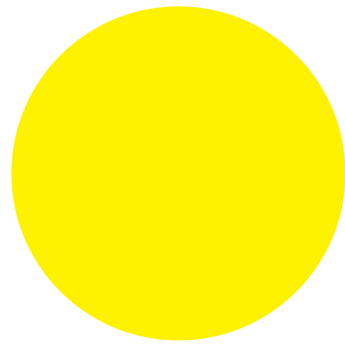


China supports Iran in defending security, sovereignty: **FM** 7 >



Pezeschkian presents cabinet to Parliament for confidence vote 7 >

Evaluating cabinet: Focusing on plans over personalities

By Javad Daliri
Iranian journalist

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

Massoud Pezeschkian unveiled his cabinet picks yesterday, setting the stage for a vote of confidence in parliament. As expected, the list has sparked a flurry of reactions from across the political spectrum, with critics and supporters engaging in a lively debate. While some argue that the nominees are not in step with Pezeschkian's campaign promises, others have come to their defense. The responses reflect a range of perspectives, with some considering the interests of society, the people, and the government, while others view the cabinet through a partisan political lens. These diverse reactions certainly give us pause for thought.

Pezeschkian's proposed list of ministers can be assessed from multiple angles. Firstly, the suggested cabinet strikes a balance between youthful energy and seasoned expertise, with 14 new faces among the 19 nominees, including one woman, alongside experienced individuals who have proven their capabilities in previous administrations. However, a general appraisal suggests that some of the proposed ministers could become the government's Achilles' heel in critical situations, with their performance falling short of expectations and potentially causing troubles for the government itself. Page 8 >

Iran's Watchful Eyes

Homegrown techs that fortify Iran's air defense

SPECIAL ISSUE

4-5 >



Three top nominees for economic ministries in cabinet lineup 2 >



Hezbollah launches 'squadrons of drones' at Israel after Sidon attack 7 >



Iranian-Armenian animation wins Italian accolade 8 >



Challenges of Abbasi Caravanserai in modern Semnan 3 >



Sensational Salimi grabs gold, caps off taekwondo heroics

Iran's taekwondo campaign at the Paris Olympics will be one for the ages after all four members of the squad finished on the podium in their respective events.



6 >

Three top nominees for economic ministries in cabinet lineup

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian submitted the list of his new cabinet members to the Parliament on Sunday, less than two weeks after he was sworn in before the country's legislators. Abdolnaser Hemmati, Mohsen Paknejad and Mohammad Atabak were included in the list for the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, the Ministry of Oil and the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade, respectively. Pezeshkian presented his cabinet's lineup in a letter to Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, with the legislative body officially commencing the process of reviewing the proposed ministers' qualifications. Among the proposed ministers is Hemmati for Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, an academic, politician and economist who served as the Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) from 2018 to 2021.

Hemmati ran as a candidate in the 2021 Iranian presidential election, being the sole representative from the Moderate Front of Iranian politicians, and was placed third overall in the results.



Abdolnaser Hemmati

Also, Paknejad has been nominated as Iran's oil minister by the president. Born in 1966 in the capital city of Tehran, Paknejad has a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from University of



Mohsen Paknejad

Tehran and holds a master's degree in Industrial engineering from the AmirKabir University of Technology. Paknejad served as deputy minister of oil for the supervision of hydrocarbon resources from



Mohammad Atabak

2018 to 2021. From 2000 to 2007, Paknejad was also a member of the board of directors of the Iranian Central Oil Fields Company. From 2005 to 2007, he was the Planning Manager of the Iranian

Central Oil Fields Company, and from then until 2013, he served as the Deputy Director of Integrated Planning at the National Iranian Oil Company, according to the Ministry of Oil's Shana news network.

Proposed for the Industry, Mine and Trade Ministry, Atabak holds a master's degree in civil engineering from the University of Michigan.

He has served as a member of the managing board of the Cement Association of Iran and Tehran Cement, as well as the advisory councils of the Industry Ministry and Parliament.

He is currently the CEO of Kaveh Pars Mineral Industries Development Holding. In addition, Atabak has conducted projects for hospitals and various cement and steel factories across the country.

The Iranian Parliament's specialized committees started deliberations on Pezeshkian's cabinet lineup as of Sunday afternoon in two work shifts during four days.

The proposed ministers were also slated to be discussed in the Parliament's plenary sessions as of August 17.

Pezeshkian was elected as the new Iranian president in a runoff election on July 5 after late president Ebrahim Raisi lost his life in a tragic helicopter crash in May.

Iran's tech-based exports to Africa set to be bolstered



The chief executive of the Export Development and Technology Exchange Fund said exporters of technology-based products to African countries will be supported.

