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President Pezeshkian Takes Oath of Office

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Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks at his swearing-in ceremony in Parliament in Tehran on July 30, 2024.
● ABOLFAZI NESAEI/IRAN DAILY

Pezeshkian talks with visiting world figures on int'l affairs

National Desk

Iran's new President Masoud Pezeshkian engaged in diplomatic discussions on regional and international developments as well as comprehensive relations with various foreign delegations on the sidelines of his swearing-in ceremony in Tehran on Tuesday.

More than 70 foreign representatives, including senior officials and secretary generals of regional and international bodies, traveled to Tehran to attend the ceremony. Presidents, vice-presidents, deputy ministers, parliament speakers and ambassadors partook in the ceremony where Pezeshkian was sworn in as Iran's chief executive in Parliament.

Commonality with Tajikistan

In the meeting with his Tajik counterpart, Emomali Rahmon, Pezeshkian stated that, "We must strive to diminish political borders while enhancing cooperation and relations," adding that language is a significant commonality shared by Iran and Tajikistan and "I hope that by relying on this commonality, we can enhance mutual cooperation in various fields."

During a meeting with Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, the Iranian president said Iran considers connecting routes, including the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), as an opportunity for the development and progress of all countries in the region, adding that the completion of projects in this sector will be one of the new administration's priorities.

In a meeting with visiting Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze, Pezeshkian emphasized that the new Iranian government prioritizes the consolidation of ties with neighboring countries, adding that Iran like Georgia is determined to employ the potential to expand bilateral ties in line with the well-be-



Iran's new President Masoud Pezeshkian (R) meets Tajik counterpart Emomali Rahmon on the sidelines of his swearing-in ceremony in Tehran, on July 30, 2024.
● president.ir

ing and development of the two nations.

Regional union

Pezeshkian also met with Chairman of the Senate of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan Ashimbayev Maulen Sagathanuly. He said bilateral relations are based on historical interactions and cultural commonalities. "Even today, political borders have not limited the cultural and historical connections of the two countries, stressing that establishing a regional union will lead to a point that cooperation between countries be more prominent," he added. Ashimbayev, for his part, stressed that Kazakhstan considers the Islamic Republic as a "strategic partner."

Unity among Muslims

Meanwhile, in a meeting with the visiting Malaysian Parliament speaker Johari Abdul, Pezeshkian vowed to strengthen the friendly relations with Kuala Lumpur. He also stressed the need for further unity among Muslim coun-

tries in order to prevent the crimes of the Israeli regime, while appreciating Malaysia's positions on Palestine.

In a meeting with Chairman of Uzbekistan's Legislative Chamber Nuriddinjon Ismailov, Pezeshkian said the numerous agreements between Iran and Uzbekistan signify the deepening and growing of bilateral relations.

He emphasized that strengthening parliamentary relations between the two sides serves as a solid foundation for accelerating government efforts to enhance bilateral ties. He called for greater involvement of the legislative bodies of both countries in this regard. Ismailov highlighted the various sectors for collaboration, particularly in trade, transportation, transit, and logistics as suitable areas for developing cooperation between the two nations. He noted that currently more than 300 joint companies are active in the commercial and economic sectors of both countries, and Uzbekistan is interested in increasing the volume of trade with Iran to twice its current amount in the new era.

Economic ties with Turkmenistan

During a meeting with Rashid Mardov, the deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs of Turkmenistan, Pezeshkian emphasized that the relations between the two countries have a long history and are based on shared cultural and civilizational ties. He also urged greater efforts to enhance economic and trade interactions between the two nations.

Pezeshkian, in his meeting with Bakyt Torobayev, the deputy prime minister of Kyrgyzstan, stated that strengthening relations with Kyrgyzstan through a commercial cooperation agreement would yield positive outcomes for both nations. Kyrgyzstan's deputy prime minister, for his part, said that relations with Iran provide a solid backing for his country in international interactions.

Stronger bonds among independent countries

In a meeting with Cuba's Prime Minister Manuel Marrero Cruz on Monday Pezeshkian said the expansion of relations among in-

dependent and freedom-seeking countries such as Iran and Cuba can play an effective role in the fight against unilateralism.

He denounced Israel's crimes against the defenseless people of Palestine in Gaza and inaction of the so-called human rights defenders on the regime's criminal acts. In a meeting with Syrian Prime Minister Hussein Arnous in Tehran, Pezeshkian said his administration will take necessary measures to speed up the implementation of the agreements with the Arab country.

In a meeting with South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Ronald Ozy Lamola, Iran's new president also called for strengthening cooperation with South Africa in bilateral and international circles, including the BRICS group of emerging economies. Lamola said his coun-

try will continue to cooperate with Iran with the purpose of restoring the Palestinian people's rights, establishing lasting ceasefire and delivering humanitarian aid to the war-inflicted civilians.

Resistance reassured of consistent support

Meeting separately with Ismail Haniyeh, the head of the political bureau of the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas, Ziad Nakhala, the secretary general of the Gaza Strip-based Islamic Jihad movement, and Sheikh Naim Qassem, deputy secretary general of the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah, Pezeshkian reassured senior resistance leaders of the Islamic Republic's policy of providing the Axis of Resistance in the region with consistent support. At a meeting with spokesman for Yemen's Ansarullah resistance movement, Mohamed Abdel-Salam, Pezeshkian has hailed the anti-Israel operations carried out by the Yemeni forces in support of Palestinians in the war-torn Gaza, calling for cooperation among Islamic nations to put an end to the oppression of Muslims.

UN chief: Iran can resolve regional crises

Meanwhile, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres congratulated Pezeshkian on his victory in Iran's presidential election, expressing the world body's readiness to promote cooperation with the new Iranian administration. In a message addressed to Pezeshkian, Guterres acknowledged that he is counting on him to help promote the values and ideals enshrined in the UN Charter. He called for Iran's important and influential role in Middle East to be used in order to help resolve regional crises and prevent the outbreak of new conflicts that could threaten the region and beyond.

