

President Pezeshkian takes oath of office

National Desk

Iran's new President Masoud Pezeshkian on Tuesday took the oath of office before the parliament for a four-year term, replacing the late president Ebrahim Raisi who died in a helicopter crash in May.

It came two days after Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei endorsed him as Iran's 9th president.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by senior Iranian politicians, military officials, and members of Parliament as well as dignitaries from 88 countries. Pezeshkian, a 69-year-old heart surgeon, won the second round of presidential election on July 5, defeating ex-nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili.

He garnered more than 16 million votes against Jalili, who secured upwards of 13 million out of over 30 million votes cast, with the voter turnout standing at almost 50 percent.

Addressing the parliament after taking the oath of office on Tuesday, the new chief executive urged the world to pounce on the "unparalleled opportunity" to work with Iran in tackling both regional and global

challenges.

"The world needs to seize this unparalleled opportunity to address regional and international issues through the collaboration of a powerful, peace-seeking, and dignified Iran," he said.

The president promised to uphold Iran's dignity and interests in the world, describing "dignity, wisdom, and expediency" as the three pillars of his foreign policy approach.

He affirmed that constructive engagement with the world would be the cornerstone of his administration's foreign relations.

"In our vision," Pezeshkian said, Iran "engages constructively and effectively in international relations while emphasizing religious democracy, social justice, legitimate freedoms, the preservation of human dignity and rights, and social and judicial security."

The president called for cooperation among the West Asian countries to create a region free from extremist influences, underlining that radical voices should not overshadow the nearly two billion peace-loving Muslims as "Islam is a religion of peace."

"My government seeks a strong region where all neighboring countries can take joint steps towards economic development, progress, and the improvement of future generations' lives through synergy," he said.

The Iranian president also wished for a world where "no Palestinian child's dreams are buried under the rubble of their homes."

As stipulated in Article 121 of the Iranian Constitution, the presidential oath must be administered in Parliament, where the president takes the oath of office in the presence of legislators and members of the Constitutional Council alongside the Judiciary chief.

After the inauguration, the president is required by law to submit the final list of his cabinet to Parliament for approval within two weeks.



Iran's new President Masoud Pezeshkian (L) and Parliament's Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf enter Parliament hall for the president's swearing-in ceremony in Tehran, on July 30, 2024.

● MEGHDAD MADADI/TASNIM



Islam's highest flag flies in Gaza: *Leader*



Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said the Palestinian nation and the people of the Gaza Strip are at the present time carrying "the highest flag of Islam" in the world.

Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks on Tuesday during a meeting with Ismail Haniyeh, head of the political bureau of the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas, and Secretary General of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement Ziyad al-Nakhalah, in Tehran. "Today, the highest flag of Islam is in the hands of the Palestinian nation and the people of Gaza, and thanks to the resistance, the ground has been provided for the further promotion of Islam," he said.

"The increasing trend toward Islam at the current juncture shows the glory and grandeur of the resistance of the Palestinian na-

tion and the people of Gaza." The Leader also described the people of Gaza and the West Bank as the main elements behind the glory of the resistance.

Haniyeh, along with many other officials, traveled to Tehran to participate in the swearing-in ceremony of Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian.

Zangezur corridor

The Leader also held a separate meeting with Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, during which Ayatollah Khamenei underlined preserving Armenia's territorial integrity. The Leader pointed to the Zangezur corridor, saying that Iran considers its formation as a detriment to Armenia.

The Zangezur corridor is a concept for a transport corridor which, if implemented, would give Azerbaijan unimpeded access to



Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei (R) meets with Ismail Haniyeh (C), chief of the Palestinian resistance group Hamas, and Secretary General of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement Ziyad al-Nakhalah, in Tehran on July 30, 2024.

● khamenei.ir

Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic without Armenian checkpoints.

Promoting Persian language

In a meeting with visiting Tajikistan's President Emomali Rahmon, the Leader described the Persian language as one of the main commonalities between Iran, Tajikistan and Afghanistan, saying that more cooperation is needed to preserve and promote the Persian language.

Ayatollah Khamenei also appreciated Rahmon's efforts to propagate the Persian language.

Protests erupt in Venezuela after Maduro's re-election

International Desk

Protests broke out in several Venezuelan cities on Monday after Nicolas Maduro was formally declared a winner by the country's electoral authority in the presidential race.

Thousands of people flooded the streets of the capital, Caracas, chanting "Freedom, freedom!" and "This government is going to fall!" The opposition has questioned the official results announced by the electoral commission, a doubt backed up by several countries around the world.

"We're fed up. We want a change," said Leydis Mojares, 33, one of the marchers. "We want a better life for our children. Maduro isn't our president any more. The result last night was such a disappointment... I cried, I screamed. I saw my daughter, who is 13, crying. I said to her, 'How long is this going to go on for?'" Regardless, the National Electoral Council (CNE) has certified Maduro's re-election for a third six-year term until 2031.

At least two statues of Hugo Chavez, the late socialist icon who led Venezuela for more than a decade and handpicked Maduro as his successor, were knocked down by protesters around the country.

The National Guard fired tear gas and rubber bullets at protesters, many wearing motorbike helmets and bandannas tied over their faces for protection. Some responded by throwing rocks and Molotov cocktails. Maduro has dismissed doubts about the result, claiming Venezuela was the target of an attempted "coup d'etat" of a "fascist and counter-revolutionary" nature. Venezuela also said it was withdrawing its diplomatic staff from seven Latin American countries that questioned the victory of Maduro.



Opponents of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro clash with riot police during a protest in Caracas on July 29, 2024, a day after the presidential election.

● YURI CORTEZ/AFP

In a statement, the foreign ministry said it rejected the "interventionist actions and statements" of the governments of Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Peru, Panama, Dominican Republic and Uruguay, which signed a joint statement asking for a complete review of the election results. Opposition leader Maria Corina Machado told reporters that a review of voting records available so far clearly showed

that the next president "will be Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia," who took her place on the ballot after she was barred by Maduro-aligned courts.

Venezuela's close allies Russia, China, Iran and Cuba hailed his victory while the US, the EU and the UK demanded to see a detailed breakdown of voting. Regional power Brazil is attempting to mediate between Maduro and the opposition.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