As one of the subsidiaries of the Innovation and Development Fund, the fund is tasked with presenting financial services to knowledge-based companies working in the field of exports, Mostafa Hosseini stated, reported Tasnim News Agency.

He went on to say that the fund pursues improving the performance of companies in regional and extra-regional markets.

The foreign offices under the title of innovation houses have gained good achievements in Africa, especially in Kenya, Hosseini added.

The fund has established livestock exhibitions in other countries, including Uganda, to help knowledge-based companies showcase their high-tech products, he stated.

Last year, Iran exported to 50 countries across the African continent. Bilateral trade stands at \$1.2 billion, of which \$1.1 billion is Iran's exports.

Given Africa's overall trade of about \$1.2 trillion last year, Iran's share is insignificant compared with countries like China and India which have a strong foothold in the African markets.

Food as most powerful industry in Iran's private sector

The food industry is the biggest non-oil industry in Iran, with an annual turnover of around 100 billion dollars. It is also the biggest job provider among the industries, accounting for 16.8% of the total industrial jobs.

There exist 15,000 active production units in the food and processing industry in Iran, which makes it the third largest industry after oil and petrochemicals with a potential to supply an assortment of products to the domestic and export markets, Press TV wrote.

The food industry is the most important economic sector managed by the private sector where more than 80% of the country's economy is in the hands of the government.

The history of Iran's food exports goes back to 3,000 years ago. The sector is developed and advanced, where Iran's 2025 Vision has set a production capacity target of more than 300 million tons.

Iran produces about 83% of its annual food needs domestically. While the country has been going through one of the fastest-growing urbanization processes in the world, the agricultural sector, accounting for 12.2% of the gross domestic product, is still playing an important role in the economy of the country.

The export of food industry products is one of the pillars of non-oil exports due to the existing potentials in the country and certain advantages such as higher added value and job creation.

Over the past decade, Iran's food exports have increased more than 10-fold to over \$10 billion, constituting 11% of



the overall added value in the country's industry.

Wheat and rice are two of the most important nutrition items in Iran's food basket and the country produces a significant portion of the two staples. Up to 99% of the food production is managed by the private sector, but the sector is entirely run and regulated by the government which decides everything from production requirements to determining the guaranteed purchase rate of agricultural products and import tariffs.

With Iran being subject to the cruelest sanctions in recent years, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has proposed a resistance economy plan.

A resistance economy in the field of food security includes efforts to create a sustainable food and nutrition supply system with the cooperation of all development sectors and maximum use of the country's capacities with the aim of producing sufficient and healthy food and reducing waste in the sector and supporting agricul-

ture by consuming local foods. Despite climate change fallout and the sanctions' stranglehold, Iran's agriculture showed resilience and relatively favorable overall economic performance in 2023.

One promising area was the state purchases from farmers at guaranteed prices, where 10.5 million tons of the strategic crop was bought across the country thanks to the implementation of a plan provide farmers with fertilizers, pesticides and technical services. Self-sufficiency in strategic agricultural products such as wheat is a cornerstone of Iran's economic policy. The achievement was snapped in 2020 during the administration of former president Hassan Rouhani when Iran imported more than 3 million tons of wheat at a cost of \$3.8 billion.

Wheat is Iran's most important crop, accounting for about half of its cultivated acreage and 70 percent of its grain output. The country consumes around 15.5 million tons of wheat a year, but supplies vary over

years due to erratic domestic production.

Iran has a huge capacity to produce agricultural products and basic goods due to its vast land. While water shortage is a major challenge, experts believe a leap in agricultural production is possible with conservation and application of new methods in irrigation and water and soil protection. The key hurdle is the existence of elements in the executive body, obstinately opposed to Iran's self-sufficiency drive which they believe drains the country's resources.

They are also doggedly opposed to indigenous agriculture and support imports, including genetically modified foods.

In recent years, Iranian media have extensively reported on irregular imports at the expense of domestic production by those who have a monopoly in the market and access to foreign currency at the lower government rate that has created an unofficial black market and a new generation of nouveau riche.

Parliament reforms trade deal with Indonesia



The lawmakers at the Iranian Parliament removed some inconsistencies in the preferential trade agreement (PTA) between Iran and Indonesia.

The Parliament removed those inconsistencies found earlier by Iran's Guardian Council, IRNA reported on Sunday.

It was in mid-May that the Iranian Parliament approved the PTA between Tehran and Jakarta.

On May 26, the director general of the East Asia-Pacific Office of the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPOI) announced that the PTA was signed between Iran and Indonesia to enhance trade-economic ties. Kaveh Daliri said Indonesia is a lucrative market for the Iranian products.