Kerman-Dubai direct flight to be launched next month

Kerman Province will have direct flights to Dubai, allowing for connection of Iran's southeastern province to 150 destinations, according to a provincial official.

Ali Beigzadeh, the deputy head of Kerman's Management and Resources Development, said the Kerman-Dubai flight will for the first time be launched as of September 9, Mehr News Agency reported. There will be a twice-weekly service on Mondays and Thursdays from Dubai to Kerman Province, Beigzadeh said.

With the launch of this flight, Kerman will be connected to 150 destinations across the world. The official stressed that the southeastern Iranian city will find the opportunity to participate in international exhibitions and economic activities, and tourism will be promoted in the province.



Iran issues permits for setting up trade centers in Shanghai, Minsk



Iran has authorized the launch of trade centers in China's Shanghai and in the Belarusian capital of Minsk.

The Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) of Iran said on Monday that it had issued a permit for opening the Islamic Republic of Iran's Trade Center in Shanghai, a major trade and economic hub on the East China Sea coast, Press TV reported.

It said the center will be authorized to carry out trade activities on behalf of the Iranian government and businesses until the end of the current calendar year in late March.

Iran has already launched a trade center in the Chinese capital Beijing as part of its plans to expand economic relations with China and to increase its exports to the East Asian country. China is currently Iran's largest trade partner as the country accounts for nearly a fourth of all purchases of Iranian non-oil exports. The TPO on Monday also issued a permit for launching the Iranian trade center in Minsk, saying the permit will be valid until next May.

Iran and Belarus have sought better ties in recent years as part of plans to fight off sanctions im-

posed on their economies by the West.

Iran relies on Belarus for imports of heavy mining and manufacturing equipment and agricultural machinery while it exports sizable volumes of agri-food and manufactured products to Belarus. Iran has signed a free trade arrangement with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), of which Belarus is a key member.

Trade ties between the two countries can further expand once parliaments of Iran and all EAEU countries finalize the free trade agreement signed in December last year.

Iran's steel output up 5.9% to 16.6m mts in H1 2024

The latest monthly report by the World Steel Association (WSA) indicated that Iran has produced as much as 16.6 million metric tons (mts) of unprocessed steel in the first half of 2024, an increase of 5.9% year-on-year.

According to the report, Iran remained on the ninth place of the world steel producers in the six-month period, IRNA reported. In May, the WSA published its report which put Iran on the seventh ranking of world steel producers in May while the country's five-month ranking was ninth, which was largely due to restrictions on gas supply during the first months of 2024.

The global steel output hit 161.4 million mts in June which is 0.5% more than figures reported in last year's corresponding month, according to the latest report by the association. It also said that Turkey, India, and Iran saw 16.9, 7.4 and 5.9 percent increases, respectively to register the biggest rises among the top producing countries in June.



Minaret of Saheb Al-Zaman Mosque in Bandar Abbas, a symbol of Islamic architecture

Iranica Desk

Understanding Islamic architecture requires thorough research and study, and the minaret is one of the most important elements of mosques and Islamic architecture. It serves as the place where the muezzin calls to prayer (adhan).

Given the significance of the adhan in Islam and its advisory and promotional functions, a dedicated space for the muezzin became necessary. Initially, the minaret featured a simple design, consisting of a tall, tower-like structure with a designated area for the muezzin at the top. Over time, a surrounding wall was added, creating an enclosure, and the design evolved further.

With the advent of Islam in Iran,

minarets were constructed in the style of local architecture, resembling *chartaqi*, which literally means "having four arches," and Sassanid towers. Later, during the Abbasid dynasty, these styles served as a model for many mosques throughout the Islamic world.

The concept of constructing minarets in mosques emerged shortly after the establishment of the mosques themselves. Historical texts suggest that the first minaret was constructed during the Umayyad period. Notably, the first minaret built in its current form was erected by Ibn Abi-ya around 50th AH at the Great Mosque of Basra.

The oldest minarets in Iran were built in Bandar Abbas, Hormuzgan Province. Initially known as Posht-e Shahr Mosque, the structure now referred to as the Saheb Al-Zaman Mosque, was constructed in the form of a *kapar*, a term in the local dialect of Hormuzgan that refers to a house made of wood and palm fronds, enclosed with a covering of reeds made from palm leaves.

Over time, canopies supported by wooden poles, with roofs made of mats or reeds, were added. Due to limited funding for a more unified structure, the mosque remained in this rudimentary form for several years. Eventually, a group of individuals from Bandar Abbas, who had previously migrated to Hyderabad, India, took the initiative to build a more permanent mosque for the local residents in this area.

This development occurred approximately 114 to 124 years ago. This resulted in the construction of a mosque made of adobe bricks, which has undergone various repairs over the years and has withstood the test of time.

In 1970, Hassan Tavakkoli oversaw the mosque's reconstruction, which was completed in 1971. It was named after its neighborhood, known as Posht-e Shahr Mosque meaning the Mosque Behind the City.

The construction of the minaret also began in the same year. Initially, the minaret was entirely made of brick. In 2007, efforts were made to enhance its appearance with the assistance of local residents and the board of trustees.

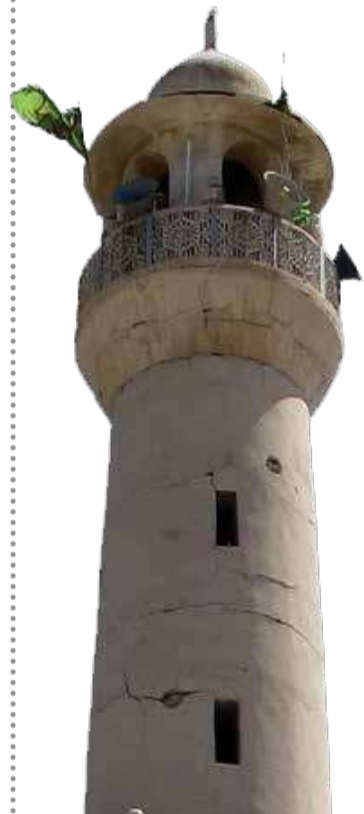
The minaret of the mosque is constructed of brick and stone, using a mortar mix of *sarooj* and plaster, while its foundation and central core are made of stone. The overall structure is predominantly brick.

