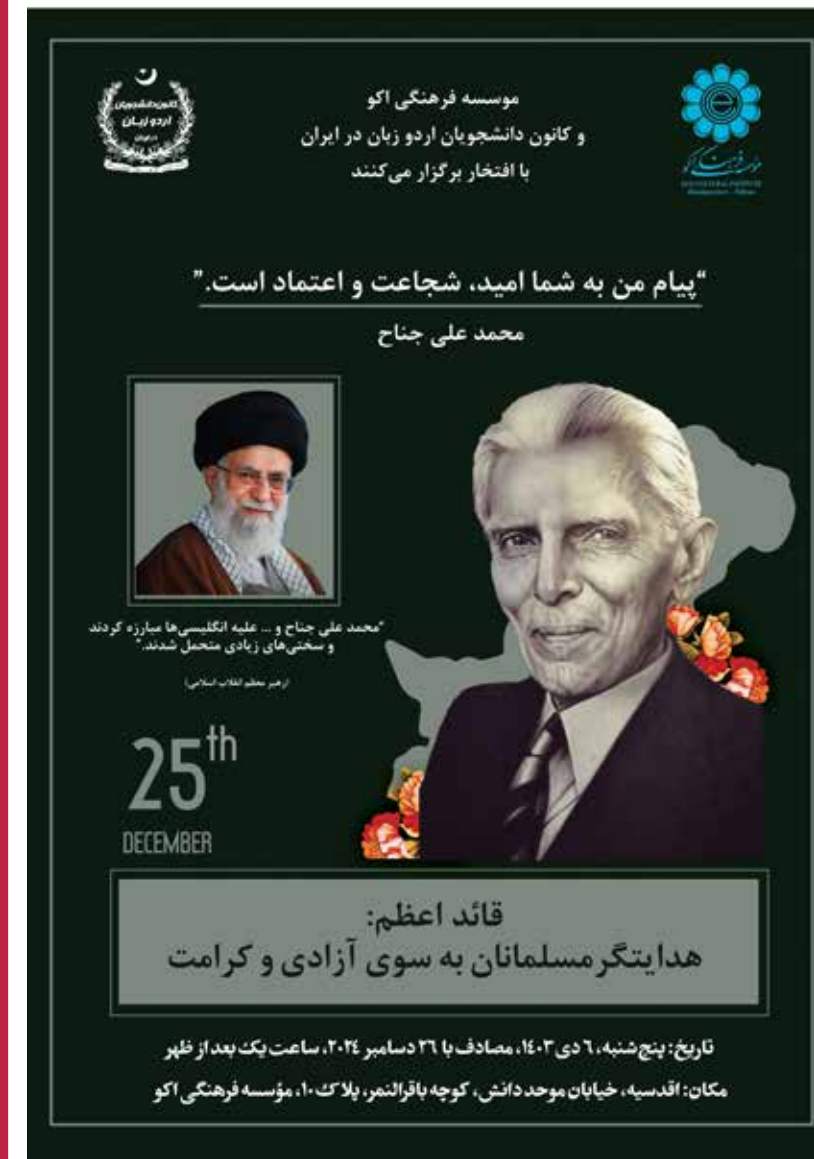
Seminar on legendary statesman Quaid e Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah:

The ECI organized, on 26th December 2024, a cultural celebration through songs and poetry, the 148th birth anniversary of Quaid e Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the undisputed leader of the Muslims of South Asia, and the leader of independence movement for the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The event was presided over by the Charge D'Affairs of Pakistan/ Deputy Head of Mission, Ms Ismat Hassan Sial, as the chief guest while diplomats from Niger, Tajikistan and others attended.

The event was participated by students from Iran, South Asia and Africa, studying in various universities. The prizes on Iqbal Essay Competition in all three languages (Urdu, Persian and Turkish) were also granted. A number of noted scholars and luminaries including Prof Ali Bayat, Prof Zahid Munir Amir, Prof Ali Kausinejad, Hassan Naqavi, and Rashid Naqavi addressed the event.

Songs and poems related to the life and achievements of Mohammad Ali Jinnah were recited.

The municipality of Tehran decorated important roads and crossings of Tehran with posters and banners depicting the photographs of Mohammad Ali Jinnah as a way to pay homage to his great struggle for liberation of the Muslims of South Asia.



To join the ECI celebrations of the 149th Birth Anniversary of Mohammad Ali Jinnah (Founder of Pakistan), popularly known as Quaid e Azam (i.e. the Great Leader) the Municipality of Tehran adorned the major roads of Tehran with these Posters of Mr Jinnah on 25 December 2024.

VII

POETRY SESSIONS FROM ACROSS E.C.O POETS

Time and again, the ECI brought together poets from ECO member countries to compose and recite their poetry on important events. Those events included the tragic helicopter accident in which the President of Iran lost his life along with his senior officials. There were other events such as Aashura which are commemorated in poetry all over the ECO region and beyond. To give opportunity to the poets to present their cultural and literary expressions to broader audience, the ECI continued to hold literary events within and outside Iran. Some of the important ones held in ECI are listed below, some others are listed under their relevant sections.

Poetic Homage from poets from across E.C.O states for deceased President Raisi of Iran and other high dignitaries of helicopter tragedy:

The Poetry Evening for Martyrs of the May 19 Helicopter crash carrying the President, Foreign Minister and other dignitaries of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was held on June 24, 2024, at the ECI. This poignant event attended by officials and poets from Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Türkiye. The evening was marked by heartfelt speeches and moving poetry recitations, all dedicated to honoring the late Iranian President Raisi, and other martyrs. The highlight of the evening was the poetry recitations. Poets from the participating countries recited their works in Persian, Urdu, and Turkish, each poem a tribute to the martyrs. The event was a touching homage to those who have given their lives in service, bringing together a community in remembrance and respect.



Ashura'i Poetry Evening
from E.C.O states' poets:

The ECI held a poetry reading event called “Ashura'i Poetry Evening” on July 25, 2024. Poets from Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Türkiye recited poems in Persian, Urdu, and Turkish about the martyrdom of Imam Hussain highlighting the importance of Aashura which falls on the tenth day of the month of Moharram in the Islamic (lunar) Hijra Calendar. The event was organized by Mr. Syed Ahmed Hussain, a Pakistani poet. The event highlighted the importance of poetry in expressing religious and cultural values commemorating the martyrs of Karbala tragedy.



Poetic Reading Session of poets from E.C.O States to remember Middle East:

In a moving tribute to Syed Hassan Nasrallah and four thousand civilians who died in the Israeli bombing campaigns in Lebanon, a poetry reading event titled “Yaran Nasrallah” took place on October 3, 2024. The event was organized by the ECO Cultural Institute in collaboration with the Islamic Revolution Art Bureau of Qom Province.

The gathering featured eight esteemed poets from ECO member countries, including Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, and Türkiye who recited their works in honor of the martyr of resistance. The event was graced with the presence of Dr. Saad S. Khan, President of the ECO Cultural Institute.

VIII

TRAINING COURSES HELD BY E.C.I

The ECI offered its facilities for learning activities including calligraphy art, carpets weaving and restoration, art and various linguistic courses.

Workshop on Carpet Weaving & Restoration:

Coupled with the ECO states carpet exhibition, explained elsewhere in the report, the ECI organized a workshop on the art of carpet weaving and the old carpet restoration concomitantly at the ECI. Leading scholars and professors of Carpet art explained the restoration techniques, that started along with the Carpet Exhibition (listed earlier) on 16 June 2024. Simultaneous stalls having artisans displaying the carpet restoration techniques attracted students and amateurs alike in this unique art.



ECI Offered Insight into Persian Art with 'Negarineh-Khat' Calligraphy Course:

The ECI conducted a calligraphy course on the 'Negarineh-Khat' Persian calligraphy style from July to August 2024, taught by master Abbas Rahimi, the inventor of this style. The course lasting two months and multiple sessions was held at the ECI Library. Twelve budding artists and calligraphers from ECO member states were not only offered the training free of charge but were also given gift cards to cover their costs. At the final session, participants were awarded certificates of completion by the ECI.



Cooperation with the Saadi foundation students of Persian Summer Course:

The ECI took keen interest in the annual summer course for Persian students overseas that is conducted by the Saadi Foundation, Tehran. The ECI maintained liaison so that the course is well publicized in the ECO member states. For instance, there were no Persian students from the neighboring ECO state of Pakistan in the summer courses for quite some years. Due to ECO efforts, sizeable number applied from that country and eight students and one teacher of Persian were selected to attend the Summer Course. The Saadi Foundation also extended the courtesy by waiving off the Euro 400 course fee, however, the students were obliged to buy their own air tickets from travel to and from Tehran to their country of origin. However, their local lodge and board was arranged by the Saadi Foundation free of charge for the duration of their three weeks stay. The ECO took care of the 16 Persian students and teachers who had come from

ECO member countries such as Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Pakistan and Afghanistan; arranged their friendly visit to the ECI head office, the President ECI hosted a dinner in their honor 13 August 2024, and the ECI reimbursed upto half of their travel costs within the prescribed ceiling due to ECI's limited resources.




Language Courses in Urdu, Turkish and Persian languages in E.C.I:

Due to lack of adequate opportunities to learn ECO countries national languages, the ECI planned to organize three months basis learning courses for the following three largest languages spoken in the ECO region:

- Urdu
- Turkish
- Persian

The ECI has opening registration and engaged language teachers. As soon as the requisite number of students for each language course are attained, the classes will begin for three days a week in each language at the ECI main library.



Urdu Language Course
For Diplomats, Diplomatic Families and Embassy Staff

Language of Instruction will be English

Course Duration- 03 Months
Expected Start date: 20 Feb, 2025

Language Outcomes

- 1 Urdu Alphabet
- 2 Quick Reference Page
- 3 Pronunciation in Urdu
- 4 Some Basic Expressions (Vocabulary- Reading- Writing)
- 5 Simple Sentence Making for Dialogue
- 6 Grammar and Conjugation of Verbs

Fee 300\$ For Diplomats, Diplomatic Families and Embassy Staff

Level: Beginner
Sessions: 3 Days (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday)
Timing: 14 p.m- 16 p.m
Venue: The Library of ECI

Address:
No. 10, Baqer Al-nemer Alley, Movahed Danesh st. Tehran, Iran

00982127673238 0098353515627 samana.abid@ecieco.org



دوره مقدماتی زبان اردو
ویژه گردشگران، دانشجویان و علاقه مندان به زبان اردو

با اعطای مدرک آموزش زبان اردو از طرف مؤسسه فرهنگی اکتو

- ۱ سه جلسه متوالی در هفته
- ۲ جلسه های گفتارمحور (گفت و گو)
- ۳ آشنایی با گرامر لازم
- ۴ تسهیل در ارتباط با مخاطبین اردو زبان
- ۵ کلمات و جملات روزمره
- ۶ محاورات و ضرب المثل ها
- ۷ مهارت در (گفتار / نوشتار / خواندن)

سطح: مبتدی
جلسات: ۳ روز در هفته (دوشنبه، سه شنبه، چهارشنبه)
زمان: ۱۴ تا ۱۶ بعد از ظهر
محل برگزاری: کتابخانه ECI

آدرس: مؤسسه فرهنگی اکتو، خیابان موجد دانش (آنداسیه)، کوچه باقرانمر، شماره ۱۰
تلفن: ۰۰۹۸۲۱۲۷۶۷۳۲۳۸ ۰۰۹۸۹۰۵۷۱۱۲۸۹ ۰۰۹۸۲۲۱۷۳۲۰۸