Increasing the trade exchanges and joint cooperation between the two countries is the main objective behind signing the agreement, he said, adding that countries facilitate the process of entering each other's markets by considering the tariff discounts.

The two countries intend to set up a joint committee for the operationalization of the preferential trade agreement which is tasked with monitoring and updating the lists and discounts that Iran and Indonesia consider for each other. Indonesia has the highest number of Muslim population in the world, so the southeast Asian country is a good and profitable market for the Iranian products, Daliri underlined.

Challenges of Abbasi Caravanserai in modern Semnan



IRNA

Iranica Desk

A cultural heritage researcher wrote a note about the fate of the Shah Abbasi Caravanserai in Semnan, which served as a prison for around 20 years. He lamented that numerous interventions in this structure have prevented it from being included on the comprehensive list of Iranian caravanserais eligible for world heritage status.

Hani Rastgaran noted that the city of Semnan currently comprises two distinct areas: old and new. Each section possesses its own unique values. The old part of the city is cohesive and densely built, while the new section is fragmented and dispersed, ISNA wrote.

In the old part of any city, specific elements reflect its identity, whereas the new areas tend to resemble each other more closely. Despite significant wear and tear, the old section still retains visual value in some areas, although it faces various challenges regarding habitation and transportation. In contrast, the new part of the city, despite its wide streets and modern urban

facilities, lacks visual appeal. In Semnan, the new area has developed to the north, adjacent to the old area. The layout of the old city is characterized by specific neighborhoods, designed around pools that divided water for irrigation.

The Shah Abbasi Caravanserai, located in the heart of Semnan, is one of the 999 caravanserais built by Shah Abbas Safavid along the route to the holy shrines.

In 1977, it was registered as a valuable historical monument on Iran's National Heritage List. After the victory of the Islamic Revolution, the building was repurposed as a prison, becoming Iran's first historically significant prison. However, reports indicate that in the early years, due to insufficient space for prison operations in Semnan, the building was handed over by the cultural heritage organization, and ownership documents were later transferred to Iran's Prison Organization. Until 2023, it remained under their control and continued to function as a prison.

This monument is one of the

few historically and culturally significant caravanserais situated at the economic, social, and cultural center of Semnan, specifically in Sa'di Square. During the Safavid period, many public utility buildings in Iran — including mosques, schools, and bridges — were established and endowed by charitable individuals in cities, villages, and along caravan routes. The facades of these buildings often feature inscriptions detailing the endowments from individuals associated with religious beliefs, with the names of the benefactors prominently displayed.

Field studies and comparative analyses of the Shah Abbasi Caravanserai plan reveal that the initial design of this building was one of the common plans for courtyard-style accommodation in the central regions of Iran during past eras. The construction method involves creating corridors and rooms around an enclosed courtyard. The design features a four-ivan layout with rooms having small ivans at the front, flanking the main ivans, along with stables surrounding them and spaces for the night-

time resting areas in each corner of the plan. By comparing the existing conditions, the original structure, and referring to historical documents, four phases of interventions, including restoration, reconstruction, and modernization, can be identified in the caravanserai building. It should be noted that all these changes have taken place in the eastern half of the structure, which is a significant aspect, and understanding the reason behind it requires special examination.

The most important structural change occurs in the eastern loading area, adjacent to the main entrance of the building; here, the removal of one column has resulted in a larger space, thereby necessitating a different type of covering. The architect had to make additional changes in this area to implement the roof of this newly created space, transforming the northern two loading areas into three spaces — one larger central area and two smaller lateral sections. All these modifications aimed to create a framework for converting the

rectangular space of the plan into a pentagonal shape and subsequently into a decagonal shape under the dome.

Poor urban management and outdated planning practices that overlook cultural heritage and disregard preservation laws have significantly contributed to the disintegration of identity and the erosion of the rich culture associated with waqf (endowment) and various social issues. Additionally, the effects of cultural erasure and the use of heavy transportation machinery cannot be overlooked.

Furthermore, the absence of modern amenities and services in older urban fabrics — such as issues related to cleanliness, sewage, water supply, electricity, gas, telephone services, and their accessibility — combined with improper wastewater and rainwater disposal, negatively impacts the integrity of traditional buildings. The inharmonious integration of these modern facilities with historical structures further exacerbates the problem.

The Shah Abbasi Caravanserai, like many historical sites, has

endured extensive damage over its several hundred years of existence, and this deterioration continues. The most significant damage has arisen from shifts in urban scale and lifestyle. Originally situated outside the city, the caravanserai became enveloped by the expanding residential area of Semnan, resulting in changes to its usage and even alterations to its physical structure.