The design of the minaret is based on circular geometry, with a diameter of 1.78 meters at the base, which gradually decreases in size as the height of the structure increases, maintaining this diameter until it reaches a height of 4.8 meters.

The minaret was built according to the principles of local architecture typical of most minarets in southern Iran, featuring the distinctive characteristic of a gradually decreasing diameter at higher elevations, resulting in a narrowing of the structure as it ascends.

The minaret can be divided into three sections based on height, with each section featuring a specific diameter in its plan. Notably, there is a subtle yet discernible decrease in the radius of the plan as one ascends through each section.

Today, the minaret of the Saheb Al-Zaman Mosque stands as the oldest surviving minaret among the coastal minarets of southern Iran, exemplifying the region's unique architectural style.



Zingan Cave, an oasis in Ilam Province

Zingan Cave is situated near the city of Mehran, in the heart of a vast plain close to Salehabad village in Ilam Province. This cave is known for its pleasantly cool weather, which has earned it the nickname Behesht Cave, meaning "heaven" in Persian. Many professional eco-tourists believe that this natural phenomenon is not a true cave, but rather a gorge, as it is open at both ends and does not resemble the typical caves we are familiar with.

Despite the warm and dry climate of Salehabad and the broader Mehran region, the interior of the cave is damp, fostering the growth of plants and vegetables typical of humid, rainy environments. The high levels of water, along with vestibules and numerous icicles, have created a natural forest within the plain, where ferns, algae, and lichens thrive. Interestingly, the temperature difference between the outside and inside of the cave can exceed twenty degrees, with the interior being significantly cooler. This unique environment makes exploring Zingan Cave an adventurous experience.

Exploring Zingan Cave is an adventurous experience. The passageway

stretches approximately six kilometers from beginning to end, with water flowing along the route, requiring visitors to wade through it in some areas. At points, the passage narrows, adding excitement and challenge to the journey. Along the way, two waterfalls can be encountered, which must also be navigated. To reach this remarkable yet less-

er-known cave, located ten kilometers from Salehabad, travelers should head west from Ilam for about fifty kilometers. A guide sign near the Salehabad village indicates the way to Zingan Cave. The final stretch from Salehabad village to the cave's entrance is a five-kilometer dirt road, and after about forty minutes of travel, the cave comes into view.



Pezeshkian's capital for constructive cooperation with world

Experts tell Iran Daily

By Ebrahim Beheshti
& Amir Mollae Mozaffari
Staff writers

EXCLUSIVE

Constructive cooperation with the world is very much the focus of the Pezeshkian government's foreign policy. But what exactly are the features of this policy? What obstacles would the implementation of this policy in today's Iran face? And finally, what do Pezeshkian and his government need to do to be successful in implementing it?

Iran Daily asked these questions and more in an exclusive interview with Sasan Karimi and Afifeh Abedi. Sasan Karimi lectures at the University of Tehran's Faculty of World Studies and researches foreign policy issues. Afifeh Abedi is a researcher at the Center for Strategic Research and an expert in foreign policy matters.



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian form gestures triumphantly at a campaign event for the presidential election in Shiraz, southern Iran, on June 23, 2024.

● BORNA



Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei (L) is greeted by President Masoud Pezeshkian during the latter's endorsement on July 28, 2024.

● khamenei.ir

IRAN DAILY: Constructive cooperation forms the main pillar of Masoud Pezeshkian's foreign policy. But what exactly are the conceptual features of this approach?

SASAN KARIMI: Iran's foreign policy operates within a general framework — the statement “neither Eastern nor Western” and the principles of “dignity, wisdom, and prudence”. Constructive cooperation is a concept that features in Iran's upstream documents, and all governments have given it at least lip service. However, putting this policy into practice takes courage and skilled stewards. Yet, we see some prominent figures who have shown such courage in their careers are always under fire and paying a price.

Are you referring to former foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif?

KARIMI: Yes, Zarif, former president Hassan Rouhani, Seyyed Abbas Araghchi, and Ali Akbar Salehi once formed a team that has come under a lot of fire since. But you have to take it into consideration that the difficult job is not cooperating with your friends, but rather it is cooperating with countries with which you have tensions or, at the very least, do not enjoy warm diplomatic relations.

To keep up with West Asian countries alone which are on the path to development, Iran needs other countries to interact with it normally and without tension. So, Iran should set its foreign policy in a way that does not give excuses to ill-wishers and regional rivals. Constructive cooperation makes sense only when we can meet three goals — on which the foreign policy of Pezeshkian is interestingly based — namely, national interest, national security, and national dignity.

AFIFEH ABEDI: The plan for constructive cooperation in this new period comes in response to the previous government's East-facing policy. The goals and national interests of the country remain fixed, no matter which government or faction rules. As I see it, the policy of constructive cooperation was discussed in president Raisi's government as well, but international restrictions and pressures led to an emphasis on a “Look to the East” approach as the declared policy.

Iran shares interests with eastern powers for various reasons, including geographical determinism. Our security is interconnected, as evidenced by the fact that when Iran's security was recently threatened, we saw

China and Russia's supportive responses. For example, after the confrontation between Iran and Israel, China and Russia tried to lower the level of conflict and bolster Iran's security vis-à-vis Israel, siding with Tehran in the UN Security Council.

Does that mean you see the Pezeshkian government's approach to foreign policy as opposing the East-facing policy of the late president's government?

ABEDI: I see constructive cooperation as the extension of “Look to the East”, not setting itself against it. Both approaches fall under the fixed foreign policy strategy of the Islamic Republic. Depending on regional and international conditions, one of these approaches or a combination of the two will be used at any given time.