Turkish Language Course
Offered by Native Speakers from the Yunus Emre Institute

Open to Diplomats, Their Families, and Staff of International Organizations

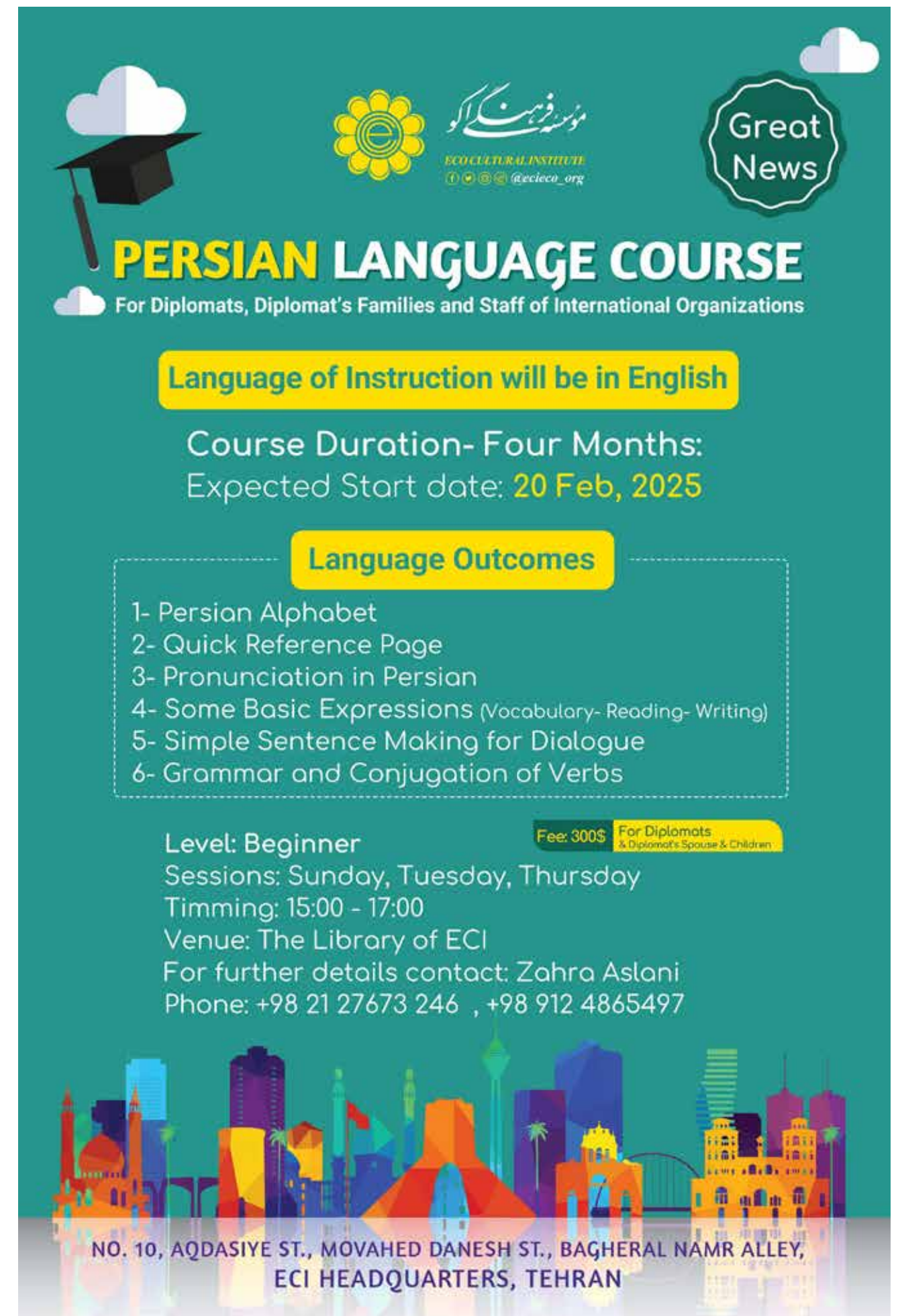
Course Details

- Level: Beginner
- Fee: \$300
- Class Days and Hours: Sunday-Wednesday, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM
- Location: Library of the ECO Cultural Institute
- Course Start Date: February 2, 2025
- Course End Date: March 15, 2025
- Total Class Hours: 30 (additional 30 hours after Nowruz)

Additional Information

- Classes will be formed based on demand and participant capacity.
- Open to individuals aged 16 and older.
- A certificate of participation will be awarded upon course completion.

Contact Information
Address: No. 10, Baqer Al-Nemer Alley, Movahed Danesh Street, Tehran, Iran
Phone: 00989302476260 - 00982127673200
Email: yezrak@ecieco.org



PERSIAN LANGUAGE COURSE
For Diplomats, Diplomat's Families and Staff of International Organizations

Language of Instruction will be in English

Course Duration- Four Months:
Expected Start date: 20 Feb, 2025

Language Outcomes

- 1- Persian Alphabet
- 2- Quick Reference Page
- 3- Pronunciation in Persian
- 4- Some Basic Expressions (Vocabulary- Reading- Writing)
- 5- Simple Sentence Making for Dialogue
- 6- Grammar and Conjugation of Verbs

Level: Beginner
Sessions: Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday
Timing: 15:00 - 17:00
Venue: The Library of ECI
For further details contact: Zahra Aslani
Phone: +98 21 27673 246 , +98 912 4865497

Fee: 300\$ For Diplomats & Diplomat's Spouse & Children

NO. 10, AQDASIYE ST., MOVAHED DANESH ST., BAQHERAL NAMR ALLEY,
ECI HEADQUARTERS, TEHRAN

IX

PARTICIPATION IN TEHRAN INT'L BOOK FAIR

Like every past year, the ECI participated in the Tehran International Book Fair which was the 35th such mega event held in Iran during 2024. The ECI's stall, located in the International Publishers section, showcased an impressive collection of over 50 books. These publications, authored by distinguished writers from the ECO region, covered a wide range of topics.

Also, Dr. Saad S. Khan, President ECI attended the opening ceremony of the 35th Tehran International Book Fair where he explored the booths of various foreign publishers.

The President ECI visited the booths of Islamic Culture & Relations Organization (ICRO), National Library and Documentation Organization of Iran, Saadi Foundation,

Martyr Qasem Soleimani Foundation, and Shariati Foundation. The President also made it a point to visit all booths representing the ECO member states including Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Türkiye. During these visits, Dr. Khan engaged in discussions with their leaders and experts about enhancing cooperation and cultural exchanges.

Through these interactions, he gained insights into the latest advancements in publishing and the public's reception of the books. He underscored the importance of collaborative efforts between the ECO Cultural Institute and these publishers to foster growth in cultural, artistic, research, and literary domains.



X

CULTURAL EVENTS FOR non-E.C.O STATES

Events of non-ECO States & on cultural heritage of Palestine

The ECI arranged a number of art exhibitions and cultural events related to non-ECO states including the theatre performance of Switzerland (listed earlier), the song and music performance of Bangladesh, the photographic exhibition of Slovakia and others. For constraints of space and scope, the details of each are not being mentioned here. In addition, the ECI remained active in documenting the cultural and artistic heritage of Palestine through a hybrid seminar-cum-webinar, through meeting with Ambassador Plenipotentiary of Palestine, through contributing in diplomatic women fundraising for humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza and through a unique 'No to War' exhibition detailed below:

Bengali Culture Day:

The Embassy of Bangladesh held the Bengali culture day in ECI on 19 May 2024, showcasing a vibrant folk drama performance. The event highlighted the rich cultural heritage of Bengal, bringing together traditional music, and storytelling. Attendees experienced the unique charm of Bengali folk theatre, fostering cultural exchange and appreciation among the diverse audience. The celebration underscored the importance of preserving and promoting cultural traditions.



Solidarity with Palestine & 'No To War' Arts Exhibition:

An exhibition featuring paintings and sculptures with the theme 'No to War' was opened at the ECO Cultural Institute in Tehran on January 22, 2024 reflecting commitment to peace and solidarity with Palestine. The opening ceremony was attended by Iranian cultural officials and Cultural Counsellors from different embassies in Tehran.

The "No to War" exhibition, showcasing various artworks including paintings, sculptures, and installations, created by artists from different countries aimed at raising awareness about the negative impacts of war. These artworks depicted the horrors of wars, such as human suffering, destruction, and environmental damage.



Slovakia Photographic Exhibition & Defense Day Celebrations:

The Embassy of Slovakia held the Defense Day and national day in ECI on 11 Nov 2024. The ECI art gallery became the stage for a captivating painting exhibition titled “Summer Lines,” organized by the Embassy of the Slovak Republic. This event featured the extraordinary works of the renowned Slovak artist Hieroným Balko. The exhibition drew significant attention, attracting representatives from various diplomatic missions based in Tehran, and left a lasting impression on all who attended.





PART-B

Activities in the Islamic Republic of Iran (Outside Tehran)



YAZD PROVINCE

E.C.I President Engaged with E.C.O Ambassadors at Yazd Tourism Capital Event

On the occasion of Yazd’s selection as Tourism Capital of Asia Cooperation Dialogue 2024, a joint meeting of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Member countries was held on March 6, 2024 in the World Heritage City of Yazd.

The two-day event in Yazd saw the ECI President, Dr. Saad S. Khan, holding meetings with the ambassadors of both the ECO member states Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, that have neither ratified nor signed the ECI Charter, encouraging them to formally join the ECI

and ratify its charter.

In addition, Dr. Khan discussed opportunities to expand cooperation in organizing cultural events with representatives from Tajikistan and Türkiye. The selection of Yazd as the Tourism Capital highlights the city’s rich cultural heritage and its potential to attract tourism from across Asia.

The host agencies took the ECI delegation to the historic and cultural sites of Yazd and also honored the President ECI by arranging plantation of a tree in Yazd by his hands.



ISFAHAN PROVINCE

E.C.I Took Part in 3rd Isfahan International Painting Festival for Youth

The President ECI, Dr. Saad S. Khan, attended the closing ceremony of the 3rd International Painting Festival for Children and Adolescents, themed “Sightseeing Places of My City,” on the evening of April 28, 2024, coinciding with Isfahan Cultural Week.

The festival received approximately 9,211 submissions from 28 countries, hosted by Isfahan for the third consecutive year, including around 8,121 entries from 294 cities across Iran. Notably, Belarus submitted 294 works, followed by Russia with 244, Armenia with 218, Kuwait with 129, and Turkmenistan with 91—representing the highest contributions from foreign countries. Additionally, countries like China, Portugal, and Bosnia and Herzegovina actively participated in the festival.

During the event, Dr. Khan, as the guest of honour, was presented with the festival’s symbolic award.

The ECI delegation visited the office of the Mayor of Isfahan, the State Library of Isfahan, the National Museum and met the high ups in each agency. The sides discussed avenues of future collaboration in the field of culture with authorities of Municipality and the heads of the libraries and museums.

Later in the year, the ECI also participated in the Sustainable Economic Growth through Establishing Science and Technology Parks on Nov. 27 to 29 2024, at Isfahan. The ECI was represented by its Cultural Expert Ms Mahtab Sahel.



III KASHAN REGION

The ECI also took part in the the program of “Commemorating of Ferdosi”, on May 17, 2024 at Paliz Institute at Kashan University in the city of Kashan. The ECI was represented by its cultural expert Mr Shahmansour Shahmirzo who also actively participated in the event. A message of the President ECI was also read out at the event and Mr Shahmansour Shahmirzo read out the message which was widely appreciated by the audience.



IV KHORASAN PROVINCE

Celebrating Ferdowsi: E.C.I President Addressed Conference in Mashhad

The ECI actively participated the celebrations of famous poet Ferdaws in Mashahd. The ECI President, Dr. Saad S. Khan, gave a speech at a conference celebrating the Persian poet Ferdowsi in Mashhad, Iran held on 24 May 2024. He highlighted the universality of Ferdowsi’s Shahnameh, emphasizing its message of

good versus evil and its promotion of truth and justice. The conference brought together scholars, researchers, students, and artists to discuss Ferdowsi’s legacy and its impact on Persian culture. The ECI President was officially invited to the Haram Complex of Imam Raza (A.S) where he met with the head of the complex administration Hojjatoleslam Seyyed Mohammad Zolfaqari and held discussions on mutual cooperation. The ECI also took part in the commemorating ceremony of National Futsal Team of Afghanistan on August 19, 2024 at Mashhad. The ECI was represented by its cultural expert Ms Mahtab Sahel.



V

SISTAN-BALUCHISTAN PROVINCE

E.C.I Advocated for Cultural Heritage at Chabahar Monsoon Festival 2024

Dr. Saad S. Khan, ECI President, participated in the Monsoon Festival 2024, which took place in the Chabahar Free Zone, Iran from September 14 to 19. This vibrant event celebrated the rich cultural heritage and natural beauty of the region, emphasizing the importance of preserving and promoting the diverse

traditions of the ECO region. The festival featured a wide array of activities, including an exhibition of rural and nomadic products, cultural nights, and traditional music performances. Visitors had the chance to engage with local crafts, and pay tribute to the literary and artistic figures of Sistan and Baluchestan Province. The festival aimed to boost tourism, providing valuable opportunities for local artisans. With its focus on cultural exchange and heritage appreciation, the Monsoon Festival reinforces the ECI's mission to advocate for the ECO region's unique cultural identity and promote its cultural significance on a broader scale.