Here, the human factor emerged as the primary cause of damage, leading to numerous alterations to the caravanserai. Subsequently, the building was repurposed as the central prison of Semnan, resulting in significant modifications to its structure and form that distorted its authenticity and original shape. During this period, various sections of the building and internal spaces were altered with the addition of partitions, and utility areas. Unfortunately, these interventions hindered the historic caravanserai from being included in the selected list of Iranian caravanserais for UNESCO World Heritage status.

Rood Dareh is Tehran's year-round natural oasis



mrbilit.com

Rood Dareh (meaning River Valley) in Darakeh, located in the northwest of Tehran, originates from the southern slope of Tochal Peak. Notably, this river flows year-round, making it one of the seven significant river valleys in Tehran. The presence of the Darakeh River has fostered several historical recreational spots in the area,

providing a refreshing escape for locals. Along its course, the valley features numerous waterfalls that enhance its natural beauty.

To reach Shirpala Shelter, visitors can follow the picturesque trail of Darakeh River Valley. Along the way, you'll find various restaurants, shaded areas beneath trees, scenic bridg-

es over the river, rugged cliffs, gentle slopes, and invigorating fresh air.

After Shirpala Shelter, the path becomes steeper, leading toward Station 5 of the Tochal Telecabin, and further northwest to the Ashtargarden rocky area and Sarbaz Ark peak. This valley is one of the most popular climbing routes in Tehran,

thanks to its alluring combination of shaded trees, gardens, and towering cliffs.

The valley's beauty is accentuated by attractions such as Jowzak Waterfall, Kara Forest, and Chin Kalaq Peak, which vividly showcase the river's presence. Additionally, there is a shrine near the valley that visitors may explore.

The area from Darakeh Square to Kara is lined with restaurants, cafes, resorts, and shops selling snacks. Along the river route, you'll encounter numerous bridges, safety barriers, and ropes in steeper sections, along with restrooms for visitors. This enchanting river can be visited year-round, each season offering unique expe-

riences. In spring, you can witness the melting snow and the rushing river as nature comes alive. Summer invites the cheerful sounds of birds and blooming cherry trees. Autumn brings vibrant colors to the foliage, while winter transforms the valley and mountains into a winter wonderland for snow lovers.

Iran's watchful eyes

Homegrown techs that fortify Iran's air defense

NATIONAL DESK ANALYSIS

Air defense steps in when all else fails. Tirelessly keeping an eye out for aerial threats, even in times of peace, anti-air forces are most likely a country's last line of defense against attackers. If they successfully nullify or reduce the effectiveness of hostile air action on sensitive military equipment and facilities, then the country would have a chance to go on the offensive and deter further attacks. If they fail, however, the nation would be at the mercy of their attackers.

As a country situated in a turbulent region, Iran has multiple enemies who never stop making military threats. Naturally, after the Iraqi-imposed war (1980-1988), Iran decided that it has to go from a weapons importer to a producer and even exporter of weapons, which it achieved marvelously, to be able to reliably defend itself. As discussed above, domestic development of surface-based and air-based target tracking systems sounded like the first logical step.

When we take into account the fact that for many decades Iran's development of its defensive capabilities was beset by sanctions, then the significance of the technological and military achievements of our brave men in designing, producing, and enhancing these equipment and weapons is doubled. At a vulnerable time when even Iran's allies refrained from providing us with fighter aircraft and high-quality defense and radar systems in fear of US retribution, we looked inward and no further than our own scientists to make us self-sufficient, and they did not disappoint us.

Enemies like Israel, who are constantly threatening us, cannot be held back by diplomatic means alone. Foes and competitors alike must understand that while we have skilled negotiators, we enter the field of battle with maximum strength and courage. We have learned not to rely on Western or Eastern weapons as they might not deliver the required efficiency at times of need. We essentially domesticized some weapons and military equipment, and that is one of the significant things that sets us apart from regional competitors.

Let's learn more about Iran's anti-air arsenal, the hawk-eyed guardians of its skies.



A domestically developed Karrar jet-powered target drone is launched during a military exercise in Iran.
● TASNIM

Karrar drone

The Karrar drone is a multipurpose unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) manufactured by Iran Aircraft Manufacturing Industries Corporation (HESA). With a length of 3.75 meters and a wingspan of 3.1 meters, it has a maximum speed of 900 km/h and a range of 1,000 kilometers. What sets the Karrar drone apart is its innovative combination of drone and missile technologies, giving it enhanced air defense capabilities. It can carry a substantial payload of up to 250 kg, including a 226-kilogram warhead in its suicide version. Powered by a turbojet engine, this drone is designed to be effective in air defense roles, adding a new dimension to Iran's military strategy.