After decades of trial and error in Iran's foreign policy, we have arrived at a fixed strategic policy. What I mean is that we cannot have “complex” strategic relations with eastern powers, but we do have close relations and shared interests. We also share geographical necessities and security links, and we are members of important organizations like the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and BRICS.

“Look to the East” was once adopted to secure Iran's interests, and now, under the constructive cooperation approach, we need to pursue the same goal. This approach does not mean maintaining relations solely with the West and turning our backs on the East; nor does it overshadow Iran's principled policy of supporting the Axis of Resistance.

Mr. Karimi, you mentioned that we naturally have a tougher time enlisting the cooperation of countries with which we have problematic relations. There is clearly a deep mistrust between Iran and Europe, and between Iran and the US. How do you see Pezeshkian's government navigating the challenges of rebuilding that trust?

KARIMI: The key point of the new government's foreign policy, as Pezeshkian himself emphasized, will be to avoid imposing a limiting foreign policy on the country. Before, there was a perception of a strategic alliance from the East-facing approach — that is, the idea that China and Russia are Tehran's strategic allies against the West.

However, in today's post-polar world, the old East-West blocs have broken down. Today's world is not a world of inclusive alliances; it is a world of case-by-case alliances. That means you might align with one country on one case, but disagree with the same country on another. So, each issue needs to be looked at separately. For instance, Russia used to refuse to give Iran the S-300 defense system pre-JCPOA, but now it is giving the S-400 system to Turkey, a NATO member.

To avoid limiting your foreign policy to just one recourse, it must be balanced. That means you may have relations with major countries in Asia or the East as well as the West. Of course, contexts differ, and you have to de-escalate with some of them first. De-escalation does not equal Westernism, but because we have the most tension with Western countries, it usually gets high-

lighted in talk of constructive cooperation. A foreign policy that gives you a diverse portfolio of options requires maintaining current relations while developing new ones. De-escalation based on a balanced foreign policy has enemies both inside and outside the country: right-wing Republican radicals in the US, Israel, and some other regional countries, and radical tendencies within Iran itself.

Western countries, especially Europeans and Americans, did not react very clearly or warmly to the result of Iran's elections. Does this point to a continued lack of trust between the two sides?

ABEDI: The way the West responds to Iran's election results shows their acceptance of Iran's political identity and its strategic policy. They recognize that there is a stable pivot point in Iran's political system and its foreign policy, which conflicts with the West. We have an identity conflict with the West on multiple levels. The ideological and independent policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, since the beginning of its Islamic Revolution four decades ago, conflicts with the West's system of domination over the world. So, they know that this fixed identity does not change with changes of government in Iran and that decision-making on major political issues rests with the Establishment, not the government.

At the regional and international levels as well, Iran's interests and those of the West are at odds. Iran's role in the regional order involves forming the Axis of Re-



Abedi: I see constructive cooperation as the extension of “Look to the East” policy, not setting itself against it. Both approaches seek to secure Iran's interests and fall under the fixed foreign policy strategy of the Islamic Republic. Constructive cooperation does not mean maintaining relations solely with the West and turning our backs on the East; nor does it overshadow Iran's principled policy of supporting the Axis of Resistance.



Sasan Karimi (L) and Afifeh Abedi, experts on foreign policy issues, share their insights with Iran Daily on the diplomatic challenges facing the newly elected Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian.

● IRAN DAILY

sistance and spiritually leading it against the American-Israeli order. On several occasions, we have seen a divide between America and Europe, but under America's leadership and within NATO, they try to present Iran as a common threat. Concerns about Iran's missile capability, nuclear program, etc., cause this atmosphere of mistrust to expand.

Will the results of the elections in Iran and Pezeshkian's announcement of his cooperation program help alleviate mistrust between Iran and the West?

ABEDI: Case-by-case agreements are being considered right now. The West, and especially the US, has come to the conclusion that if it does not move towards case-by-case agreements with Iran, the nightmare it fears — an alliance between Iran, Russia, and China — will come about, which will undermine Western interests in West Asia and Southeast Asia.

Very soon, the time will come for Pezeshkian to deliver a speech at the United Nations General Assembly. Which issues do you think will be his focus? Will he propose an innovative plan to end the conflicts Iran has been dragged in, such as those in Gaza or Ukraine, or will he keep the status quo for now?

KARIMI: Part of Iran's power in the international sphere comes from the Axis of Resistance, so there is no reason for the new president to want to reduce our level of support for them. This held true under the Khatami and Rouhani governments as well, and it does not conflict with Pezeshkian's foreign policy. Just as Saudi Arabia, with its friendly relations with major regional powers, carries out its desired activities, so too does the Islamic Republic in the region. The other side does not expect Iran to withdraw from the Axis of Resistance because of an election either.

But as for the United Nations General Assembly speech, it is too soon for Pezeshkian to propose a plan for the region or the international system. Nevertheless, we will see the government's real program when the proposed foreign minister goes before the parliament and delivers his speech. We should wait until then. If the proposed minister gets a vote of confidence, it shows that parliament also backs the new government's proposed program.

There will be a change in Iran's foreign policy under Pezeshkian, but this does not mean losing forces that give the Islamic Republic its power. Pezeshkian aims to close existing gaps.

What we have seen in these past few weeks was also partly the result of the ambiguous atmosphere around the American elections. With Biden's withdrawal, this uncertainty has increased. While we criticize the behavior of the Europeans — by which I mean Britain, France, and Germany — towards Iran, we should also remember that when president Rouhani handed over the government to president Raisi, even though Iran was not in a good position internationally and Trump had reinstated sanctions, the Rouhani government had managed to keep the Europeans politically beside itself and, of course, indebted to Iran. We even saw in the United Nations Security Council that the Europeans did not go along with Trump's demands against Iran in several instances.

However, over these past three years, the approach of the European Troika towards Iran has become negative and harsh. This calls for the reconstruction of relations through bilateral and multilateral dialogue. They also have to admit that they first dropped the ball.