VI

KERMANSHAH PROVINCE

E.C.I Celebrated Persian Literature at the First International Shahnameh Festival in Kermanshah

The first International Shahnameh Reading and Storytelling Festival was held from 24 to 27 September 2024, in Kermanshah, Iran, marking a significant celebration of Persian literature and culture. The event attracted impressive participation, with 430 domestic and 22 international works submitted. After a rigorous

selection process, 30 domestic and 8 international submissions advanced to the final stage. Dr. Saad S. Khan, President ECI, was a guest of honour of the festival, where ambassadors and diplomats had the opportunity to delve into the rich cultural heritage of Kermanshah. During his visit, Dr. Khan met with local authorities to discuss opportunities for promoting cultural diplomacy and collaboration between Kermanshah and other cities in the ECO region. The ECI's participation underscores the ECI's commitment to advancing cultural diplomacy and partnerships within the ECO region, paving the way for future collaborative initiatives.



VII

QOM REGION

E.C.I Paid Tribute to Lebanon victims with Poetry Reading

In a moving tribute to martyr Syed Hassan Nasrallah, a poetry reading event titled “Yaran Nasrallah” took place on October 3, 2024 in Qom, Iran. The event was organized by the ECO Cultural Institute in collaboration with the Islamic Revolution Art Bureau of Qom Province.

The gathering featured eight esteemed poets from ECO member countries, including Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, and Türkiye who recited their works in honor of the martyr of resistance. The event was graced with

the presence of Dr. Saad S. Khan, President of the ECO Cultural Institute, and Hojjatoleslam Rezaei, the cultural head of Al-Mustafa University.

During the event, Dr. Khan emphasized the importance of artistic expression in maintaining the legacy of cultural figures. He also discussed the ECI's mission to foster cultural diplomacy among member countries, highlighting plans for future cultural programs in various cities.



VIII

KISH ISLAND (Persian Gulf)

E.C.I President Engaged in Cultural Diplomacy at Int’l Kish Sustainable City Expo

The 2nd International Sustainable City Exhibition was held from October 8 to 11, 2024, on Kish Island, Iran, attracting a diverse array of participants, including municipalities, industry experts, and financial groups, all focused on advancing sustainable investment and financing.

Dr. Saad S. Khan, President ECI, attended the exhibition,

which featured a series of conferences dedicated to sustainable investment. Organized by the Kish Investment and Development Company, the event aimed to promote economic growth and attract investment to Kish Island while also emphasizing the importance of cultural heritage in sustainable development.



IX

LORESTAN PROVINCE

Mahtab Sahel, Cultural Expert E.C.I represented the institution in Khorramabad

Mahtab Sahel, Cultural Expert of the ECO Cultural Institute, attended the International Conference on Environmental Protection and Urban Health in Khorramabad from November 20 to 22, 2024, following an invitation from the Asian Mayors Forum. The event, hosted by the forum and the Khorramabad Municipality,

featured participation from diplomats, environmental activists, and local officials, who emphasized the importance of environmental protection. During the conference, attendees expressed interest in the ECI offering Persian language classes.



X

GILAN PROVINCE

President Engaged in Cultural Diplomacy in Rasht Festival

The President of ECI was invited by the Governorate of Gilan and the Mayor office of the city of Rasht to attend the annual Rasht Festival that he attended from 17th to 20th December 2024. There was a meeting with the Governor of Gilan and one with the Mayor of

Rasht in which avenues of cultural collaboration came up for discussion. There was multiple musical and band performances displayed and the President ECI held discussions on further promotion of the music of Rasht and dances of the province of Khorasan.





PART-C

Activities in E.C.I Member States (Other than IRAN)

REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN

A Poetic Session held in Writers Union of Tajikistan in Dushanbe

The ECO Cultural Institute and the Writers Union of Tajikistan held a joint poetry session in Dushanbe on August 7, 2024. The event included introductions of both institutions and poetry recitations by poets from Tajikistan and Pakistan. The event was well-attended and featured a diverse range of poetry styles. The poetry session was addressed by Mr Nizam Qasim,

famous Tajikistani writer and the Chairman of the Tajikistan Union of Writers as well as the President ECI, H.E. Dr Saad S Khan. Both luminaries emphasized the importance of literature in bringing nations together and hoped that the ECI will play its role in bringing the poets and writers of the member states of the ECO closer together.





II ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN

An International Iqbal Conference held in
the Iqbal Academy Pakistan at Lahore

The ECO Cultural Institute in cooperation with the Iqbal Academy Pakistan, under the Federal Ministry of National Heritage and Culture of the Government of Pakistan, organized a three day international conference on famous poet-philosopher Allama Mohammad Iqbal, also known as Iqbal Lahori, at Lahore on 17-19 November 2024. Scholars from all ECI nations including Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Turkiye were invited to present the papers and were supported by the ECI.

The ECI had requested the **Prime Minister of Malaysia H E Dato Sri Anwar Ibrahim**, an Iqbal scholar in his own right, to let it play his speech on Iqbal's thoughts at the ECI conference that he had delivered during his State Visit to Pakistan the previous month. With the permission of PMO Kuala Lumpur, his address was played at the

Inaugural Ceremony along with recorded speech of **H E Asad Majeed Khan, Secretary General ECO**. Amongst other invitees were the Governor of Punjab as well as the Prime Minister of the state of Junagarh, amongst other luminaries. The Chief Minister of Punjab hosted a sumptuous reception dinner in honor of ECO countries scholars and participants of the conference.

The conference was a resounding success and leading literary experts from the ECO region presented their research findings. There were also scholars invited by the Iqbal Academy from outside the ECO region such as Spain, Germany, Kuwait, Egypt, Bangladesh and UK etc, however, those scholars travelled at their own cost since ECI did not finance any scholar from outside the ECO region.





H.E. Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Prime Minister of Malaysia, is a scholar on Allama Mohammad Iqbal. His recorded speech on the thoughts of Iqbal was the opening speech of the inauguration ceremony of E.C.I International Iqbal Conference.



H.E. Sahibzada Sultan Ahmad Ali, Prime Minister of the State of Junagadh, addressed the concluding session of the E.C.I International Iqbal Conference in Lahore as the Chief Guest.



Prof. Dr. Abdul Rauf Rafiqi, head of the Iqbal Academy Pakistan, addressed the E.C.I International Iqbal Conference. The Ministry of National Heritage and Culture of the Government of Pakistan and the Iqbal Academy Pakistan cooperated with the E.C.I for holding this international conference.



Maryam Nawaz Sharif (top), the Chief Minister of Punjab Hosted a Sumptuous Reception Dinner in Honor of E.C.O Countries' Scholars and Conference Participants. (top right) The Brass Band of the Lahore Police played welcoming tunes (Right)



As a mark of support for the E.C.I International Iqbal Conference, the Government of Punjab arranged full ceremonial protocol of Pakistan Rangers for guard of honor and ceremonial wreath laying by E.C.I scholars at the tomb of Allama Mohammad Iqbal. A brass band of Pakistan Rangers played ceremonial tunes.





III. & IV. REPUBLIC OF TURKIYE





“Frames of Friendship: A photographic tribute to ECO Culture”: A photographic journey of ECO nations

The ECO Cultural Institute, in collaboration with the municipality of Ankara and the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Türkiye, arranged a photographic exhibition in Ankara with inauguration ceremony planned for Tuesday, 10th December 2024. Opening ceremony of the photographic exhibition, held at the Esztergom Castle Turkish Cultural Center in Keçiören, Ankara, attracted diplomats and people from all walks of life. The event was arranged by Tehran-based ECO Cultural Institute (ECI)—the cultural specialized agency of the ten-member Economic Cooperation Organization, in collaboration with the the Keçiören Municipality and diplomatic mission of Pakistan. The event showcased the work of six renowned photographers belonging to Türkiye, Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan.

During his remarks, Dr. Saad S Khan, President of ECI, highlighted the diverse cultural heritage of ECO member states emphasizing the importance of fostering cultural cooperation between the ten ECO member states by showcasing each other's calligraphy, poetry, painting, photographs, and music. He expressed his deep connection to Türkiye, calling it his second home.

Sultan Bey, the head of foreign affairs committee in Turkish Parliament; Atila Zorlu, Vice Mayor of Keçiören Municipality; Yousaf Junaid, Pakistan's ambassador to Türkiye, and Dr. Ghasem Nazemi, Cultural Counsellor of Iran in Ankara also spoke on the occasion. The speakers underscored the strong cultural ties between ECO member states. Deputy Mayor spoke about his vision of making Keçiören a bridge for all ECO countries, emphasizing the importance of fostering deeper ties between the nations in the region.

The exhibition featured the works of photographers Muzammil Toori, Sajad Heydari, Aytaç Ünal, Aigerim

Beginmbet, Ali Tahir and Samaneh Rustami. The photographs offered a glimpse into the beauty, traditions, and unity of the ECO region. The exhibition is open to the public at the Esztergom Castle Turkish Cultural Center in Ankara for the next seven days.



As a mark of solidarity with the ECI exhibition of photographs from ECO member states in Türkiye, the Municipality of Ankara lit the tower of Esztergom Castle Turkish Cultural Center with the flags of all member states of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) for the whole week.



IV

“Form Hearts to Horizon”: Literary Expressions in Turkish, Urdu and Persian languages

The ECO Cultural Institute, in collaboration with the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, scheduled a literary event in Turkish, Urdu and Persian languages in Ankara on Monday, 9th December 2024. Scholars, writers and poets from all across the ECO region were brought together at a great literary event on Urdu, Persian and Turkish expressions held at the International Study Group, Ankara, yesterday evening. Organized by the ECI in collaboration with the Pakistan Mission Ankara, was attended by people from all walks to life.

Speaking at the occasion, Dr Saad S Khan, himself a historian and a leading Pakistani diplomat, opined that Turkish, Urdu and Persian have a shared literary tradition sharing thousands of common words. He said it was the first time that literary luminaries from all three languages have been brought together on a single platform in Ankara which will lay be basis for future

cooperation between writers and poets of these ten great nations.

Aptly titled “From Hearts to Horizons: Urdu, Persian, and Turkish Expressions”, the event included poetry and literary recitations recitations by Mr. Shaiq Ahmed Bhutto; Mr. Mohammad Hussain Fayyaz; Dr. Davut Şahbaz; Mr. Mohib Altaf; Mr. Muhammad Huzaifa; Ms. Yeşim Işık Bağrıaçık; Mr. A. B. Ashraf; Mr. Ghalib Gillani, and Ms. Ilknur Zamir Khan. Their readings demonstrated how poetry transcends national boundaries, promoting mutual respect and cultural cooperation.

Ambassador of Pakistan to Türkiye, Dr. Yousuf Junaid; Ambassador of Iran to Türkiye, Dr. Mohammad Hassan Habibollah Zadeh and Dr. Abdolkarim Sadeghdoost, Executive Director of ECO Educational Institute, Ankara, in their speeches, appreciated the ECI for the great initiative.





PART-D

Administrative, Reform & PR Initiatives



The ECI has taken a number of initiatives for close coordination with the ECO main secretariat, all sister agencies and the public relations with the diplomatic community, especially of the ECO region.

COORDINATION WITH E.C.O AND SISTER AGENCIES



The ECI maintained close liaison with the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Secretariat throughout the year, attending its meetings and activities, whenever invited. At the individual level the President ECI maintained professional contact both with the former and incumbent Secretary General of the ECO, apprising them of the ECI activities and seeking input, guidance and support from them.



E.C.I Participation in 34th E.C.O-RPC:

The ECO Cultural Institute took part in the 34th meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council (RPC) which was held on 22-25 January 2024, with delegations from ECO Member States, specialized agencies, regional institutes, and affiliated bodies in attendance. At the event, the Islamic Republic of Iran assumed the Chair of the Organization for 2024. Furthermore, sectoral committee meetings were conducted to discuss the Work Program and Calendar of Events for 2024 of the ECO family. The ECI also presented and got approved its planned activities for the year 2024.

Farewell Reception of Outgoing E.C.O Secretary General:

The ECO hosted a well-attended farewell reception in honor of the outgoing ECO Secretary General Khusrav Noziri a & Kashif zaman, Deputy Secretary General at Bagh e Ferdous, Tehran, on 9th August 2024.



**First Official Visit of the
New E.C.O Secretary
General to E.C.I:**

The ECI also welcomed the new Secretary General Asad Majeed Khan at the ECI head office at the time of his first formal and official visit to the ECI on 6th Nov 2024.





E.C.I REFORM PROCESS

During the year, five key proposals were presented including:

- ✓ renaming the ECO Cultural Institute to either “ECO Regional Cultural Organization” or “ECO Cultural Association,” or any other acceptable nomenclature representing the depth and breadth of ECI activities;
- ✓ approving the ECI media and visibility strategy;
- ✓ simplifying the procedure for the ECO Youth Award;
- ✓ establishing a committee to revisit the ECI staff salary scales, frozen since long; and
- ✓ expediting the establishment of ECI branches in all ECO member states, as mandated under the ECI Charter.