S-300 air defense system

Iran's S-300 air defense system, acquired from Russia, is a formidable long-range surface-to-air missile system. With a range of approximately 200 kilometers and a reaction time of around five minutes, it provides a robust defensive capability. The S-300 can simultaneously track 100 targets and engage up to 12 of them. In certain scenarios, it can even be utilized as an offensive weapon. This system significantly bolsters Iran's ability to protect its airspace and critical assets.



This file picture shows a Russian S-300 anti-aircraft missile system on display in an undisclosed location in Russia.
● AP



The picture shows Iranian-made air defense missile system Bavar-373 during a ceremony in Tehran on August 22, 2019.
● IRNA

Bavar-373 air defense system

The Bavar-373 is an indigenous long-range mobile air defense system developed by Iran's Ministry of Defense. With a range of over 300 kilometers and an engagement altitude of approximately 32 km, it is a key component of Iran's air defense network. The system can intercept various aerial threats, including fighter jets, drones, cruise missiles, and even stealth fifth-generation aircraft. Bavar-373 is a highly capable system, with only a handful of countries possessing similar technology. It boasts a detection range of over 450 km and can simultaneously track 300 targets, ensuring Iran's armed forces have a robust long-range defense capability.

Sayyad-4 missile

The Sayyad-4 is a surface-to-air defense missile designed by Iran's Ministry of Defense. With a range of over 200 kilometers and an engagement altitude of up to 32 km, it is a formidable weapon. One of its standout features is the ability to engage small targets, such as drones, at altitudes as high as 43,000 feet. The Sayyad-4 is equipped with a vertical launch mechanism, making it a versatile and rapid-response asset in Iran's air defense arsenal.



Sayyad-4B missile is formally unveiled during a ceremony attended by former Iranian president Hassan Rouhani on August 22, 2019.
● IRNA

Shahid Arman air defense system

Shahid Arman is a medium-range, high-altitude air defense system, also developed by Iran's Ministry of Defense. With a system range of 120 kilometers and a radar detection range of 200 km, it provides robust protection. Shahid Arman can engage targets at an altitude of 27 kilometers using the Sayyad-3F vertically launched missile. Its Joshan passive phased array radar and Najm-804 active phased array radar enable it to simultaneously engage six targets with a reaction time of less than 20 seconds. This versatile system can counter a wide range of threats, including ballistic missiles, anti-radar missiles, cruise missiles, guided bombs, helicopters, and drones.



Iran's homegrown Shahid Arman anti-ballistic missile (ABM) defense system, also known as Tactical Sayyad
● FARS

Bavar-373 air defense system can intercept various aerial threats, including fighter jets, drones, cruise missiles, and even stealth fifth-generation aircraft. It is a highly capable system, with only a handful of countries possessing similar technology. It boasts a detection range of over 450 km and can simultaneously track 300 targets.



Talaash air defense system

The Talaash air defense system is a medium-range, high-altitude defense solution designed to counter aerial threats. With a range of approximately 300 kilometers, it employs Sayyad-3 missiles to destroy various helicopters and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). Talaash is also capable of countering surprise attacks from modern fighter jets. The system consists of three vehicles carrying missile launchers and two radar system vehicles, ensuring a rapid and effective response to incoming threats.

The Talaash air defense system
● FARS



Two women look at the specific Khordad-3 TELAR that shot down an RQ-4 drone in 2019.
● MOJNEWS

Khordad-3 air defense system

The Khordad-3 is a long-range, high-altitude air defense system developed by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). With a range of 200 kilometers and an engagement altitude of 30 km, it can simultaneously guide up to eight missiles toward multiple targets. The system uses the Bashir radar, which has a detection range of 350 kilometers, to identify and engage a wide range of aerial threats. Khordad-3 serves as a suitable replacement for the Russian S-200 system and provides Iran's armed forces with high mobility and maneuverability in air defense operations.



Majid air defense system

Majid is a short-range air defense system designed by Iran's Ministry of Defense. With a range of 18 kilometers and an engagement altitude of 6 km, it can react in as little as three seconds. The system employs AD-08 missiles, which are smoke-free, providing better concealment. Mounted on various platforms, Majid offers high mobility and the capability to engage four targets simultaneously. With a radar detection range of 18 km and an optical tracking range of 8 km, it provides effective coverage and protection against aerial threats.

