

Turkmen Horses Get Beauty Contest

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ASHGABAT, Turkmenistan — Once prized by Alexander the Great for their speed and stamina, Turkmenistan's thoroughbred horses are being groomed for a series of beauty contests, ordered by a presidential decree published on Monday.

President Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov, who is known for his deft horsemanship, said national beauty contests for the ancient Akhal-Teke breed should be held every April.

The best horses of the breed, distinguished by shimmering coats, long delicate necks and legs, and popularly revered as "the wings of the Turkmen," will be chosen "to promote the glory of the heavenly racehorse worldwide," the decree said.

Special awards will be given to craftsmen for the best carpet featuring the horse, the best "holiday attire" for the breed and the best portrait.

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