Regardless, Pezeshkian seeks to adopt an opportunity-oriented foreign policy. If other countries embrace this change, the road ahead of them will be easier and there will be more benefits for both sides. Implementing the JCPOA is one important example of opportunities for embracing the change, and confronting Iranophobia is another.

Mr. Karimi said that Pezeshkian's policy is based on seeking opportunities. Considering Kamala Harris is likely to replace Biden, who has historically



Iran's late president Ebrahim Raisi (2nd-L) shakes hands with Masoud Pezeshkian, who would later pick up his mantle, in Tabriz, northwestern Iran, on June 2, 2022. president.ir

always sided with Israel whether as senator, VP, or president, might she soon break with the pro-Israeli ways of Biden? If so, what effects will this have on Iran?

ABEDI: By alternating between an East-facing policy to constructive cooperation, Iran seeks recognition by the West and the world. Iran has always sought recognition as a regional power, at least, and tried to consolidate that position in the eyes of the East and the West with alternating strategies.

Iran managed to achieve the recognition of eastern powers as a result of certain international developments like the war in Ukraine. Despite criticisms regarding China and Russia's treatment of Iran, Iran earned its status as a regional power in the eyes of those countries, and now it seeks to achieve the same thing in the eyes of the West.

The talk of seeking constructive cooperation that Pezeshkian raised was not uncritical of the West, but his language was different and revolved around trust-building. So, if we are to expect anything from Pezeshkian's speech at the United Nations, we should expect to still see a critical approach towards the West, despite it being paired with opening doors for negotiation.

Iran is seeking to create a gap between Europe and America, or at least to exploit this opportunity by its own account, to show that Iran is a norm-abiding actor. America's unwavering support for Israel in the Gaza war has obviously bolstered Iran's discourse, both regionally and internationally. All the goals that Pezeshkian pursues may use newer language, but they follow the same previously established goals that strengthen the fundamental discourse and strategy of the Islamic Republic.

Iran can make the most of the gap that has opened up between Europe and America. Iran can now raise the issue of a JCPOA without the US again. Overall, I am optimistic. We have arrived at a strategic policy, and Pezeshkian has shown that he agrees with this policy. The government's diplomatic apparatus should implement the same strategic policy. I think higher-level institutions that report back to the Leader, including the Strategic Council on Foreign Relations and the Supreme National Security Council, will play a more decisive role in foreign policy from now on.

Ms. Abedi characterizes the differences between Iran and the West as identity conflict and argues that Iran has a fixed strategy in foreign policy, with the government playing only an executive role. If we accept this idea, it suggests that Iran's governments do not differ greatly from one another and that Pezeshkian, for example, will not differ from Raisi in the field of foreign policy. We have even had tangible cases in the confrontation between Iran and the West that contradict Ms. Abedi's position.

KARIMI: The law states that the Leader determines the general framework of Iran's foreign policy. So, even the framework is not necessarily fixed and may change after certain international developments to secure Iran's interests.

In any case, when you have a foreign minister who the head of government introduces and parliament gives a vote

of confidence to, that minister has come out of a presidential election and a parliamentary election. The country's position and trajectory in areas that fall under the purview of the government are supposed to be determined by these elections.

Now, many of our country's problems stem from foreign policy. So, if people vote for a faction or approach that goes against the status quo in an election, failing to change the status quo amounts to turning your back on the people's vote. If there were to be no change in foreign policy with the new government, then president Raisi should not have changed president Rouhani's foreign policy, but we know that he did. So, this right is reserved for Pezeshkian too.

As the law states, the government holds responsibility for implementation and practical policymaking in the realm of foreign policy. Yes, the Leader has said that decision-making for the most important issues occurs in higher-level institutions, the most notable of which is the Supreme National Security Council. However, six members of that council come from the government, and the council's head is the president himself. Furthermore, in the past, we have seen the Leader, in keeping up with international conditions and national interests, allow the government to engage in the JCPOA negotiations and

er with the backing of Zarif, in particular, obviously helps to strengthen Iran's position to revive the nuclear deal, regardless of any obstacles from the West or even inside Iran. Iran seeks to negotiate with the US, and in the new government, holding direct or indirect talks with America will again be pursued. But if that does not work, Iran can look to Europe to fulfill that role, both for economic exchanges and deals, as well as for reviving the JCPOA or resolving the nuclear issue.

KARIMI: Pezeshkian's most important capital is his voting base in the presidential election. Based on his campaign positions, Pezeshkian and his government will seek to de-escalate and lift sanctions and international pressure on Iran. It has now become clear that you cannot separate the economy from foreign relations. In my view, the most important capital that Pezeshkian has, which the late president Raisi did not, is his voting and social base. Raisi's voting base comprised those who did not seek de-escalation, the lifting of sanctions, and cooperation with the world in the sense that Pezeshkian suggests. His second asset is that prominent technocrats are willing to work with Pezeshkian. It is a good advantage for a president to be able to draw on skills from any field.



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (L) meets with former foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif (3rd-L) and Sasan Karimi (2nd-L) during the race for the presidency in June 2024. ISNA

hold direct or indirect talks with America.

But Ms. Abedi said that decision-making in foreign policy in this upcoming period will fall not under the purview of the government itself, but the higher-level institutions of the Establishment that report back to the Leader.

KARIMI: No, I disagree. The government forms part of the governance structure. What is more, the Supreme National Security Council includes the president and some government members. If by the Establishment we refer to the Leader and all the institutions under the Leader, then not only the government is also part of the Establishment, it is the most important pillar of the Establishment after the Leader. For example, the 7th National Development Plan, as an upstream document, was written by the government.

What advantages or capital can the Pezeshkian government draw on to succeed with its cooperative policy?

ABEDI: The policy Iran has pursued these last three years centers on reviving the JCPOA. Pezeshkian's rise to pow-

Will regional and global relations and developments, such as the Gaza War and the Ukraine War, or the continuous competition between the US and China, lend themselves to the Pezeshkian government's cooperative approach?