The AD-08 Majid air defense missile system
● IRAN PRESS AGENCY

Azarakhsh air defense system

Azarakhsh is another short-range air defense system developed by Iran's Ministry of Defense. With a radar detection range of 50 kilometers and an optical tracking range of 25 km, it carries four Azarakhsh missiles, each with a range of 10 kilometers. This system specializes in destroying low-altitude aerial targets such as drones, cruise missiles, and helicopters. Azarakhsh is highly mobile and does not require post-launch guidance from a control center, allowing for rapid and autonomous engagements.



Azarakhsh (Thunderbolt) low-altitude defense system
● FARS

These systems and drones showcase Iran's significant investment in its air defense capabilities and its commitment to protecting its airspace and strategic assets.

Small drones force new thinking on air superiority



A US soldier watches hovering unmanned aerial systems during an exercise at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar, on December 11, 2020.
● BRIGETTE WALTERMIRE/AIR NATIONAL GUARD

By Chris Gordon
Journalist

PERSPECTIVE

The US Air Force needs to rethink how small, low-cost drones could change the definition of air superiority, Vice Chief of Staff Gen. James C. Slife said on July 29.

Small drones have become a defining feature of the Russia-Ukraine war, with both sides fielding drones and cheap quadcopters for strikes and reconnaissance. In Iraq, Syria, and Jordan, small drones — along with rockets and missiles — are regularly used to harass US and allied forces, in some cases injuring and even killing American troops. In January, an Iranian-aligned armed group killed three US troops in Jordan with a drone at Tower 22, a remote US base that lacked its own robust defenses.

"We used to make the claim that since 1953, no American has been killed by air attack," Slife said. "We can't make that claim anymore. It calls into question, 'What does air superiority actually look like?' [Does] it look like 30,000 feet over the Yalu River in 1953 or does it look like below 3,000 feet with quadcopters with a hand grenade slung to the bottom of them? I think the answer is: It's all of the above." Drones are hard to detect, flying low and presenting a minimal radar cross-section. They also can be used en masse by more sophisticated adversaries, posing serious dilemmas for the Air Force and America's allies. And they force the US and its allies to counter them with high-priced weapons, imposing disproportionate costs.

sons learned during the Spanish Civil War and other conflicts just before World War II. "You could see the contours of World War II starting to take shape prior to the full-scale outbreak of World War II," he said. "I hope there's not a World War III, but if there is, I wonder to what extent the lessons are starting to take shape in places like Israel today, Ukraine, and so forth. So, we're keenly interested in what we can pick up from that." Speaking later in the day during an event at the Brookings Institution in Washington, Undersecretary of the Air Force Melissa Dalton said there is a way of "thinking that I think is increasingly taking hold across the Department of Defense and certainly the Department of Air Force" of what she



Israeli police investigate the scene of a drone attack by the Houthis in Tel Aviv, occupied Palestine, on July 19, 2024.
● ODED BALILTY/AP

To counter drones in the Middle East, the US has used F-22, F-15, and F-16 fighters, along with costly missiles. US and allied forces neutralized Iran's attack on Israel in April, eliminating 99 percent of its missiles and drones, but in other cases, attacks have proven successful. Since October 2023, dozens of American service members have been injured and three killed in more than 170 drone, rocket, and missile attacks throughout the region. In addition to Iran-backed groups in Syria, Iraq, Gaza, and Lebanon, Iran has also backed the Houthis, a Yemeni armed group that is using the same sort of weapons to attack shipping in the Red Sea and, earlier in July, to attack Tel Aviv, Israel, with a weapon that flew more than 1,000 miles before striking a building and killing a civilian. "Now, clearly, you're not going to be sending F-22s out to find a DJI quadcopter with hand grenades underneath them," Slife said. "And so, we have to think about a broader definition of what air superiority actually looks like and how we achieve it." Slife said the US can learn to use small drones as an extension to its more conventional airpower. The general likened today's experiments with drones to the les-

termed "cost-effective mass" to augment expensive platforms. "For the Department of the Air Force, in particular, historically, we have focused on building on a discrete set of exquisite platforms, with an emphasis on quality, less on quantity. But quantity can have a quality of its own when you're thinking about how to be able to penetrate through, or to be able to disrupt, the type of contested environments we may find ourselves in," she said. Slife added artificial intelligence and machine learning are also opening new possibilities for existing drones and future weapons. "With advances in networking technology, advances in automation, the emergence of AI as a warfighting capability that we need to bring to bear" is changing the Air Force's central way of thinking, Slife said. "What we're finding is that one-pilot, one-cockpit, one-datalink, one-airplane architecture doesn't have to define the way we operate these things. The idea is one operator, many platforms with higher degrees of automation."