These proposals were shared with the esteemed member states in the form of five concept notes, discussed in various meetings of the ECI’s Council of Permanent Representatives, as well as considered by a Working Group established for this purpose. We kindly request the esteemed member states to convey feedback from their relevant authorities on these concept notes to the ECI for approval by the ECI-CPR.

There are five more proposals in the pipeline which will be put forth once the competent forums reach a decision on the above matters. The ECI is also desirous of dovetailing its reform process with that of the ECO, already underway.



E.C.I Participation in 28th meeting of E.C.O Council of Ministers (COM):

The ECO Cultural Institute took part in the 28th meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers (COM) which was held on 2-3 December 2024 in the holy city of Mashhad in Iran. Delegations from ECO Member States, specialized agencies, regional institutes, and affiliated bodies in attendance. At the event, the



Republic of Kazakhstan was elected as the new Chairman of the ECO for the year 2025. In his speech, the President ECI H.E. Dr Saad S Khan highlighted the important role culture plays in bringing about regional cooperation in other fields. He also called upon Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic to join the ECI

as full members. Dr Khan lamented the fact that the ECO member states are spending only 0.1 cents per capital per annum for cultural cooperation through the ECO Cultural Institute and urged the member states to raise it to 10 cents (i.e. USD 0.1) per capita per annum by the year 2030.

Welcome and Farewell calls on incoming and outgoing DSG’s of E.C.O:

The ECI also received farewell call-on by the outgoing Deputy Secretaries General of the ECO (Mr Kashif Zaman and Mr Hüseyin Avni Bicakli) during the year 2024 on 26th August and 20th Nov 2024 respectively. President ECI made a courtesy call on the new ECO Deputy Secretary General Silapberdi Nurberdiyev from Turkmenistan on 23 September 2024 and welcomed the new Deputy Secretary General H E Cagatay Emrah Ongut from Türkiye.



Bilateral Meetings with the Heads of the E.C.O Sister Agencies:

The ECI delegations also met the heads of the sister agencies of the ECO not only in formal meetings at the respective headquarters of ETDB, the ECOSF and the ECOEI, but also on the sidelines of the ECO activities such as the Council of Ministers (COM) etc. The President of the ECO Science Foundation also visited the ECI head office in Tehran twice during the year, in one of which, he was the chief guest at a cultural event. The formal bilateral meetings by the ECO President were held at the following dates and venues:

- Meeting with H E Dr Kumail Tayebi, President of ECOSF, on 18th March 2024 at Islamabad during the official visit of the President ECI to head office of ECO Science Foundation.
- Meeting with H E Dr Mohammad Hashem Botshekan, President of ETDB, on 10th July 2024 at Istanbul during

the official visit of the President ECI to head office of ECO Trade & Development Bank.

- Meeting with H E Dr Akif Kirecci, President of ECOEI, on 22nd August 2024 at Ankara during the official visit of the President ECI to head office of ECO Education Institute.
- Meeting with Mr Shahid Javed Malik, Executive Director of ECO Postal Staff College, on 18th January 2024 at Islamabad during the official visit of the President ECI to ECO Postal Staff College.
- Meeting with Mr Saeed Shokohi, the Dean of the ECO College of Insurance, Tehran, took place on 29th February 2024 at the ECI head office. Subsequently, the President ECI paid a return courtesy call on Mr Shokohi at the ECO College of Insurance main campus in Tehran where the two sides discussed areas of cooperation.



WELCOME & FAREWELL FOR E.C.O AMBASSADORS

To maintain close liaison with the Ambassadors of the ECO member states accredited to Tehran and accredited as Permanent Representatives to the Economic Cooperation Organization, the ECI has taken a step of hosting welcome parties for incoming ambassadors and their spouses and also arranging farewell receptions.

Several activities including the farewell reception for the Secretary General ECO, the two Deputy Secretary Generals ECO, and welcome parties for the new ambassadors of Kazakhstan, Pakistan and Uzbekistan H.E. Mr. Ontalap Onalbayev, Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan, H.E. Mr. Muhammad Mudassir

Tipu, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Fariddin Nasriev, Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan) have so far been organized.

The ECI is also keen to issue messages on the national and cultural days of the member states which was something not diligently followed earlier. This year, the President ECI has remained engaged in close coordination with the ECO member states with respect to their public and national events through messages of felicitations, flower exchange and related events being held in ECI.

Several other initiatives are in the pipeline which will be announced in due course of time.





PART-E

Cultural Diplomacy Initiatives and Meetings



ECI President paid a courtesy call to Minister of National Heritage and Culture of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

H.E. Dr. Saad S. Khan, ECI President, paid a visit to H.E. Jamal Shah, the Caretaker Minister of National Heritage Division of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan at his office in Islamabad on 25th March 2024. During the meeting, the sides engaged in discussions about the future of cultural activities and the promotion of shared cultural heritage across the ECO region. Dr. Khan emphasized the importance of enhancing cultural exchanges amongst the ECO member states and sought the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance's support towards this endeavor.



ECI President met the Deputy Prime Minister for Culture and Tourism affairs of Turkmenistan on the sidelines of the CIS Film Festival in Ashgabat

On the sidelines of Gorkut Ata international film festival, the ECI President, had the opportunity to see Deputy Prime Minister for Culture and Tourism affairs of Turkmenistan, Mahriyem Mammedova, where the Dr Saad S Khan thanked her for the close cooperation that the ECI has with the esteemed government of

Turkmenistan. President Khan reminded her that Turkmenistan is one of the pioneering signatories of the ECI Charter and requested her to graciously consider full accession to the ECI Charter through ratification of the ECI Charter.



ECI President paid a courtesy call to I.R. Iran Culture Minister

H.E. Dr. Saad S. Khan, ECI President, paid a visit to H.E. Dr. Mohammad Mahdi Esmaili, the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the Ministry on 23 June 2024. Dr. Khan emphasized the importance of enhancing cultural exchanges amongst the ECO member states and sought the Ministry of Culture and Islamic

Guidance's support towards this endeavor. Recognizing the pivotal role of the ECO Cultural Institute in enriching the cultural tapestry of the region, the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance pledged full backing from the ministry to facilitate and elevate these cultural initiatives of the Institute in the future.

ECI President meets the Deputy Chairman of the Uzbekistan National Tourism Committee

The Deputy Chairman of the Uzbekistan National Tourism Committee Mr. Sardar Niyazov hosted a dinner at Tashkent for the ECO and the ECI delegations, respectively, headed by the ECO Secretary General and the ECI President on the sidelines of the celebrations declaring the Shakrisabz city as the Tourism Capital of the ECO region. The two sides discussed avenues of future collaboration between the member states of the ECO region for collaboration in the field of Tourism.





ECI President paid a courtesy call to Head of Islamic Culture & Relations Organization (ICRO) of the Islamic Republic of Iran

H.E. Dr. Saad S. Khan, ECI President, paid a visit to Hojjatol Islam Mahdi Emanipour, the Chairman of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, which is the international cultural diplomacy arm of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The President ECI apprised the Chairman of multiple cultural activities that the ECI is undertaking and emphasized the importance of ECI for Iran's and other ECO member states' positive and soft image to the outside world.



ECI President calls on the Foreign Secretary of Pakistan

The ECI President made a courtesy call on His Excellency, Syrus Sajjad Kazi, the honorable Secretary Foreign Affairs, equivalent to First Deputy Foreign Minister in the other ECO Member States, at his office in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Islamabad on 24th January 2024.

The President apprised the FDFM of the importance of ECI in the cultural diplomacy initiatives of the ECO member states and requested Pakistan's support in the success of the ECI. He said the ECI was established in the 3rd ECO Summit held in Islamabad, Pakistan, in 1995 so the country has an onerous responsibility for its success.

Meeting with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye

On 20 August 2024, the ECI delegation led by the President met with Esen Altuğ, Director-General for Multilateral Economic Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye in Ankara. The meeting emphasized the importance of Türkiye's active and effective role within the ECI in serving the region. Discussions included enhancing ECO's efficiency through cultural interaction, with ECI playing a key role in fostering connections. Additionally, ideas for implementing student exchange programs and establishing a joint university were explored to strengthen educational and cultural ties.

Additionally, they emphasized strengthening language teaching and student exchange programs between the member states. Dr. Saad Khan, stating his pleasure of



Türkiye's membership to ECI, expressed his willingness to work on joint projects aimed at deepening cultural ties with Türkiye.

ECI delegation holds meeting with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Türkiye

A delegation of ECI led by the President met with Dr. Gözde Şahin, Director of EU and Foreign Relations at the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in Ankara on 21st August 2024. Discussions focused on the Ministry's support for ECI activities. The importance of Türkiye's cultural and logistical contributions to ECI's projects was highlighted.

The discussions focused on enhancing cultural interaction within the framework of the Economic Cooperation Organization and fostering cooperation through cultural diplomacy in the region. The parties agreed on supporting and ensuring the sustainability of cultural projects in the region.





ECI President Met with Tajikistan's Deputy Prime Minister & Culture Minister to Enhance Collaborative Initiatives

In a significant step toward enhancing cultural collaboration among the ECO Cultural Institute and the ECO member states, Dr. Saad S. Khan, President ECI, called on H.E. Ms. Matlubakhon Sattoriyon, Honourable Minister of Culture of the Republic of Tajikistan, on August 5, 2024.

Minister Sattoriyon expressed her enthusiasm for deepening ties with ECI and reiterated Tajikistan's commitment to participate actively in upcoming cultural programs and events organized by the Institute.

During the meeting, Dr. Saad S. Khan and H.E. Ms. Matlubakhon Sattoriyon exchanged valuable insights on promoting cultural exchange programs, preserving cultural heritage, and fostering artistic collaborations within the ECO region. The meeting highlighted both sides' commitment to exploring new avenues for collaborative projects that celebrate and promote the rich culture of Tajikistan.

In furthering collaboration, the ECI President requested that the Culture Ministry of Tajikistan designate a national cultural center in Tajikistan to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the ECI, acting as the ECI Coordination Unit in the country.

This initiative aims to streamline communication and cooperation between the ECI and Tajikistan's cultural institutions for facilitating ECI's activities pertinent to Tajikistan.

Additionally, the ECI President proposed that the ECI is willing to organize a photo exhibition showcasing tourist attractions of the ECO member states on the sidelines of the International Book Fair scheduled to be held in Dushanbe in October 2024.

Moreover, Dr. Saad S. Khan suggested that the Culture Ministry of Tajikistan may host ECO meetings in the area of culture that are supposed to be held every two years, including meetings of Heads of National TVs, National Radios, National Libraries, and News Agencies of the ECO member states. These meetings aim to facilitate collaboration and exchange of ideas among cultural institutions within the ECO region.

The Culture Minister of Tajikistan warmly welcomed the proposals put forth by the ECI President during their meeting, indicating a shared commitment to enhancing cultural cooperation and promoting mutual understanding within the ECO region.



ECI President Explored the Rich Cultural Heritage at National Museum of Tajikistan

Dr. Saad S. Khan, the ECI President, embarked on a visit to Tajikistan on August 5, 2024, to foster cultural ties and collaboration between the Republic of Tajikistan and the ECI. As part of his visit, Dr. Khan met with Mr. Zafarsho Ibrohimzoda, the Director of the National Museum of Tajikistan, at the museum in Dushanbe.

During their meeting, Dr. Khan and Mr. Ibrohimzoda engaged in an insightful discussion about the preservation and promotion of Tajikistan's diverse cultural heritage. They also explored potential avenues for cooperation between the ECI and the National Museum. As a member state of the ECI, Tajikistan holds significant cultural treasures that can further enrich the shared cultural tapestry of the ECO region.

In a significant proposal, the ECI President suggested that the National Museum of Tajikistan could host the meeting of the Heads of National Museums of

ECO member states. This initiative aims to foster greater collaboration and exchange of ideas among the museums within the ECO region.

Furthermore, Dr. Khan proposed the idea of organizing a traveling exhibition of artifacts that would journey across the ECO member states. This exhibition would showcase the rich cultural heritage of Tajikistan and other member states, promoting greater cultural understanding and appreciation among the diverse populations of the region.

The Director of the National Museum of Tajikistan warmly welcomed the proposals put forth by the ECI President during their meeting.

As part of their visit, the ECI delegation toured various exhibits within the museum, gaining valuable insight into Tajikistan's artistic contributions and historical narratives.



Literary Exploration: ECI President Visited Tajikistan's National Library

As part of his visit to Tajikistan, Dr. Saad S. Khan, ECI President paid a visit to the National Library of the Republic of Tajikistan on August 6, 2024. During the meeting with the Deputy Head of the National Library Ms. Salima Rajabzoda, the sides delved into discussions on promoting literature, knowledge sharing, and scholarly collaborations within the framework of the ECI's cultural mandate.