KARIMI: First of all, I should say that conditions in the regional and international environment are much less conducive to reaching a nuclear deal than it was in 2020 or 2021. Iran has been wrongly turned into a security concern, and we overlooked this issue in the past three years. Even though the US relaxed its imposing of sanctions and looked the other way on our oil sales, we allowed our debt regarding the JCPOA to be forgotten. So, Pezeshkian's work is much more difficult. A testament to the fact that the situation is not ripe for reviving the JCPOA is that the world has seemingly adapted to Iran's absence from transportation corridors and oil and gas supply chains. Iran's role has been reduced to a threat actor, whether due to what it does or what it does not do. If the powers of the government or its for-

eign policy apparatus get limited in matters related to the nuclear case, like in Rouhani's period, things would become much more difficult. But if the negotiator can negotiate and bargain in different areas, it will make finding a solution easier. Of course, our overarching policy is to not tie nuclear and non-nuclear issues together, but there may arise a situation where we may need to give more freedom to our negotiators to resolve the issue of sanctions. The issue before us is the sunset of the JCPOA in October 2025. We have to make policies so that the JCPOA's snapback mechanism does not get implemented during the remaining period.

ABEDI: To add to that point, I would like to say that the change of governments and its technocrats creates an opportunity for approaches to change as well. Now, fortunately, the change of governments in Iran has coincided with that of some European countries, with the elections of the United States and possibly Ukraine approaching fast. There is even a possibility of a change of cabinet in Israel. These changes are momentous and create an opportunity for cooperation so that crises can subside, at the very least, through negotiations.



Karimi: Many of our country's problems stem from foreign policy. So, if people vote for a faction or approach that goes against the status quo in an election, failing to change the status quo amounts to turning your back on the people's vote. If there were to be no change in foreign policy with the new government, then president Raisi should not have changed president Rouhani's foreign policy, but we know that he did. So, this right is reserved for Pezeshkian too.



Iran's U-20 volleyball team cruises to 3rd straight Asian title

Sports Desk

Iran's youth volleyball team defeated South Korea on Tuesday to claim their third consecutive title at the Asian Men's U-20 Volleyball Championship in Indonesia.

Going into the final day of the tournament with six straight wins, Iran faced South Korea for the cup match and managed to sweep them 3-0 to secure the top spot in Asian volleyball.

Coached by Gholamreza Momeni-Moqaddam, the Iranian youngsters went down in history with a hat-trick of championships.

In the first set, Iran's solid defense shut down South Korea, as the young Iranian volleyballers

cruised to a commanding 25-12 win, establishing a 13-point lead. South Koreans, determined to salvage their reputation, put up a better fight in the second set but still fell short against Asia's top team, losing 25-18.

Iran's diverse offense shone in the second set, with 16 attack points, three points from blocks, and another three from aces, outperforming their opponents in every aspect.

The third set saw a more resilient South Korea, who even led at times, but Iranian players prevailed 25-22 to clinch the match and lift the 22nd Asian men's championship trophy.

Iran's starting lineup included Emran Koukajili, Armin Qelich-Niazi, Pouya Ariakhah, Matin Hos-

seini, Arian Mahmoudinejad, and Morteza Tabataba'i. Players Shayan Mehrabi, Matin Saghali, Abolfazl Mehdian, Taha Behboudnia, Morteza Narimani, and Ali Eshqinour also contributed to Iran's win.

In the third-place playoff, Japan faced off against the hosts, Indonesia, who emerged victorious with a 3-1 win to grab the bronze medal.

It was Iran's 18th appearance in the Asian Men's U-20 Volleyball Championship. In the previous editions, Iran had won seven golds, three silvers, and two bronzes. With this year's triumph, they bring home another trophy to become eight-time champions in this age group in Asia.



IRNA

Daei tips 'best Asian striker' Taremi to excel at Inter



inter.it

Sports Desk

Iranian football great Ali Daei says his compatriot Mahdi Taremi has what it takes to succeed in his debut season for Serie A giant Internazionale.

Taremi, 31, joined the Nerazzurri as a free agent from Portuguese heavyweight Porto earlier in the month, on a contract that could keep him at the Italian champion until June 2027.

The Iranian spent four glorious seasons in the Porto shirt, bagging 91 strikes in 182 appearances to become the Dragons' third all-time leading marksman.

It has been a decade since Taremi's introduction to the Iranian top flight, when ex-Persepolis boss Daei signed him for the Tehran Reds from second-tier club Iranjavan Bushehr.

And now his former coach is confident Taremi is set for another success story once he embarks on the new chapter of his career.

"Taremi possesses all the at-

tributes of a real striker. He is literally the best Asian center forward," Daei said in an interview with Italian newspaper La Gazzetta dello Sport, adding: "His best quality is his footballing intelligence. Watch him carefully: He might make few touches on the ball throughout the game, but he can still find the net. He moves well all over the pitch and wins every duel." Daei believes Taremi's contract is "a true bargain" for Inter.

"Just look at the great job he has done over the past four years. He scored 90-plus goals at Porto, some decisive ones in the Champions League, and won several trophies with the club. Signing him as a free agent was an incredible deal for Inter," said the former Bayern Munich and Hertha Berlin striker, who is third in the all-time international scoring chart with 108 goals. Taremi has already made a case for a place in Inter's starting XI in the upcoming campaign, making the most of extended vacations for first-choice strikers

Lautaro Martinez and Marcus Thuram – due to their involvement in Copa America and Euro 2024 – by scoring three in five preseason friendlies.

Daei says Taremi's versatility could help him instantly fit into head coach Simone Inzaghi's gameplans.