The full article first appeared on Air & Space Forces Magazine.



The most-decorated Iranian in the Olympic history with double golds and a bronze, Hadi Saei played a significant part in the latest success as the head of the sport's national governing body. Taekwondo girls Nahid Kiani and Mobina Ne'matzadeh made history earlier in Paris as the former became the first Iranian woman to reach the final showpiece in any Olympic event before taking the -57kg silver, while the latter's -49kg bronze meant this year's Games were the most prolific for the Iranian female athletes in 30 editions.

Sensational Salimi grabs gold, caps off taekwondo heroics

Sports Desk

Iran's taekwondo campaign at the Paris Olympics will be one for the ages after all four members of the squad finished on the podium in their respective events.

Representing the country in the men's +80kg contests, young prodigy Arian Salimi came out victorious against British fourth-seed Caden Cunningham 2-1 to walk away with the coveted gold on Saturday night – a fitting finale to a thrilling, action-packed four days for the Iranians in the French capital's Grand Palais.

The Briton drew first blood with a 6-3 win in the opening round, but the 20-year-old Iranian bounced back in the second, starting with a round kick to the head and never looked behind to win 9-1.

Both fighters went all out in a nail-biting third round, with Salimi sealing the victory in the closing seconds with another spectacular three-pointer as it finished 6-2.

It was the final episode of a sensational 14 months for the Iranian young gun, who won the world bronze last year before claiming the gold at the Asian Championships in May.

Salimi began the day with a comfortable win against

Uzbekistan's two-time world silver medalist Nikita Rafalovich in straight rounds.

He then came from behind twice to beat Mexican second-seed Carlos Sansores and Croatian Ivan Šapina, who share five world medals between them, en route to the ultimate prize – Iran's first taekwondo gold in the Games since legendary Hadi Saei's triumph in Beijing 2008.

The most-decorated Iranian in the Olympic history with double golds and a bronze, Saei played a significant part in the latest success as the head of the sport's national governing body.

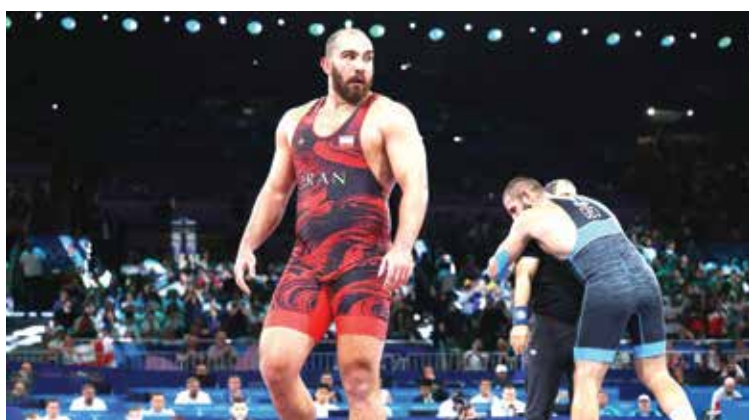
Taekwondo girls Nahid Kiani and Mobina Ne'matzadeh made history earlier in Paris as the former became the first Iranian woman to reach the final showpiece in any Olympic event before taking the -57kg silver, while the latter's -49kg bronze meant this year's Games were the most prolific for the Iranian female athletes in 30 editions.

Mehran Barkhordari, meanwhile, ended Iran's wait for a first men's final spot in 12 years when he made it to the -80kg showdown, though he was unlucky to finish his impressive run with a silver.



Iran's Arian Salimi celebrates after the victory over Britain's Caden Cunningham in the men's taekwondo +80kg final at the Paris Olympics on August 10, 2024.

● ANDREW MEDICHINI/AP



Iranian wrestler Amirhossein Zare' (red) reacts after the defeat in the freestyle 125kg final at the Paris Olympics on August 10, 2024.

● BORNA NEWS

Amouzad, Zare' fall short in freestyle finals

Sports Desk

Iranian wrestlers Rahman Amouzad and Amirhossein Zare' fell to defeats in their respective finals as the country's freestyle squad failed to win a gold across the five weight classes at the Paris Olympics.

Having enjoyed an emphatic run toward Sunday's final, Amouzad was stunned by Japanese Kotaro Kiyooka in

the 65kg showdown, suffering a 10-3 defeat.

The setback came after Zare' had also come short against familiar foe Geno Petriashvili of Georgia in a thrilling 125kg final on the preceding night at the Grand Palais Éphémère.

