

ECI NEWSLETTER

ECO CULTURAL INSTITUTE

NO: 02 **JUNE 2026**

CULTURE COOPERATION CREATIVITY



Message from the President



Amb. Muhammad Hassan, President, ECO Cultural Institute (ECI)

Dear Readers,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this edition of the "ECO Cultural Institute Newsletter", which reflects another period of dedicated work in advancing the cultural aspirations of our region.

In a rapidly evolving global landscape, cultural cooperation remains one of the most enduring foundations for mutual understanding and regional solidarity. Despite the challenges encountered during this period, the ECO

Cultural Institute remained unwavering in its commitment to its mandate, continuing to serve as a platform where the rich and diverse cultural heritage of the ECO member states is celebrated, preserved, and shared.

The activities featured in this issue testify to that commitment. From the launch of our new series introducing the cultural wealth of ECO member states, beginning with Afghanistan, to the publication of "Kamand-e Zolf", the inspiring poetry of the renowned Tajik poet Zulfiya Atoyi, each initiative has sought to strengthen cultural dialogue across our region. We also had the privilege of honoring the timeless legacy of Turkmen poet Magtymguly Pyragy through commemorative events and scholarly discourse, highlighting his enduring message of wisdom, unity, and shared humanity. Furthermore, our symposium on bilingual poets and the launch of the Silk Road Intangible Heritage Series reaffirmed our belief that culture is not merely a reflection of our past but a bridge to a more connected and harmonious future.

These achievements have been made possible through the continued



support and trust of our member states, partners, scholars, artists, and cultural institutions. Their collaboration reinforces our conviction that our shared heritage is a source of strength that transcends borders and brings our nations closer together.

As you explore the pages of this newsletter, I hope you will find both inspiration and renewed confidence in the transformative power of culture. Together, we will continue to deepen regional cooperation, preserve our invaluable cultural legacy, and foster greater understanding among the peoples of the ECO region for generations to come.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support.

Ambassador Muhammad Hassan
President
ECO Cultural Institute

Table of Content:

1. ECI Launches New Series Introducing ECO Member States with Focus on Afghanistan.....	2
2. ECO Cultural Institute Launches Kamand-e Zolf, a Collection of Poems by Tajik Poet Zulfiya Atoyi.....	4
3. ECI President Highlights Magtymguly's Enduring Legacy as a Shared Cultural Heritage of the Region.....	6
4. ECO Cultural Institute Hosts Commemoration of Magtymguly Pyragy as a Symbol of Regional Unity and Shared Heritage.....	8
5. ECI Hosts Symposium on Bilingual Poets as Bridges of Cultural Dialogue across the ECO Region.....	10
6. ECI Launches Silk Road Intangible Heritage Series to Promote Regional Cooperation.....	12

ECI Launches New Series Introducing ECO Member States with Focus on Afghanistan

TEHRAN – June 2, 2026



Scholars, cultural experts, and participants attending the first session of ECI's new series introducing ECO Member States, dedicated to the history, culture, and civilization of Afghanistan.

The ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) launched the first session of a new cultural and educational series dedicated to introducing the history, culture, and civilization of ECO Member States, with the inaugural event focusing on Afghanistan.

Held at the Institute's headquarters in Tehran, the event brought together scholars, academics, cultural practitioners, and representatives of cultural institutions to explore Afghanistan's

rich historical legacy and its contribution to the shared cultural heritage of the ECO region.

The discussions highlighted the significance of Afghanistan's historic cities, including Balkh, Herat, and Ghazni, as major centers of civilization, learning, and cultural exchange. Participants also reflected on the enduring legacy of Afghan scholars, poets, and cultural figures, emphasizing the importance of preserving and promoting the country's cultural and artistic heritage.

Opening the event, Amb. Muhammad Hassan, President of the ECO Cultural Institute, described culture as the most enduring bond among nations and underscored the role of cultural understanding in advancing regional integration. He noted that meaningful regional cooperation extends beyond economic

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Sustainable regional integration begins with understanding the cultures, histories, and shared heritage of our peoples.
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relations and requires a deeper appreciation of the cultural connections that unite the peoples of the region.

The academic programme featured presentations by Dr. Sayed Askar Mousavi, Afghan historian and author, and Dr. Yaman Hekmat, writer and former lecturer at Kabul University. Their presentations examined the historical evolution of Afghan culture, the formation of its civilizational traditions, and the role of geography and history in shaping the country's cultural resilience and national identity.

The event also provided an opportunity for dialogue among researchers and participants on issues related to cultural geography, social resilience, and the preservation of shared heritage. In addition, ECI officials outlined plans for continuing the series as a platform for promoting intercultural understanding and introducing the cultural richness of ECO Member States to wider audiences.

The session concluded with an exchange of ideas on future cultural initiatives and cooperation opportunities aimed at strengthening cultural ties and fostering greater mutual understanding across the ECO region.

