

# Leader endorses Pezeshkian as Iran's 9th president

## National Desk

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei formally endorsed Masoud Pezeshkian as Iran's 9th president at a ceremony held in Tehran on Sunday.

The Leader's decree, endorsing the mandate of President Pezeshkian, was read out at the event by the head of the leader's office.

In the decree, Ayatollah Khamenei said, "The fate-determining test of the presidential election ended with calmness and sobriety in difficult conditions thanks to the endeavors of people and officials, and the person chosen by the nation became ready to take on a great responsibility."

He also described the 14th presidential vote, which was held after late president Ebrahim Raisi's unfinished term of office, as "one of the honors of the Iranian nation and a sign of the establishment of a sustainable Islamic system that indicate the rationality and sobriety of the country's political environment."

The Leader also expressed prayers and wishes for Pezeshkian's success, adding that the nation's vote and his endorsement will persist as long as the president follows his usual approach on the straight path of Islam and the Revolution. Pezeshkian won the second round of the presidential election which was held on July 5. The 69-year-



Iran's newly elected President Masoud Pezeshkian (2nd L) speaks after receiving an official seal of approval of Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei (L) as Parliament Speaker Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf (2nd R) and Judiciary Chief Gholam-Hossein Mohseni Ejehei listen.

● khamenei.ir

old trained heart surgeon garnered more than 16 million votes against ex-nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili, who secured upwards of 13 million out of over 30 million votes cast, with the voter turnout standing at almost 50 percent.

The election was called early after Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi lost his life in a helicopter crash in May.

Pezeshkian will take the oath of office in parliament on Tuesday. Delivering a speech at the event, the Leader said Iran's "democra-

cy is mixed with competition and healthiness."

"This democracy that exists today in our country was not obtained cheaply and easily, it is the result of people's uprising against a chaotic and disastrous situation that prevailed in the past," he emphasized. Ayatollah Khamenei further said that the Islamic Republic has in the past more than 40 years witnessed dozens of elections that were held in a healthy and competitive atmosphere with the motivated presence of the people.

## Economic issues

Ayatollah Khamenei also asserted that economic issues are a priority today, stressing, "A calculated, strong and persistent economic mobility is required."

"Of course, in the previous government, valuable work was done, which should continue."

The leader urged officials to do whatever that is within their power on the international level while protecting the nation's dignity, however, he advised them not to ignore "capabilities and initiatives inside the

country." He further called for the country to adopt an "active and effective" approach in the face of global issues, especially regional ones.

The Islamic Republic has priorities in its foreign relations, one of which is its neighbors, he pointed out.

"We have no intention to oppose some European countries. The reason I didn't mention European countries as a priority is that they have not treated us well for many years," he added.

"If they don't have this bad attitude, then (ties with Europe) would be

one of our priorities."

On the campaign trail, Pezeshkian had pledged to try to revive a 2015 nuclear deal with the United States and other world powers.

The deal collapsed in 2018 after Washington withdrew from it. Pezeshkian has in a recent article called for "constructive relations" with European countries, even though he accused them of reneging on commitments to mitigate the impact of US sanctions.

## Justice for people

In his Sunday speech, President Pezeshkian pledged to pursue no path other than that of justice.

He said that "returning dignity and honor to the country is only possible through unity, and sticking to the law."

"We must join hands to address problems, needs, and concerns of the beloved people of our country," he added. "A society that is convergent and law-oriented can see the strengthening of its administration and society." Following the event, acting President Mohammad Mokher handed over official responsibilities to Pezeshkian

## Reformist Aref appointed as first vice president

Haji-Mirzaei appointed as president's chief of staff

## National Desk

Iran's new President Masoud Pezeshkian appointed Reformist Mohammad Reza Aref, 72, as his first vice president, according to an announcement carried by state TV.

Aref has represented Tehran in parliament and served as first vice president and communications minister under Iran's last Reformist president Mohammad Khatami, who held office from 1997 to 2005. He was also a candidate in the 2013 presidential election but withdrew



Mohammad-Reza Aref

in favor of Hassan Rouhani, who went on to win the presidency. Aref is currently a member of the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution and a member of the Expediency Council. He holds a doctorate in engineering from Stanford University.



Mohsen Haji-Mirzaei

Pezeshkian also served as health minister under Khatami. Iran's new president also appointed former education minister Mohsen Haji-Mirzaei as his chief of staff. Haji-Mirzaei served as education minister under former president Rouhani.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist



## Iran warns of 'consequences' of Israeli attacks on Lebanon after Golan strike

## International Desk

Iran on Sunday warned Israel that any new military "adventures" in Lebanon could lead to "unforeseen consequences", following a deadly rocket strike in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.

"Any ignorant action of the Zionist regime can lead to the broadening of the scope of instability, insecurity and war in the region," said foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani.

He added that Israel will be responsible for "the unforeseen consequences and reactions to such stupid behavior".

Hezbollah, which on Saturday claimed multiple attacks on Israeli military positions following a deadly raid on southern Lebanon, has denied responsibility for the rocket fire that Israeli authorities said killed 12 people including children in the Druze town of Majdal Shams.

Kanaani accused Israel of pinning the blame on Hezbollah "to divert public opinion and world attention from its massive crimes" in the Gaza Strip, where war has raged since October 7.

He added that Israel "does not have the least moral authority to comment" on the deaths in Majdal Shams, on the Golan Heights which the country has seized from Syria in 1967 and lat-

er annexed in a move not recognized by the United Nations.

The attack sharply escalated tensions in the hostilities which have been fought in parallel to the Gaza war and has raised fears of a full-blown conflict between the heavily armed adversaries.

"Hezbollah will pay a heavy price, the kind it has thus far not paid," Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a phone call with the leader of the Druze community in Israel, according to a statement from his office.

In a written statement, Hezbollah said: "The Islamic Resistance has absolutely nothing to do with the incident, and categorically denies all false allegations in this regard".

Hezbollah had earlier announced several rocket attacks targeting Israeli military positions. The Israeli ambulance service said 13 more people were wounded by the rocket that hit the soccer pitch which was filled at the time with children and teenagers.

The Israeli military said the rocket launch was carried out from an area located north of the village of Chebaa in southern Lebanon. Netanyahu's far-right coalition ally, Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, called for tough retaliation, including against Hezbollah's leader,



Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah. "For the death of children, Nasrallah should pay with his head. All of Lebanon should pay," Smotrich posted on X.

The conflict has forced tens of thousands of people in both Lebanon and Israel to leave their homes. Israeli strikes have killed some 350 Hezbollah fighters in Lebanon and more than 100 civilians, including medics, children and journalists.

On the Israeli side, 22 soldiers and 24 civilians have been killed, according to Israeli authorities. In a statement on X, Lebanon's Foreign Minister Abdallah Bou Habib urged for an "international investigation or a meeting of the tripartite committee held through UNIFIL to know the truth" about who was responsible for the attack. He insisted the Lebanese group targets "only mili-

A man stands near a damaged gate around a football pitch after a rocket strike in Majdal Shams village in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights on July 28, 2024.

● MENAHEM KAHANA/AFP

tary" positions and ruled out them carrying out an intentional attack on civilians in Majdal Shams.

The UK on Sunday condemned the rocket attack and said it was "deeply concerned about the risk of further escalation and destabilization".

France's Foreign Ministry also condemned the attack and urged belligerents to avoid escalation. "France condemns in the strongest terms the particularly fatal attack on the Druze town of Majdal Shams in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights," the ministry said, calling for "everything to be done to avoid a new military escalation".