"Taremi knows how to adapt to any situation, be it a first or second striker, playing as a pure No. 9 or in a deeper role," said Daei. "Taremi moves a lot, which is why he always surprises the defenders. He is also a physical player and rarely loses duels against the opposition. It's not easy to get the ball off his feet, not to mention he is a player with great dribbling skills in the finishing phase, which could cost problems for any defender." Describing Taremi's overhead strike against Chelsea in the 2021 Champions League last eight, which brought him a Puskas Award nomination, as his best-ever goal, Daei said: "He has shown he can score even in the most unexpected situations. He knows how to position his body to evade man-marking. He is a very underrated striker, but if you're not good enough you don't get to score 50 goals for the national team."

Making a prediction of Taremi's goal tally in the new season, Daei said: "I would say at least 15. Serie A is much more difficult than the Portuguese league, but when a striker knows how to score, he always manages to find the net at every level."

Asked if he has any tips for Taremi's new coach, Daei said: "I think Inzaghi already knows all about him, so he won't need my advice. I can only say that Mahdi preforms better alongside an-



His best quality is his footballing intelligence. He might make few touches on the ball throughout the game, but he can still find the net. Signing him as a free agent was a true bargain for Inter. He is a very underrated striker, but if you're not good enough, you don't get to score 50 goals for the national team.

other striker. He communicates well with his frontline partner, provides assists and exploits the flanks."

Daei went on to heap praise on Taremi for always being "so humble, respectful, and with certain values" off the pitch. "He has never forgotten where he has come from. He has a great personality. I'm sure he'll do well and, above all, score goals. Inter fans can rest assured."

Nadal to decide on future 'after Olympics'

AFP – Rafael Nadal said he will make a decision on his future in tennis "after the Olympics" in the aftermath of a shattering straight-sets defeat to old rival Novak Djokovic at the Paris Games on Monday.

"When this tournament is over, I will take the necessary decisions based on my feelings and desire," said Nadal, after losing 6-1, 6-4 in his 60th career meeting with Djokovic.

Nadal, playing in just his seventh tournament of the year after another campaign disrupted by injuries, admitted that at 38 he did not "have the legs of 20 years ago". The Spaniard, a gold medalist at the Olympics in singles in 2008 and doubles at Rio eight years later, won the last of his 22 Grand Slam titles when he captured a 14th French Open in Paris in 2022.

His ranking, which once stood proudly at number one, has slumped to 161 in the world. In May, he suffered his first ever opening-round loss at the French Open and then skipped Wimbledon to focus on the Olympics.

"For many people it makes little sense, I have been suffering for two years," added Nadal who described Monday's loss as "tough". "If I feel that I am not competitive

I will make the decision to stop. I just try my best every single day, trying to enjoy a thing that I have been enjoying for so much time.

"I have been suffering a lot of injuries the last two years. So if I feel that I am not competitive enough to keep going or physically I'm not ready to keep going I will stop and let you know."

Despite his defeat, Nadal still has hopes of a gold medal in the men's doubles where he is playing alongside Carlos Alcaraz. Monday's win was 24-time Grand Slam champion Djokovic's 31st in a rivalry which began on the same Roland Garros clay courts in 2006.

Nadal was largely outclassed in the much-anticipated encounter, only coming briefly to life when he won four games in a row in the second set.

"I'm very relieved," said Djokovic after the second-round win.

"Back in 2006, I don't think we would have thought we would be playing against each other on the same court at the Olympics."

Nadal conceded that Djokovic was the better player throughout the contest.

"Playing against Novak, without creating damage to him and without having the legs of, 20 years ago is, is almost impossible now."



Rafael Nadal (R) and Novak Djokovic greet each other at the net after their match at the Paris Olympics in Roland Garros Stadium, Paris, France, on July 29, 2024.
● ANDY CHEUNG/GETTY IMAGES

Napoli open to Osimhen deal with Chelsea in push to land Lukaku

THE GUARDIAN – Napoli are open to including Romelu Lukaku in discussions with Chelsea over Victor Osimhen, with the Serie A side keen to wrap up a move for the Belgium striker.

Lukaku is due to return to

training at Chelsea's base in Cobham this week having spent two seasons on loan at Inter and Roma.

Lukaku has two years of his contract remaining after re-signing for a club record £97.5m in 2021 and has re-

portedly agreed a three-year deal with Napoli. However, Chelsea are believed to be holding out for about £30m and remain in negotiations with the Italian club, who must sell Osimhen to fund moves in the market.

Paris Saint-Germain had been considered the frontrunners to sign the Nigeria striker but talks with Napoli are believed to have stalled. Napoli's president, Aurelio De Laurentiis, has set a release clause of about €130m (£110m) for Osimhen,

who has been training separately from the rest of Antonio Conte's squad and is yet to feature in their pre-season games. Chelsea have a longstanding interest in the 25-year-old after he helped Napoli end their 33-year wait to become Ital-

ian champions in 2023. Club sources have previously indicated they would not be willing to pay his release clause, but the opportunity to offload Lukaku from their wage bill could potentially help finance a move for Osimhen.

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/APP

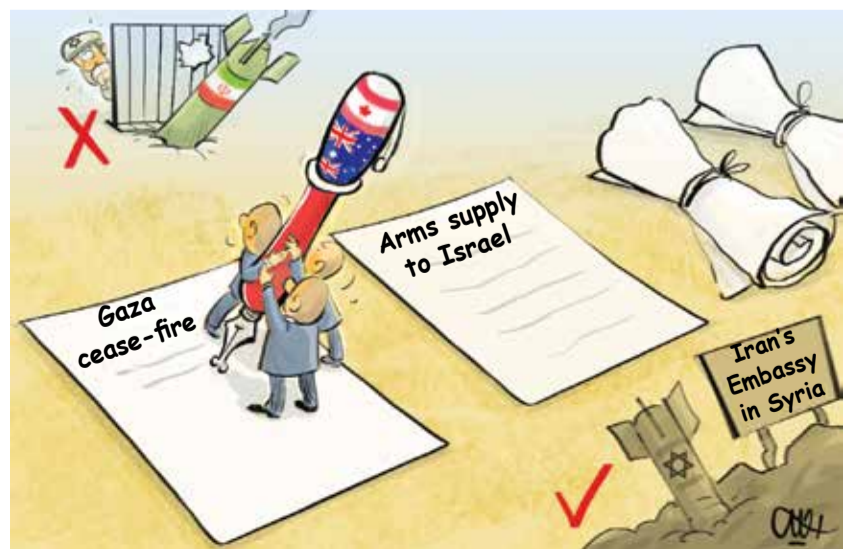
In a statement, the foreign ministry said it rejected the "interventionist actions and statements" of the governments of Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Peru, Panama, Dominican Republic and Uruguay, which signed a joint statement asking for a complete review of the election results. Opposition leader Maria 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