Highlight Box



The event marked the launch of a new ECI initiative dedicated to introducing the history, culture, and civilization of ECO Member States, with Afghanistan selected as the first country in the series.



ECO Cultural Institute Launches Kamand-e Zolf, a Collection of Poems by Tajik Poet Zulfiya Atoyi

TEHRAN – June 9, 2026



Amb. Muhammad Hassan, President of the ECO Cultural Institute, alongside the Ambassadors of Tajikistan and Turkmenistan and other distinguished guests during the launch ceremony of Kamand-e Zolf in Tehran.

The ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) hosted the launch ceremony of Kamand-e Zolf (The Lasso of Tresses), a collection of poems by renowned Tajik poet Zulfiya Atoyi, bringing together diplomats, literary figures, scholars, and artists at the Institute's headquarters in Tehran.

Opening the ceremony, Amb. Muhammad Hassan, President of the ECO Cultural Institute, welcomed the guests and described the volume as a literary work rich in emotion,

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Literature remains one of the strongest bridges connecting the peoples, cultures, and shared heritage of our region.
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humanity, and poetic elegance. He noted that Atoyi's poetry reflects themes of love, homeland, hope, suffering, and resilience, while offering a powerful and compassionate voice within contemporary Persian literature. A message from H.E. Matlubakhon Sattoriyon, Minister of Culture of the Republic of Tajikistan, was presented during the event. In her message, the Minister described the publication of Zulfiya Atoyi's poetry in Persian script as an important contribution to strengthening literary ties among the countries of the region and promoting the shared cultural heritage of Persian-speaking communities. The ceremony also featured remarks by H.E. Nizomiddin Zohidi, Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan to Iran, who highlighted Zulfiya Atoyi's distinguished place in contemporary Tajik literature and her significant contribution

to the development of modern Persian poetry. Scholars and literary experts further discussed the poet's artistic achievements, her engagement with the classical Persian literary tradition, and the distinctive voice she has brought to contemporary literature.

A video message from the poet herself was screened during the event, in which she expressed appreciation to the ECO Cultural Institute for publishing the collection and shared selected readings of her poetry with the audience.

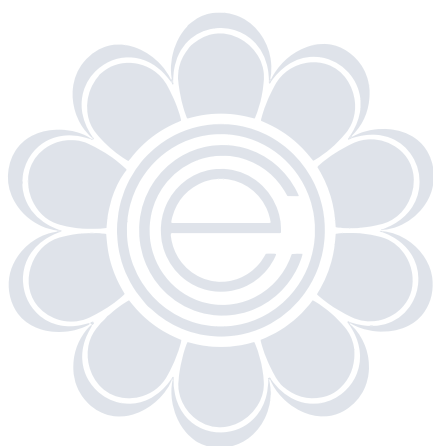
Published by the ECO Cultural Institute Publications in cooperation with Aroon Publications and with the support of the Ministry of Culture of Tajikistan, Kamand-e Zolf represents another step toward strengthening cultural and literary exchanges among ECO member states and promoting the region's rich shared literary heritage.

The -480page volume has been published in Persian script and is now available to readers and enthusiasts of Persian literature.

Highlight Box



Published with the support of the Ministry of Culture of Tajikistan, Kamand-e Zolf introduces the poetry of Zulfiya Atoyi to a wider Persian-speaking audience and contributes to strengthening literary ties across the ECO region.



ECI President Highlights Magtymguly's Enduring Legacy as a Shared Cultural Heritage of the Region

TEHRAN – June 11, 2026



Amb. Muhammad Hassan, President of the ECO Cultural Institute, delivering remarks at the commemorative event honoring Magtymguly Pyragy at Kharazmi University, Tehran, on 11 June 2026.

Amb. Muhammad Hassan, President of the ECO Cultural Institute (ECI), participated in a commemorative event honoring the renowned Turkmen poet Magtymguly Pyragy, describing him as both the national poet of the Turkmen people and a transnational cultural figure whose legacy belongs to the shared heritage of the region.

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Magtymguly is not only the national poet of the Turkmen people, but also a shared cultural asset of the entire region.

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The event, organized by the Turkmen Cultural House and held at Kharazmi University in Tehran, brought together ambassadors, diplomats, scholars, artists, and admirers of Magtymguly's literary legacy to celebrate the anniversary of his birth.

In his address, delivered in Persian, Amb. Hassan emphasized that Magtymguly emerged during a period marked by political fragmentation, social challenges, and cultural transformation across the region. Through his poetry, he advocated unity, justice, spirituality, and cultural identity, values that continue to resonate across generations and national boundaries.

