



During an unannounced visit to the Tehran International Book Fair, the late Iranian president Ebrahim Raisi (C) talks with a publisher of the Holy Qur'an on May 21, 2022.

Expansion of public libraries

His attention to cultural issues wasn't just a one-time thing at the Book of the Year Award. On November 15, 2022, president Raisi flagged the problem of books and book reading as one of the key indicators of every society's culture. He asked the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance to make expanding public libraries and easy access to books a priority. Following the late president's attendance at a ceremony for commemorating the National Day of Books, Reading, and Librarians in November 2022, the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance penned a letter to the president, suggesting ways to make books more accessible and tackle the livelihood challenges faced by

librarians with the help of the country's institution for public libraries.

Per the president's order on November 28, 2023, relevant institutions, including Iran's Planning and Budget Organization, were tapped to cooperate in solving librarians' problems and making books more accessible. The organization was also tasked with allocating the necessary credit budget to temporarily ease librarians' livelihood challenges within the rules. Another part of the order focused on central libraries in the provinces; the Planning and Budget Organization was to allocate the required credits to complete the construction of these central libraries.

Self-sufficiency in paper production

Another key point in the president's was the attention he paid to self-sufficiency in paper production. Right from the start of the previous government's term, Raisi pushed for self-sufficiency in paper production by rallying various forces and holding regular meetings with paper producers. He also tasked his first deputy with following up on

this matter.

With Raisi at the helm of the government, the Ministry of Education was tasked with using domestic production for textbook papers. This move kept \$50 million of foreign currency within the country. As a result, about 1,241 people found employment in Mazandaran's wood and paper industry factory.

Communicating via Book fair

During different periods, both when he was serving as the head of the judiciary and later as president, he attended the Tehran International Book Fair. He recently spoke about the importance of holding the Tehran International Book Fair and advancing cultural justice. During his multi-hour visit to the book fair, chatted with publishers and publishing managers about issues and challenges in the publishing industry and the book market.

According to him, the book fair is more than just a cultural event. It's a platform for establishing meaningful and effective communication between authors, publishers, and book readers, and a place where ideas are exchanged.

He attributed the thriving book publishing and distribution sector to the blessings of Iran's Islamic Revolution. Before the Revolution, the Tehran Book Fair was limited to a couple of tents pitched next to the University of Tehran. Now, with the backing and encouragement of the leader, an exhibition of this magnitude and quality is held for books, fueling everyone's enthusiasm and interest in reading.



Martyr President