In addition to discussions on joint initiatives, Dr. Khan toured the National Library's facilities and appreciated its extensive collection that represents Tajik literature and history. The ECI delegation's visit to the National Library not only acknowledged Tajikistan's rich literary heritage but also underscored the significance of literary and intellectual exchange in fostering cultural cooperation among member states.

ECI Meeting with the Atatürk Supreme Council of Culture, Language, and History



An ECI delegation led by President ECI met with Prof. Dr. Derya Örs, President of the Atatürk Supreme Council, alongside Prof. Dr. Yüksel Özgen and Prof. Dr. Osman Mert, heads of Language Association and Atatürk Supreme Council. Meeting was held on 20th August 2024 in the new building of Ata Turk Supreme Council in Ankara. Discussions included the registration of common cultural heritage and promoting multinational

education processes. The significance of Nowruz as a shared cultural tradition was emphasized. Additionally, the idea of addressing common cultural figures in the region, from history and literature, was proposed. These topics could be explored through seminars and conferences, where scholars and students could actively participate, enriching the cultural dialogue further.

ECI- Yunus Emre Institute Coordination Meeting at Ankara

The first meeting between President ECI Dr Saad S Khan and the newly appointed President of the Yunus Emre Institute Prof. Dr. Abdurrahman Aliy was held in Ankara, Türkiye, on 19 August 2024. Discussions focused on the establishment of a Coordination Office within the headquarters of Yunus Emre Institute to facilitate joint activities, as pointed out in ECI's Charter. The potential for organizing joint programs and cultural events was explored, both in Tehran and Ankara, emphasizing closer ties among member states.



Meeting with President of Türkiye's National Commission for UNESCO

The ECI delegation paid a visit to Prof. Dr. Öcal Oğuz, President of the UNESCO National Commission of Türkiye, who extended warm hospitality in his office in Ankara on 19 August 2024. Discussions highlighted the registration of common Cultural Heritage in ECO region. The importance of multinational processes in education and cultural projects was emphasized. Plans were also made to organize webinars and seminars to foster collaboration on cultural heritage preservation.



Legacy and Continuity: ECI President Met Former two ECI Leaders in Tajikistan

Continuing his visit to Tajikistan, Dr. Saad S. Khan, President ECI, had a notable meeting with Mr. Sarvar Bakhti and Mr Murodjon Buribaev, both former Presidents of the ECI, on August 6, 2024. The meeting took place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, providing an opportunity for a comprehensive exchange of ideas and insights between the esteemed leaders.

During this meeting, Dr. Saad S. Khan and Mr. Sarvar Bakhti, who met as the head of the ECO and Middle East Desk, of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, engaged in insightful discussions on the future trajectory of cultural cooperation within the ECO region.

This encounter underscored the continuity and legacy of leadership within the ECI, a testament to the enduring commitment of the ECI to foster a seamless transition of leadership and build upon past achievements to propel cultural initiatives forward.

President ECI met with Chairperson Pakistan Academy of Letters in Islamabad

H E Saad S Khan called on famous Pakistani literary luminary and the incumbent Chairperson of the Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL), Dr Najeeba Arif, in Islamabad on 23rd April 2024. The two sides discussed the potential of future collaboration between the two agencies. The potential of holding an international conference with the help of the Academy in Islamabad, Kabul or at any other convenient and acceptable venue for ECO member states on literary traditions of the ECO member states was also discussed. In addition to discussions on joint initiatives, Dr. Khan toured the National Library's facilities and appreciated its extensive collection that represents Tajik literature and history. The ECI delegation's visit to the National Library not only acknowledged Tajikistan's rich literary heritage but also underscored the significance of literary and intellectual exchange in fostering cultural cooperation among member states.



ECI agrees to promote soft image of Iran across the world by unveiling book *Beyond Diplomacy*



Iran is a peaceful nation and other the vision of the Supreme Leader, is working towards fairness and justice not only for the Palestinians but for the whole region. This has consistently been the position of the President ECI, Dr Saad S. Khan. In this respect, the ECO Cultural Institute has consistently been promoting the soft image of the Islamic Republic of Iran as the host state.

This commitment was reaffirmed in a meeting with Dr Ashkan Mombeini, the Iranian media and international

relations expert. The President ECI and Dr Mombeini discussed the unveiling of the memoirs of Dr Ali Akbar Vilayati within Iran and in other ECO countries to get Iran's point of view to the outer world about its commitments to international peace and stability. It may be mentioned that the book titled "Beyond Diplomacy" is about the memories of Dr Vilayati who was the Foreign Minister of Iran for 16 years and is the Advisor to the Supreme Leader on foreign affairs.





ECI and Tehran ICH Centre Forge Cultural Bonds: Collaborative Initiatives Unveiled

In a significant step toward strengthening cultural ties, Dr. Saad S. Khan, President of the ECO Cultural Institute, met with Dr. Atoosa Momeni, Director General of the Tehran Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre on August 27, 2024 at the ICH Centre. During the session, three key issues related to future cooperation were discussed. The ECI and the Tehran ICH Centre explored the possibility of organizing an exhibition featuring the remarkable artworks of the artist Ahad Saadi. The collection, known as “Azarnegari,” will be showcased in Türkiye, providing a platform for

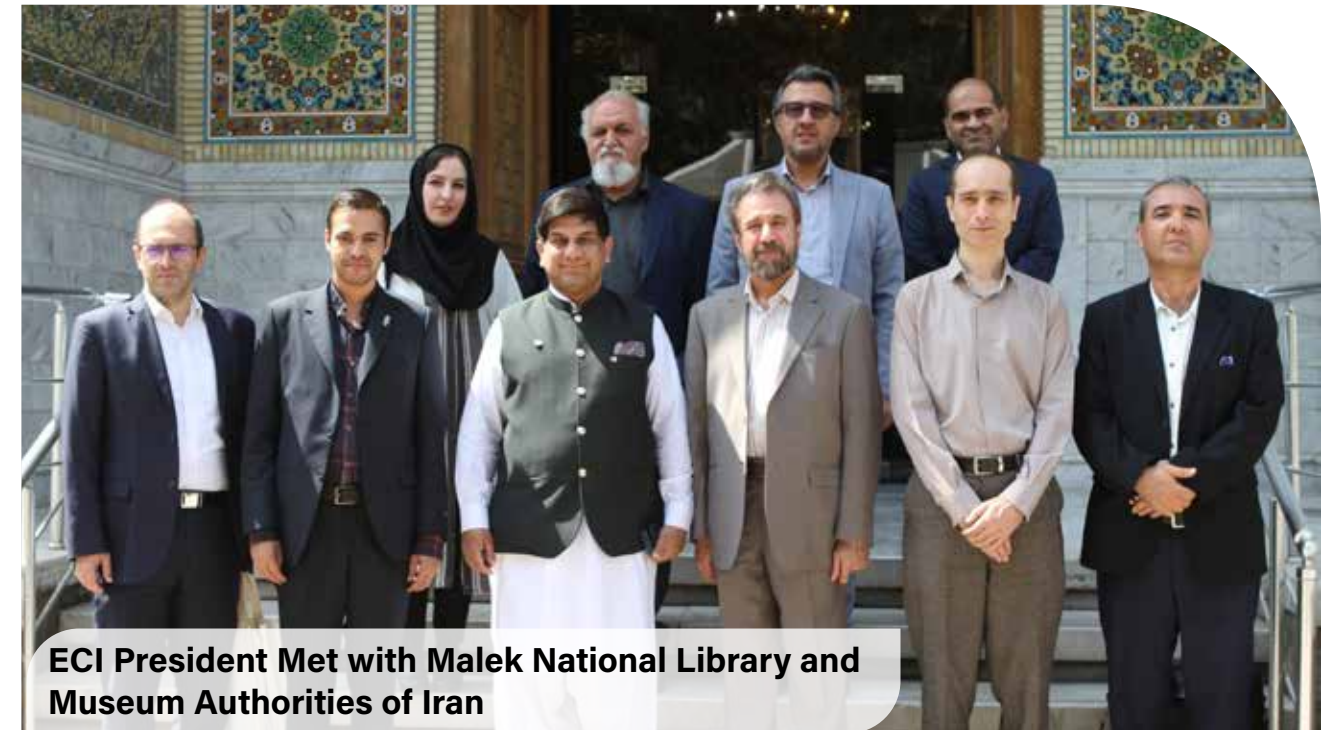
cross-cultural exchange and appreciation.

Also, both parties discussed preparations for holding “Intangible Cultural Heritage Night of Iran-Pakistan”. The events scheduled to be held in coming months will highlight traditional practices, rituals, and artistic expressions that bind the two nations.

Finally, the ECI offered collaboration with the ICH Center in organizing a cultural night dedicated to Kazakhstan. This event aims to foster understanding and appreciation of Kazakhstan’s intangible cultural heritage, emphasizing its unique traditions and customs.

ECI President initiates dialogue with the Faculty of Languages and Literature of the University of Tehran

The President ECI and his team were welcomed by the Dean, Faculty of Languages and Literature, University of Tehran, Prof Abdul Reza Saif, the head of International Affairs of the Faculty, Dr Ali Shahidi, and the professors and faculty members of oriental languages at the University. The two sides expressed interest in initiating joint programs for promotion of languages like Urdu, Persian and Turkish from the E.C.O region. Prof Ali Bayat, Prof Ali Kausinejad and Prof Vafa Yezdanmanesh of the Urdu language program also attended the meeting.



ECI President Met with Malek National Library and Museum Authorities of Iran

The President of the ECO Cultural Institute met with officials from the Malek National Library and Museum in Iran to discuss expanding cooperation. They discussed joint initiatives like organizing exhibitions, hosting seminars, conducting museum tours, and

exchanging books to promote their shared historical heritage. The authorities of Malek National Library and Museum expressed their readiness to hold joint events with the ECI.



The President of ECI Participates in the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the Eighth National Festival of “Iranian Self-Taught Artists”

The festival opened on September 13, 2024, at the Iranian Artists’ Forum, showcasing over 1,000 works by 100 self-taught artists and featuring Dr. Saad S. Khan, the President of the ECO Cultural Institute (ECI), appeared as the guest of honor and the keynote speaker. Dr. Khan emphasized the shared cultural heritage across ECO member countries and the vital role of self-taught art in fostering historical and cultural cohesion, setting the stage for enduring collaboration between ECI and the Iranian Self-Taught Artists Association.

Seven days later, on Sept 20, 2024 the President was again invited to give his speech at the concluding ceremony and to distribute awards and certificates. The chairman of the Iranian Self Taught Artists Association Mr Ali Ezzati welcomed the dynamism of the new President ECI in promoting Iranian culture and arts.