The President of ECI noted that what distinguishes Magtymguly from many of his contemporaries is the unique combination of wisdom, mysticism, social consciousness,

Highlight Box



Addressing a gathering of diplomats, scholars, and artists in Tehran, the President of ECI underscored Magtymguly Pyragy's role in promoting unity, cultural identity, and intercultural understanding across the region.

and commitment to the well-being of society reflected in his works. He stressed that the poet regarded literature not merely as a means of personal expression, but as a vehicle for social reform, public awareness, and solidarity among peoples and communities.

Amb. Hassan further observed that while Magtymguly is widely recognized as the founder of Turkmen classical literature, his influence extends far beyond Turkmenistan. His poetry has been appreciated throughout the ECO region, including in Iran, where his humanistic and ethical teachings continue to inspire literary circles, researchers, and cultural enthusiasts.

The ECI President described Magtymguly as a source of pride for the entire region, whose literary and intellectual legacy continues to contribute to intercultural understanding and regional cultural dialogue.

The event also featured remarks by H.E. Ilyas Gayypov, Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Iran, H.E. Nizomiddin Zohidi, Ambassador of Tajikistan to Iran, and a number of distinguished scholars and researchers. The program concluded with performances of traditional Turkmen music by cultural ensembles.



ECO Cultural Institute Hosts Commemoration of Magtymguly Pyragy as a Symbol of Regional Unity and Shared Heritage

TEHRAN – June 17, 2026



Participants at the commemoration ceremony of Magtymguly Pyragy hosted by the ECO Cultural Institute, celebrating the poet's enduring legacy as a symbol of unity and shared cultural heritage in the ECO region.

The ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) hosted a commemorative event entitled "Magtymguly Pyragy: The Voice of Unity and Cultural Renaissance" to celebrate the enduring legacy of the renowned Turkmen poet, philosopher, and cultural figure whose influence extends across the ECO region.

The event brought together diplomats,

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Magtymguly Pyragy's message of unity, humanity, and cultural renewal continues to inspire generations across the ECO region.

”

academics, researchers, and cultural enthusiasts to reflect on Magtymguly Pyragy's contributions to literature, ethics, and intercultural understanding, highlighting his role as a shared cultural asset that continues to inspire regional dialogue and solidarity. In his opening remarks, Amb. Muhammad Hassan, President of the ECO Cultural Institute, described Magtymguly as a symbol of social awakening and unity whose literary and moral vision remains highly relevant in addressing contemporary challenges. He emphasized that the poet's enduring message of humanity, justice, and cohesion continues to offer valuable guidance for strengthening cultural ties among the peoples of the region. H.E. Ylyas Gaipov, Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Iran, praised the organization of the event and highlighted Magtymguly's pivotal role in

the development of Turkmen literature and cultural identity. He also noted the international recognition of the poet's literary legacy and the preservation of his manuscripts as part of the UNESCO Memory of the World Register.

The academic programme featured presentations by Dr. Sayfolloh Mullojon of the National University of Tajikistan and Mr. Ali Rahbar, Director of the Turkmen Culture and Art Institute, who explored Magtymguly's intellectual heritage, his connections with the broader Persian literary tradition, and his significance as a transnational cultural figure whose works continue to resonate across the region.

As part of the ceremony, Ambassador Gaipov donated a collection of books and reference materials on Magtymguly Pyragy and Turkmen culture to the ECI Library, reaffirming the importance of cultural exchange and scholarly cooperation in preserving the region's shared heritage.

The event formed part of the ECO Cultural Institute's ongoing efforts to promote intercultural dialogue, celebrate the literary legacy of the region's great figures, and strengthen people-to-people connections among ECO Member States.

Highlight Box



As a gesture of cultural cooperation, the Ambassador of Turkmenistan donated a collection of books and scholarly works on Magtymguly Pyragy and Turkmen culture to the ECO Cultural Institute Library.



The Voice of Unity and Cultural Renaissance in the ECO Region
Pyragy **مختومقلی**
Magtymguly **فراغی**
 آوای وحدت و نوزایی فرهنگی در منطقه اِکو

Wednesday, June 11, 2026 11:00 - 12:00
 16, Bagat Al-Mansour St., West 16, Sharada
 Sharada Ave., Afghanistan

Speakers:

H.E. Ali Rahbar
 Director of the Turkmen Culture and Art Institute

H.E. Sayfolloh Mullojon
 Professor of Persian Literature, National University of Tajikistan

H.E. Gaipov
 Ambassador of Turkmenistan to the ECO

H.E. Ali Rahbar
 Director of the Turkmen Culture and Art Institute

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ECI Hosts Symposium on Bilingual Poets as Bridges of Cultural Dialogue across the ECO Region

TEHRAN – June 23, 2026



Scholars, writers, and cultural experts participating in ECI's symposium «The Shared Voice», dedicated to the role of bilingual poets in strengthening cultural dialogue and preserving the shared literary heritage of the ECO region.

The ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) hosted a specialized symposium entitled «The Shared Voice» to celebrate the literary legacy of bilingual poets and explore their contribution to intercultural dialogue and the shared cultural heritage of the ECO region.

Bringing together distinguished scholars, researchers, writers, and cultural practitioners,

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Bilingual poets were among the region's first cultural ambassadors, building lasting bridges between languages, cultures, and civilizations

”

the event examined the role of bilingual poets in fostering mutual understanding among the peoples of the region and preserving the rich linguistic and literary traditions that transcend national boundaries.

Opening the symposium, Mr. Mehrdad Rakhshandeh, Executive Director of the ECO Cultural Institute, described bilingual poets as the region's earliest cultural ambassadors, whose works created enduring bridges among civilizations. Referring to prominent literary figures such as Abd al-Rahman Jami, Ali-Shir Nava'i, Fuzuli, and Mohammad-Hossein Shahriar, he emphasized that their multilingual literary heritage continues to promote unity, dialogue, and cultural coexistence across the ECO region.

The academic programme featured presentations by leading scholars from

Afghanistan, Iran, and Tajikistan, who explored the historical development of bilingual literature, the interaction between Persian and other regional languages, and the enduring influence of bilingual poets on the intellectual and literary traditions of the region. Discussions also highlighted the contributions of figures such as Allama Iqbal and Shahriar, whose works demonstrate how multilingual creativity can enrich cultural identity and strengthen intercultural understanding.

Participants further emphasized the importance of documenting, preserving, and promoting the literary heritage of bilingual poets through collaborative research, comparative literary studies, and regional cultural initiatives. Proposals including the creation of a comprehensive database and an atlas of bilingual poets were presented as practical steps toward safeguarding this shared cultural legacy.

The symposium concluded with a reaffirmation of the ECO Cultural Institute's commitment to promoting multilingual literary heritage as an important instrument of cultural diplomacy, regional cooperation, and people-to-people connectivity across the ECO region.

Highlight Box



The symposium proposed the establishment of a comprehensive database and an atlas of bilingual poets to preserve and promote the shared literary heritage of the ECO region.



لعل مشترک
Shared Voice
Commemoration of the Bilingual Poets of the ECO Region

چهارشنبه ۱۴۰۳/۰۶/۰۳ - ۱۴۰۳/۰۶/۰۴
10. Bagheri St. Huzefa Inn. Next to Bazar-e
Korosh St. - Bagh-e Zohreh

جهت شرکت در برنامه، لطفاً با شماره ۰۲۱-۲۷۶۷۳۲۰۴ تماس حاصل فرمایید.
For participation in the event, please contact: + 21 - 2767 3204

ECI Launches Silk Road Intangible Heritage Series to Promote Regional Cooperation

TEHRAN – June 30, 2026



Cultural experts and heritage practitioners participating in the inaugural session of the Silk Road Intangible Heritage Series, hosted by the ECO Cultural Institute in Tehran.

The ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) launched the first session of its Silk Road Intangible Heritage Series under the theme “Regional Cooperation for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in ECO Member States.” The event brought together cultural experts, academics, and heritage practitioners to discuss new approaches to preserving the region’s rich

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Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage is an investment in the future, not merely the preservation of the past.

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living heritage through regional collaboration. Opening the session, Mr. Mehrdad Rakhshandeh, Executive Director of the ECO Cultural Institute, emphasized that intangible cultural heritage has become an important resource for sustainable development, social cohesion, community empowerment, and cultural diplomacy. He noted that safeguarding living heritage should be regarded as an investment in the future rather than simply an effort to preserve the past.

The symposium featured presentations by distinguished experts from across the region, including Ms. Zulfia Burhon, Secretary-General of the National Commission for UNESCO of Tajikistan, Dr. Atousa Momeni, Director of the Regional Research Centre for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in West and Central Asia, and Professor



Hamidreza Shairi of Tarbiat Modares University. Speakers highlighted the importance of strengthening regional cooperation to safeguard intangible cultural heritage, emphasizing that the cultural diversity of the ECO region represents a shared source of dialogue, mutual understanding, and regional identity. Discussions also explored community-based safeguarding approaches inspired by the 2003 UNESCO Convention, stressing the need to place local communities at the center of heritage preservation efforts. The symposium further examined the historical significance of the Silk Road as a corridor of cultural exchange, where ideas, artistic traditions, knowledge, and technologies traveled across civilizations, shaping the shared cultural landscape of the ECO region and beyond.

Highlight Box



The inaugural session of the Silk Road Intangible Heritage Series reaffirmed the importance of regional cooperation and community-centered approaches in safeguarding the shared living heritage of ECO Member States.

The session concluded with a call for enhanced exchange of expertise, joint research initiatives, and stronger institutional cooperation among ECO Member States to ensure that the region's rich intangible cultural heritage is preserved, promoted, and transmitted to future generations.