Photographers display Muharram rituals across Iran in 'Red Flag' show

By Sadeq Dehqan & Hamideh Hosseini
Staff writers

Laleh Art Gallery and Azadi Cultural Complex in Tehran are currently hosting a photo exhibition titled 'Red Flag,' showcasing a unique perspective on the Muharram rituals and traditions across Iran. The exhibition, organized by the Alborz Visual Arts Association's Photography Council, features a curated selection of images captured by 28 professional photographers, offering a

glimpse into the diverse and rich cultural heritage of the country during the sacred month of Muharram. Mohammad Ali Saeedi, manager of Laleh Art Gallery, in his exclusive interview with Iran Daily reporter said that the exhibition presents 82 carefully selected photographs from 22 cities across Iran, each capturing the artistic and social dimensions of the Muharram rituals. "These photos go beyond simple documentary; the photographers have skillfully utilized artistic techniques, offering their distinct perspectives on the

traditions, thus, it carries both social and artistic dimensions." Saeedi explained. The images on display highlight the influence of regional cultures, ethnicities, and climates on the way Muharram is observed. Traditions such as Nakhil Gardani (palm-carrying) in Yazd and Abyaneh, and Alam Bandi in Masouleh, showcase the diverse and fascinating rituals that have evolved over time, each with its own rich history and significance. Saeedi noted that while the story and figures of Ashura (the day of Imam Hussein's martyrdom)

remain constant, the way Muharram is commemorated varies across Iran and "Each ceremony sheds light on a different aspect of the Ashura incident". In recent years, Muharram rituals have gained international attention, attracting tourists from around the world who are intrigued by the passionate displays of grief and devotion.

a social perspective, the photographs highlight how Muharram and Ashura serve as a reminder of the universal humanitarian messages of Ashura to humanity. The rituals during these days bring people together in a sorrowful gathering, attracting even those who are not Muslims. During this time, mourners from various faiths, including Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians, participate in the ceremonies, demonstrating their respect and admiration for Imam Hussein and the values of Ashura. Saeedi emphasized the impact these rituals have on foreign visitors, sparking curiosity about Imam Hussein and the enduring legacy of his sacrifice, even over 1,400 years later. The 'Red Flag' exhibition opened on July 12 and will remain open until August 1. Saeedi concluded that from



Hegmataneh symbolizes unity of ethnic groups: Pezeshkian



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian hailed the ancient site of Hegmataneh as a symbol of unity among Iran's diverse ethnic groups, following its inscription on the World Heritage List last week. In a message published Tuesday, Pezeshkian described the site, located in the city of Hamedan, as a reminder of the splendor of Iranian civilization, with a rich history dating back to ancient times. "Hegmataneh stands as a testament to the unity of Iran's ethnic groups, from the Medes to the Achaemenid, Parthian, and Sassanid eras," the president said. He congratulated Iranians on the site's inscription on the World Heritage List and pledged his administration's commitment to preserving Iran's cultural heri-

tage and boosting its tourism sector. "Hamedan has always been a cradle of science and religion, and we will strive to protect and promote its rich legacy," Pezeshkian added. The governor of Hamedan province, Alireza Ghassemi Farzad, echoed the president's sentiments, predicting that the inscription would spur a boom in tourism to the area. "Hegmataneh's recognition as a World Heritage site underscores the significance of this ancient hill and the city of Hamedan in the history of humankind," Farzad said. The site, which bears the marks of various civilizations, is expected to draw increased attention from historians, archaeologists, and tourists interested in exploring Iran's rich cultural diversity.

Iranian students bag four medals at 56th Int'l Chemistry Olympiad

Social Desk

Iranian students proved their abilities in chemistry, bagging four medals at the 56th International Chemistry Olympiad (ICHO) held in Riyadh. The Iranian team, comprising Ramtin Moradi Mazhari, Mohammad Yassin Salehi, Amir Kia Salimi, and Alborz Rezaei, showcased their talent and knowledge, earning a well-deserved spot on the podium, IRNA reported. The Iranian delegation, led by head coach Ebrahim Kianmehr,

also included assistant coach Ahmad Amiri, scientific supervisors Ali Asghar Aghajani and Faezeh Moghzi, and executive supervisor Akbar Asadi Dam-anab. Their guidance and support played a pivotal role in the students' success. The IChO, a international competition, brought together bright young minds from 86 countries. Over the course of the event, which ran from July 21 to July 30, participants showcased their chemical chops, with the Iranian team making their country proud.



Iranian 'The Runner' wins Best Actor Award in Russian festival



Mardin Sheikh Moradi, the young star of the Iranian short film 'The Runner,' has taken home the Best Actor Award at the 19th Within the Family International Festival of Family and Children's Films in Russia. The festival, which focuses on films that promote love, loyalty, and family values, is one of the largest of its kind in Russia. 'The Runner,' produced and directed by Seyyed Payam Hosseini, tells the story of a teenage boy named Hakim, who lives in one of Iran's marginalized neighborhoods. Hakim's

father engages in betting on running races, and the film follows the family as they navigate the challenges that arise when the rules of the game change unexpectedly. The film was selected to compete in the short film category at the 19th edition of the festival, alongside 75 other films from 39 countries. 'The Runner' has also made its mark on the international festival circuit, screening at the 62nd Zlin International Film Festival for Children and Youth and the 52nd Giffoni Film Festival in Italy.