ECI collaborative meeting with the Urdu Language Promotion Department

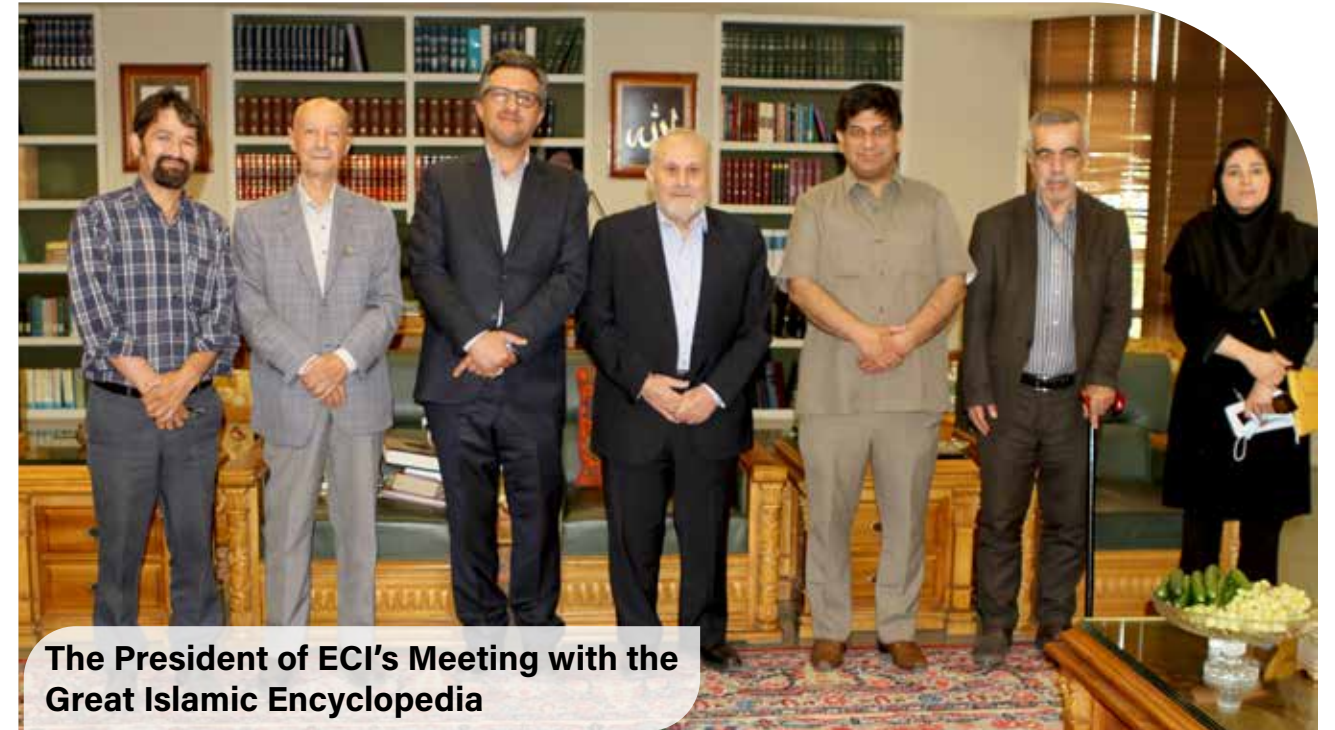
A friendly meeting between the principal agency of the Government of Pakistan, for the promotion of Urdu language, named National Language Promotion Department (NLPD) led by its Director General Saleem Mazhar and the President ECI Dr Saad S Khan was held in Islamabad on 8th February 2024 in Islamabad. The NLPD requested the ECI support for promotion of Urdu Language in the ECO member states. Amongst other matters, the two sides agreed that the ECI will purchase full sets of the NLPD publications on Urdu language and literature and donate them to libraries in

ECO countries for the “ECO Corner” of national libraries that the ECI is working on.

The President ECI briefed the Director General that the ECI remains committed to promotion of all three major families of languages spoken in the ECO region including the Persian family (incl Dari and Tajik languages), Turkish family (including Uzbek, Azeri and Kazakh languages), and the Urdu family (including various regional languages spoken such as Pushto, Sindhi, Punjabi, Balochi and Kashmiri languages).

President ECI meets Vatican diplomatic mission

President of ECI, H E Saad S Khan paid a courtesy call on Apostolic Nuncio Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Holy See, His Eminence Archbishop Andrzej Jozwicz, whom Pope Francis II recently elevated to the dignity of “Archbishop Titular of Lauriaco” on 29 August 2024. The importance of interfaith harmony and the need for acknowledging and celebrating shared features of the cultural heritage between religious communities was discussed in a meeting. As the representative of the Roman Catholic Pope and the Vatican City State, His Eminence explained the functions of the diplomatic corps of the Holy See. The meeting ended with presentation of ECI publications to him.



The President of ECI's Meeting with the Great Islamic Encyclopedia

On September 18, 2024, Dr. Saad S. Khan, President of ECI, held a meeting with representatives of the Great Islamic Encyclopaedia project. The Great Islamic Encyclopedia is a project led by the Center for the Great Islamic Encyclopedia (CGIE) to research and publish encyclopedias and reference books on Islamic and Iranian culture and civilization. The CGIE was founded in 1983 in Tehran by Kazem Mousavi-Bojnourdi. The project's first agenda was to compile the Great Islamic Encyclopedia, which is a Persian-language project.

The CGIE also publishes Encyclopaedia Islamica, which is a 16-volume translation of selected articles from the Great Islamic Encyclopedia, supplemented by additional English articles

Dr Khan and Dr Bojnourdi met each other, along with their teams, to discuss potential collaboration and book exchanges. This initiative aligns with ECI's mission to promote cultural dialogue and knowledge sharing among member states, fostering a deeper understanding of shared heritage.





The President of ECI's Contribution to the Peace Carpet

The team of Global Peace Carpet called on the President ECI and requested ECI's support in their endeavor to use carpet art for the promotion of peace. President ECI Dr. Saad S. Khan contributed to the Peace Carpet, a global symbol of unity and cultural harmony,

by adding a knot that reflects his dedication to cultural identity and peace. His participation highlighted the ECI's commitment to the initiative's dual mission of fostering unity and promoting environmental sustainability.



ECI President and Iran's Deputy Culture Minister Discussed Future of Artistic Collaboration at "Golden Nights" Exhibition

Iran's Deputy Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance for Artistic Affairs, Dr. Mahmood Salari, visited the "Golden Nights" exhibition at the ECI on March 12, 2024 to underscore the importance of cultural collaboration. During his visit, Dr. Salari expressed admiration for the exhibition, featuring calligraphy paintings by renowned Iranian master Abbas Rahimi, and commended the ECI's commitment to arranging such events. He engaged in a candid discussion with ECI President, Dr. Saad S. Khan,

emphasizing the significance of artistic endeavours like "Golden Nights" in fostering cultural cooperation. Dr. Khan outlined the ECI's vision for future events, focusing on showcasing artworks from all ECO countries and providing a platform for artists to share their creative expressions. The meeting promises a brighter future for ECO's cultural landscape, as it reiterates the commitment of both sides to continued bilateral cooperation in the realm of art and culture.

University Supporting Cultural Diplomacy: Meeting Between the President of ECI and the Chancellor of Shahid Beheshti University

In a continuation of diplomatic and culture-focused discussions, Dr. Saad Khan, ECI President, met with the Chancellor of Shahid Beheshti University. The meeting took place on March 11, 2024, at the Chancellor's office, where both parties engaged in dialogue about collaborative efforts in scientific and cultural initiatives including the proposal for an ECO Cultural Night featuring the students from ECO member countries to showcase their art, music and culture.





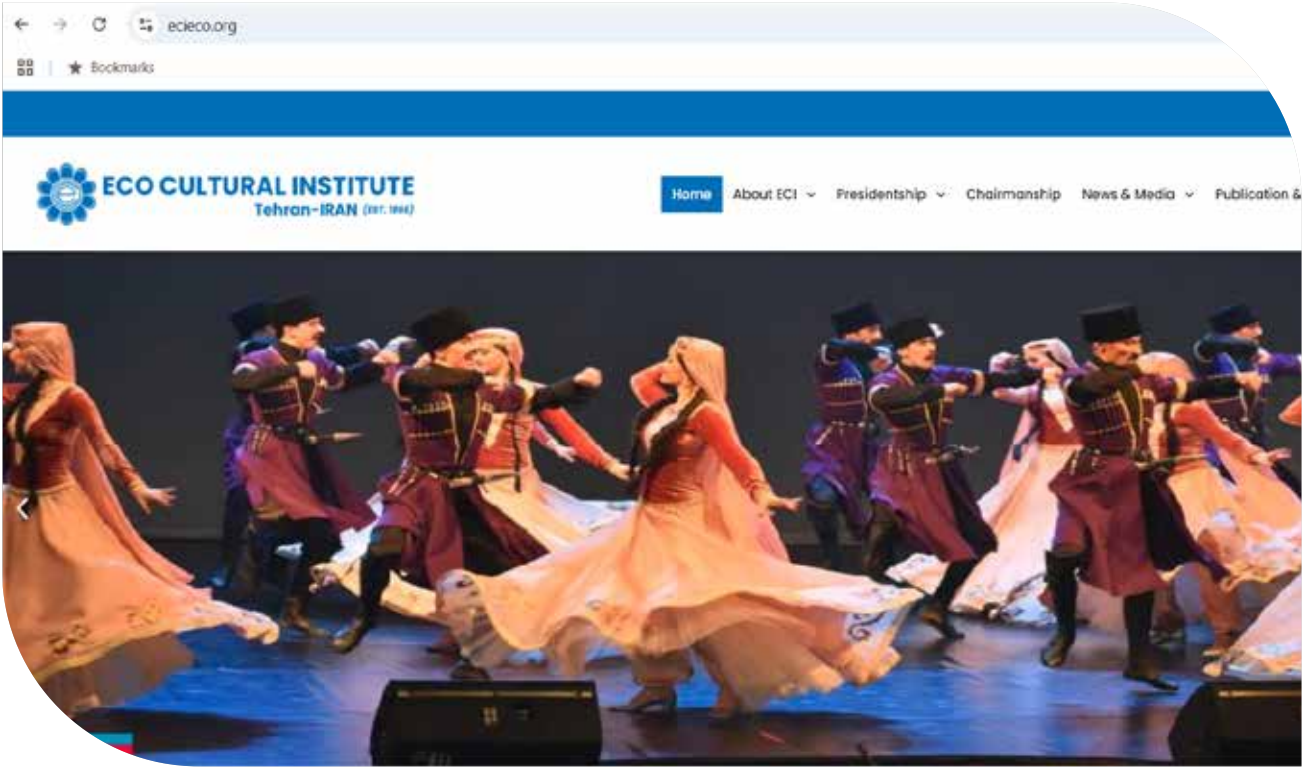


PART-F

E.C.O Visibility and Information Initiatives



E.C.O Secretary General inaugurates the new dynamic E.C.I Website in a ceremony in Tehran



H E Asad Majeed Khan, Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) inaugurated the new dynamic website of the ECO Cultural Institute at a ceremony held in the ECI head office in Tehran on 6 November 2024.

The new dynamic website contains all relevant information and indicators about each of the ten ECO member states including their area, population, ethnic and demographic statistics, economic indicators including GDP, trade and industrial output etc and 99 other useful indices.

The website is also rich in audio visual content including documentaries and videos about tourism, culture and arts & crafts of all ten ECO member states.

The President of ECI’s Participation in the Day of Persian Language Conference

On September 17, 2024, Dr. Saad S Khan, President of the ECO Cultural Institute (ECI), attended the Sokhan conference at IRIB to commemorate the World Day of Persian Language. Highlighting Persian’s role as a unifying cultural force across ECO member states, he emphasized its significance in fostering regional identity and cultural cooperation.

He also talked about the linguistic affinities between Persian language and the Urdu language. He emphasized that for over two hundred years, the Persian had been the imperial court language of the Mogul empire which comprised areas which are now India and Pakistan.



E.C.I launches its new Documentary on the E.C.I Activities

The ECI has commissioned a new documentary on ECI activities for better promotion and projection of the role that the ECI is playing on the cultural landscape of the ECO region.

The documentary was launched on 10 October 2024. The website features the cultural events, the publications, the seminars and book launches and other important events in the ECI annual calendar.

The President of the Islamic Republic of Iran hosted an Iftar dinner in honor of all Muslim diplomats, the President of ECI also participated."





The President of the Islamic Republic of Iran hosted reception to mark the 46th anniversary of Islamic Revolution that was attended by E.C.I



E.C.I President Shared Cultural Vision in Exclusive Interview with Tajikistan Safina TV



During his visit to Tajikistan, Dr. Saad S. Khan, the ECI President, sat down for an exclusive interview with TV Safina of the Republic of Tajikistan on August 5, 2024. The interview showcased Dr. Khan's profound insights and perspectives on the role of culture in promoting regional cooperation. He emphasized the ECI's commitment to promoting rich cultural heritage of the member states, in particular Tajikistan. The interview offered a unique opportunity for viewers to gain a deeper understanding of the ECI's mission and vision.

E.C.I President shares thoughts with Tasnim News Agency:



In an engaging interview, ECI President shared his vision for enhancing cultural exchange among ECO member states through vibrant festivals celebrating arts, music and literature. He emphasized the importance of literature in fostering cultural understanding and expressed commitment to inspiring reading habits in younger generations. Finally, he shared his personal passion for Iranian history and culture which reflects a hopeful vision for a more interconnected ECO community.



E.C.I President appears on IRIB/Sada o Seema television

Amongst the very large number of television appearances of the President ECI during the year 2024, one important interview was on “Saher TV”—the Urdu language broadcasting network of the Iranian state broadcasting agency—the IRIB. The President spoke on the cultural initiatives that the ECI has undertaken to promote cultural and linguistic harmony between the ten member states of the E.C.O.



E.C.I President raises important issues in Interview with AVA Diplomatic:

In an enlightening interview, the ECI President shared his vision for enhancing cultural cohesion among the ten ECO member states. He discussed exciting upcoming initiatives, including a writers’ forum, youth awards, and a military music festival, while emphasizing support

for cultural tourism. He highlighted the ECI’s effective use of its website and social media for enhancing its international outreach.

E.C.I President highlights achievements in Interview with IBNA:

In a recent interview with IBNA, the ECI President highlighted the Institute’s significant achievements in promoting cultural exchange among the ECO member states. He emphasized successful initiatives such as shared festivals and support for artists, showcasing the ECI’s commitment to enhancing regional cohesion. The President also discussed future plans aimed at fostering youth engagement and cultural tourism. He reaffirmed the ECI’s vital role in preserving cultural heritage and promoting peace within the ECO region.



President ECI’s address to the Maku Free Zone conference at IRIB on the role of culture in promoting economic integration

The Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization, H E Asad Majeed Khan, and the President of the ECI, H E Saad S Khan, were both invited to address the Maku Free Zone international conference held at the IRIB hall in Tehran on 17 December 2024. The President ECI explained his ideas about how

important it is to use culture and people-to-people contacts between the member states of E.C.O to bring about economic and trade connectivity. The Secretary General of the ECO also praised the role of ECI in bringing peoples together.



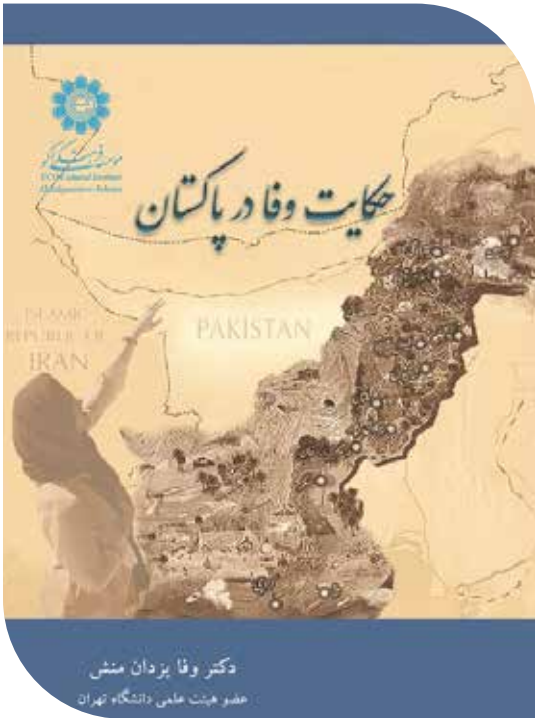
PART-G

E.C.I Publications Division Activities



BOOK PUBLISHING

The ECO Publication Division has seven projects for publication in the year which are under various stages of proof reading, editing, pagination and formatting, designing or printing.



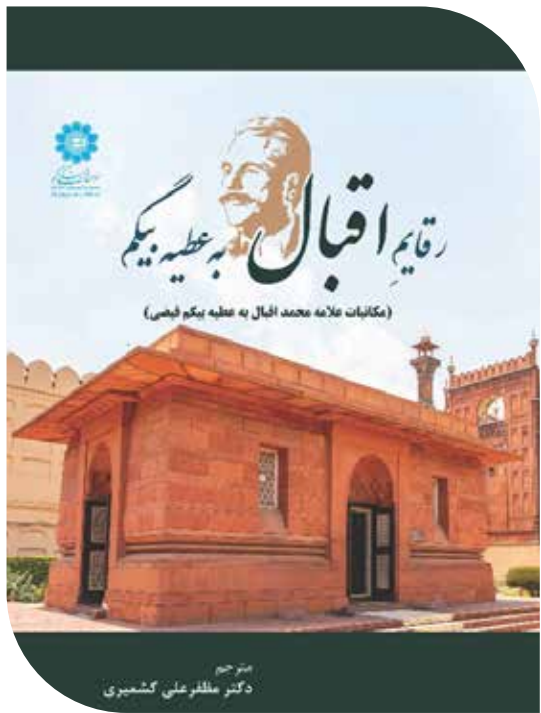
The ECI has a proactive publication division with up to 100 titles published in its history with seven in the pipeline for the current year. The ECI also has an impressive record of five periodical publications in three languages (English, Persian and Russian) which were discontinued due to financial constraints. The year 2024 is seeing a revival of the publication division activities:

Publication of Persian travelogue:

The most recent book printed by the ECI is titled Hikayat Vafa dar Pakistan – a Persian language travelogue of Pakistan authored by an Iranian professor of Urdu at the University of Tehran whose name is Dr Vafa Yazdanmanash.

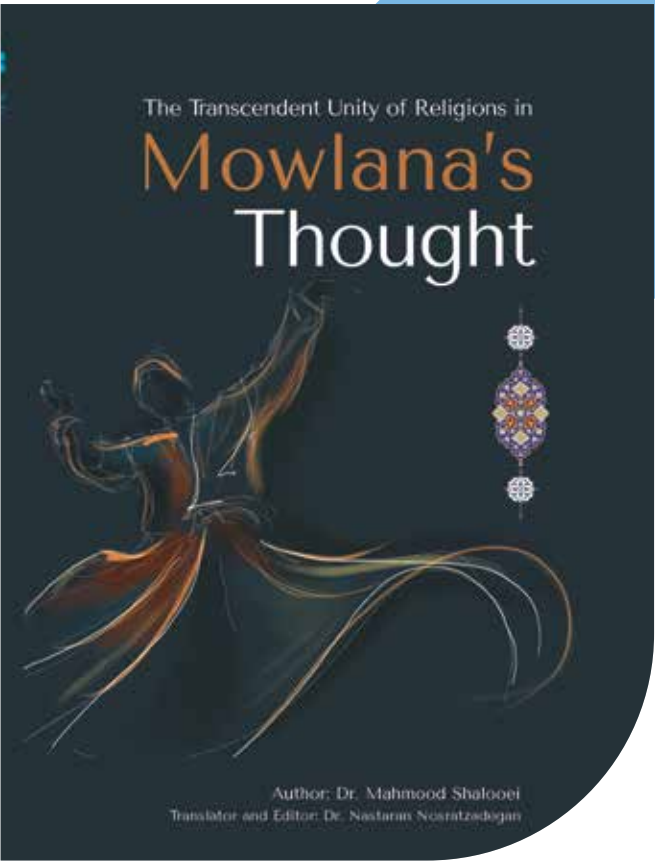
Book on Iqbal:

The ECI had also received permission from the Ministry of Islamic Guidance for the second book also titled Attiya Begum ke Khatoot. It will be out in next few weeks.



Book on Maulana Rumi:

The ECI has also finalized contract for publication of a book on the thoughts of Maulana Rumi by a renowned Persian academic Dr Mahmood Shaloei.



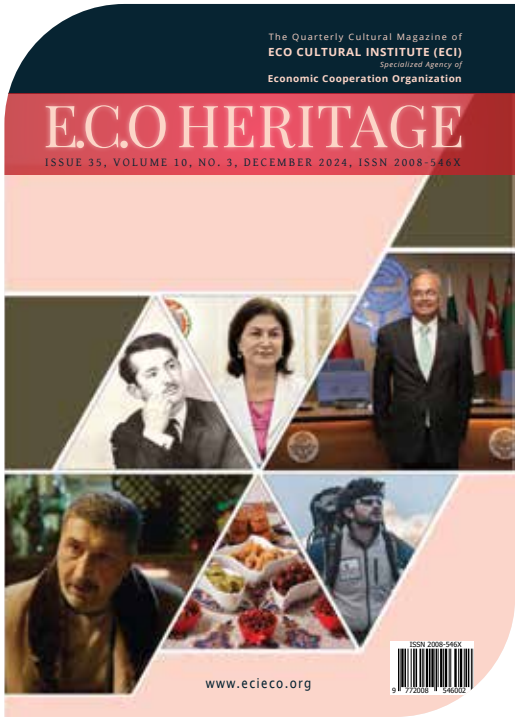
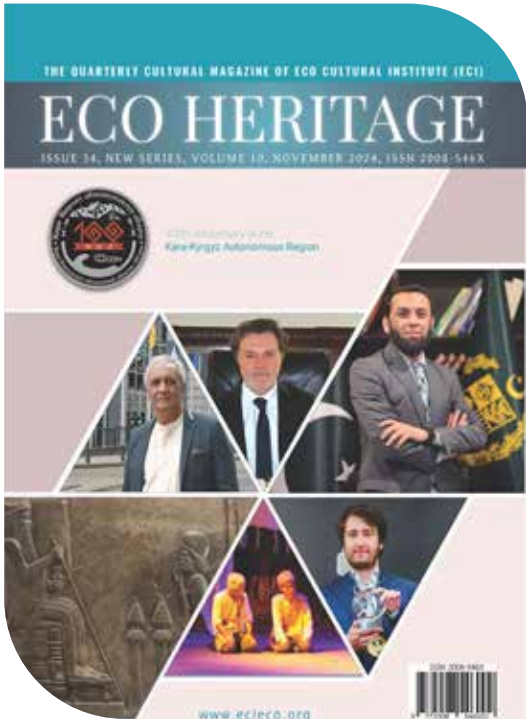
Intangible Cultural Heritage



Four Books on Intangible Cultural Heritage:

Several other books are in process in coordination with the Tehran ICH Center and the Society for Appreciation of Cultural Works and Dignitaries of Tehran.

JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS

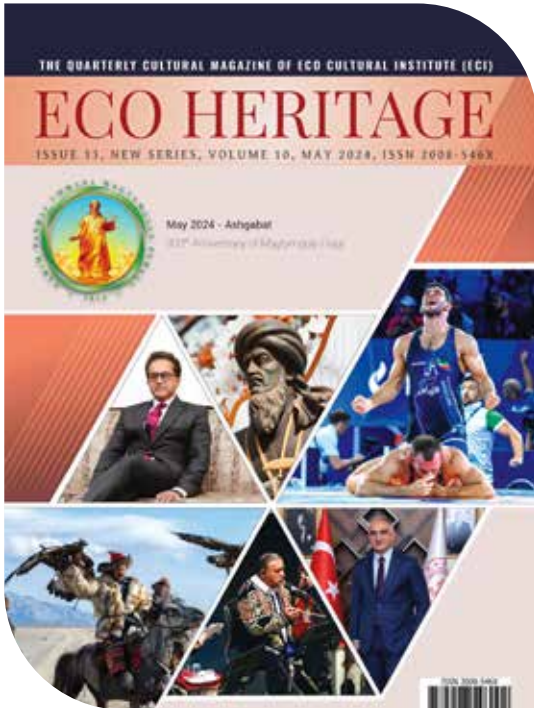


Publication of Persian travelogue:

The ECI has moved to revive its flagship quarterly journal of the ECO Heritage and aims at reviving other periodicals with gradual expansion in fiscal space and human resource capacity.

ECO Newsletter:

The ECI brought out issues no 22 to 27 of the ECO newsletter, each as a special issue on some ECI event or achievement, so far this year.



E.C.O CULTURAL CALENDARS

The ECO also publishes each year cultural calendar of the ECO region with a different theme. The Calendar published in 2024 depicted the capital city of each of the ten member states of the ECO on the one side of the Calendar and one leading tourist attraction on the other side.

The 2025 Cultural Calendar has been decided to have the picture of one national poet on the one side and a picture and brief description of one traditional dance of the nation state on the other side. Close coordination with the esteemed embassies and the cultural agencies of the ECO member states is underway in this regard.



IV

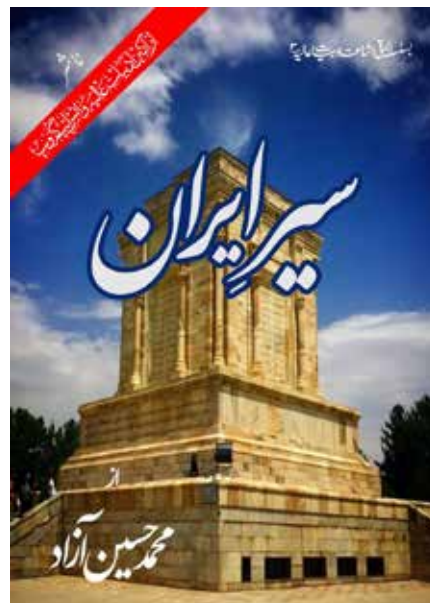
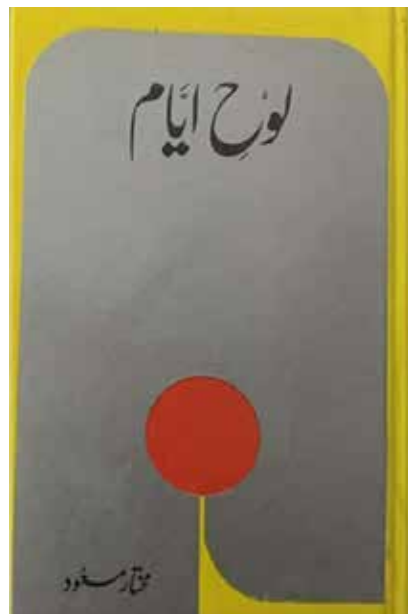
TRANSLATIONS

The ECI has commissioned several books for translations from Urdu into Persian, from Persian into English and from Persian into Urdu, which have been written in one language but may have readership amongst the language speakers of other countries.

For instance, the book **Loh e Ayyam** written in Urdu by the then (and last) Secretary General of the RCD (predecessor organization of the ECO), Mukhtar Masood, recounts his impressions of the revolution days of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Since it is in Urdu, the Iranian readership may not be able to benefit from it. The ECI has commissioned its translation for the Persian readers.

For similar reasons as enumerated above, the ECI is also in the process of commissioning translations of **Sayr e Iran** (tr: "Visit to Iran") written by famous Urdu writer Mohammad Hussain Azad in 1940's and **Iran main Ajnabi** (tr. "A stranger in Iran") composed by noted poet Noon Meem Rashid in the 1970's. Their Persian translation would be a literary boost for the soft image of the state and nation of Iran.

There are other translation projects in finishing stages such as translation of **Persian Travelogue** of Pakistan into Urdu or translation of Persian book on the **Thoughts of Mawlana Rumi** into English etc.

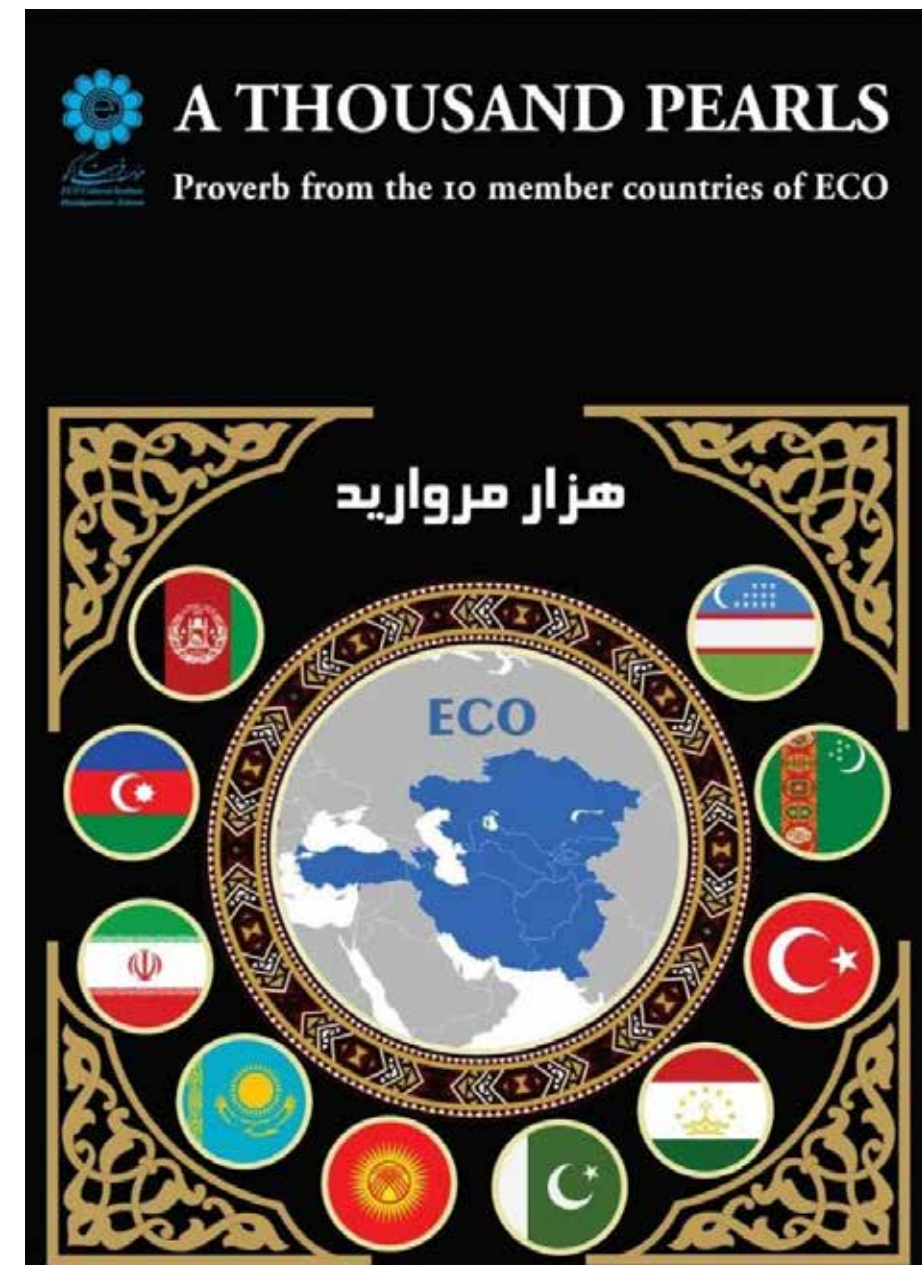


V

BOOK OF PROVERBS OF ECO LANGUAGES

The ECI is the final stages of compilation of a book of Proverbs from all ten ECO member states in their official languages Persian/Dari/Tajik, Urdu, Turkish, Kazakh, Azeri, Uzbek, Kyrgyz, Kazakh and Turkmen

languages along with their translations in English and—for the non-Persian languages—their translation in Persian also.





PART-H

Future & Ongoing Initiatives



There are many other ongoing and future initiatives for which groundwork is underway. As and when necessary details such as costing and operational methods could be arrived at, the matters will be referred to the ECO RPC and ECI CPR for discussions and debates.

ECO CORNERS IN LEADING LIBRARIES

The ECI has been in touch and negotiations with the Secretary General of the Iran Public Libraries Association, and his team to establish, with the help of ECI, an ECO corner in nine largest public libraries of the Islamic Republic of Iran with books from the remaining nine ECO member states in their languages. The ECI has acquired seventy-seven sets of books published by four agencies, under the administrative control of the Federal Ministry of Culture of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and similar initiatives are underway with other states.



COMISSIONING ARTWORKS DEPICTING ECO REGION

The ECI is in touch with several leading artists for artworks either depicting the ECO region map or the ECO region national flags or the ECO region luminaries on pieces of cloth, wood, marble or carpet etc. At the time, following art works are in progress:



A Wood art work of ECO region map with different shades of original wood by the artist Farid Nourzahi has been completed and unveiled.



A Carpet art work of carpet depicting leading poets and monuments of all ten ECO countries is in the design stage.



A Cloth artwork on cloth showing flags of the ten ECO member countries by the artist Hakimeh Ghanbari has been completed and unveiled.







DISCUSSIONS ON ECO-WIDE MUSICAL INITIATIVES

There are several proposals for which technical requirements and details are underway which include:

The raising of an ECO Orchestra: An orchestra consisting of musicians from the National Orchestras of ten member states is a project for which massive planning is underway. The President ECI had raised this issue with the Minister of Culture of the Islamic Republic of Iran who had shown keen interest in the project and offered the services of the Vahdat Hall for training and coordination.

For technical support, the President ECI has held meeting with the Music wing of the Iranian state media

agency, the IRIB, and further negotiations are underway. The ECI is also in the process of finding a Director or Conductor of the ECO Orchestra.

On the sidelines of the celebrations to declare Shakhrisabz as the ECO Tourism Capital in Uzbekistan, a team from Asian Cultural Center (ACC) that manages the East Asian Traditional Orchestra, based in Gwangju, South Korea, met the President ECI. The Asian Orchestra comprises eleven nations, including all Ten member states of the ASEAN plus South Korea. The two sides discussed the possibility of ACC assistance to the ECI in raising the first ever ECO Orchestra.



The ECO Military band competition: A Bands tattoo of all ten ECO member states on a yearly basis at the capital of one of the states on rotation basis is another of the pipeline projects of the ECO Cultural Institute. The President has already started consultations with some of the diplomatic missions with a view of finding an acceptable host member state for the first such Military Bands Tattoo.

A project on ECO Anthem: The proposal of the ECO region's anthem was first considered by the ECO CPR in 2004. Despite four years of activity, the composition of a tune and some proposals about the wording, the project was shelved for lack of consensus. The audio files of old tunes and working of the anthem was made available by the ECO Secretariat, Tehran, to the ECI.

The revival of the project of ECO Anthem stalled since 2008 in five languages and with a symphony music depicting the musical traditions of the whole region is currently under consideration these days and meeting with IRIB music directorate for technical help for recording and practice is already underway.

Compilation of Nowruz songs: Nowruz is a UNESCO recognized intangible cultural heritage of the ECO region. It is a festival to celebrate the Persian new year and the advent of Spring season on the 21st of March of each year. The festival is marked by songs and dances. The ECI is in the process of collecting the Nowruz songs that are used in traditional settings, villages and tribes in ECO member states.



IV

SHORT-TERM PROJECTS IN PIPELINE (Planned in 01 year)

There are several other projects in the offing for which more homework needs to be done. This includes the following:



E.C.O Youth Awards:

The most important is the revival of the ECO Youth Awards for persons aged between 18 to 30 who outshine in any cultural field. A particular theme is approved for each year and the competition is opened.

E.C.O Floral Park:

The President ECO also discussed floral Designing of ECO Park at Abbasabad, Tehran, with the Secretary General of the Asian Mayors Forum and offered support of ECI if the Parks Authority of the municipality of Tehran accepts to grow flower beds with floral colors depicting the images of the national flags of the ten member states.



E.C.O Competition of Calligraphy:

The ECO Cultural Institute is also discussing the possibility of a Competition of Calligraphy from ECO member states through discussions with leading calligraphers on ways to organize such an event in a cost effective way.



V

**MID-TERM PROJECTS IN PIPELINE
(Planned in 2-5 years)**



Annual E.C.O Film Festival:

The ECI is making its efforts to have an annual ECO Film Festival in one of the ECO member states on a rotating basis. The ECI tried to dovetail its film festival with those organized by other regional organizations with overlapping membership with the ECO such as the TurkSoy or the CIS with no success up to the point. The ECI is trying to organize a film festival on its own and looking for a volunteer member state to host it.

**Designation of an E.C.O
Cultural Capital Biannually:**

There is an annul designation of the Tourism Capital of the ECO for quite some time where multiple cities bid for a Cultural Capital and one of them is gets voted in to become one. On similar lines, the President ECI is in negotiations with the member states during his diplomatic interactions to estimate the level of support for an ECO-wide designation for a cultural capital city each year.



**E.C.O-wide Food and
Gastronomy Competitions:**

The ECI is also in consultations and discussions about the possibility of an annual gastronomy competition to honor the traditional food and cuisine of the ECO region.



VI
LONG-TERM PROJECTS IN PIPELINE
(Planned in 5-10 years)



**E.C.I Coordination Centres in
all ten E.C.O Member States:**

Article IV of the Charter of ECI makes it obligatory for the ECI to have a branch office or coordination unit in the capital of each of the ECI member states. That obligation was left unfulfilled for nearly six decades. The ECI is making diplomatic efforts to convince all ECO member states, in the interest of cost effectiveness, to designate one of their existing national cultural agencies as the ECI Coordination Centre to make it easy for the ECI to arrange ECO-wide events in any country without any bureaucratic hurdles.

**Raising per Capita Cultural
Expenditure to at least 10
Cents per Capita:**

The ECI is concerned about the fact that its annual budget for cultural promotion of a teeming population of 550 million of the ECO region comes to around one tenth of a cent per capital per annum. The ECI wants to raise it to 10 cent per capita within ten years that comes to around USD 5 million as the budget of ECI in coming years.





Conclusion

The ECO Cultural Institute has received suggestions for activities related to the culture of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. The proposals from the other esteemed member states are awaited to be included in our Calendar of Events.

There will also be activities that will may be planned in collaboration with other institutions such as the Council for Appreciation of Arts, the Iranian Musical Instruments Manufacturers Association,

the Embassy of Pakistan, the Yunus Amre Institute, the Saadi Foundation and others. The ECI is also exploring possibility of having a regular annual festival of military bands of the ECO member countries as its flagship cultural event.

The ECI is also in discussions with the concerned institutions for promotion of language courses on its campus, especially the learning of Persian and English for non native speakers of both the languages.



موسسه فرهنگی
ECO CULTURAL INSTITUTE

ECO CULTURAL INSTITUTE
@ecieco_org

ECO Cultural Institute (ECI)

Specialized Agency of
Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)

Address: No.10, BaqerAlnemer Alley, Shahid Movahed Danish,
Aghdasieyeh, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Tel: 0098-21-27673000

E-Mail: info@ecieco.org

Fax: 0098-21-27673456

Web: www.ecieco.org