Trailing 10-1 at the break, the Iranian fought back to cut the deficit to a single point in the second round but it proved too little too late as

Zare' added a second Olympic medal to his three world medals, including double golds, as well as the bronze in the Tokyo Games three years ago.

Meanwhile, Amir-Ali Azarpira bounced back from a loss to eventual gold winner Akhmed Tazhudinov to round off his 97kg campaign with a consolation bronze, thanks to a 4-1 victory over American great Kyle Snyder.

Earlier in the freestyle competitions, Hassan Yazdani, struggling with a recurring shoulder injury in the final, had to settle for a second successive 86kg silver in the Olympics after a 7-1 defeat against Bulgaria's Russian-born Magomed Ramazanov. Younes Emami missed out on the 74kg podium following a technical-fall defeat against American Kyle Dake in the quarterfinals.

Davoudi misses out on podium as Talakhadze retains superheavyweight crown

Sports Desk

Ali Davoudi's quest for a second Olympic medal ended in vain as the Iranian weightlifter finished fourth in the men's +102kg event on Saturday.

Georgian great Lasha Talakhadze made history by becoming the first super-heavyweight weightlifter to

win three successive Olympic gold, with Armenian Varazdat Lalayan and Bahrain's Gor Minasyan taking the silver and bronze medals respectively.

A silver medalist at the Tokyo Games three years ago, Davoudi registered 205kg in the snatch event, and then began his favorite clean & jerk contest with a 242kg lift.

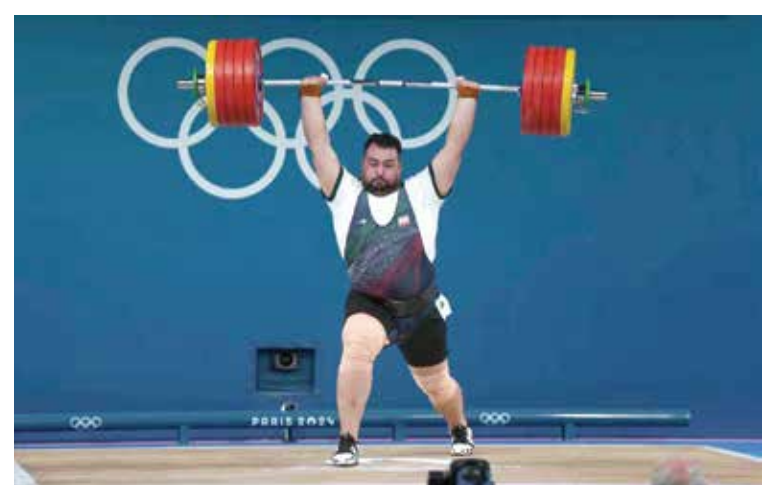
A successful 257kg would

have seen the Iranian stand win the bronze, but two failed attempts saw Davoudi settle for 447kg in total.

It was always going to be a three-horse race featuring Lalayan, Minasyan, and Davoudi for the silver and bronze medals as the Talakhadze was the hot favorite for a landmark triumph in the French capital.

The Georgian, however, was far from his dominant form, finishing second to Minasyan in the snatch contest, while he just did enough with 255kg in the clean & jerk to secure the gold with 470kg in total – 22 kilograms shy of his world record.

Lalayan finished with 467kg for the runner-up spot, with Minasyan recording 461kg.



● PRESS TV

Pezeshkian presents cabinet to Parliament for confidence vote

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian submitted the list of his new cabinet members to the Parliament, less than two weeks after he was sworn in before the country's legislators.

Pezeshkian presented his cabinet's lineup in a letter to Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf on Sunday, with the legislative body officially commencing the process of reviewing the proposed ministers' qualifications, Press TV reported.

The list of Pezeshkian's proposed cabinet members is as follows:

-Alireza Kazemi for Ministry of Education
-Sattar Hashemi for Ministry of Communication and Information Technology
-Esmail Khatib for the Ministry of Intelligence
-Abdolnaser Hemmati for Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance



● MIZAN

-Abbas Araghchi for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
-Mohammadreza Zafarghandi for Ministry of Health and Medical Education
-Ahmad Meydari for the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour, and Social Welfare
-Gholamreza Nouri Ghezleh for Ministry of Agri-

culture Jihad
-Amin-Hossein Rahimi for Ministry of Justice
-Brigadier General Aziz Nasirzadeh for the Ministry of Defence
-Farzaneh Sadegh for Ministry of Roads and Urban Development
-Mohammad Atabak for

Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade
-Hossein Simaei Sarraf for Ministry of Science, Research and Technology
-Abbas Salehi for Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance
-Eskandar Momeni for Ministry of Interior

-Reza Salehi-Amiri for Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts
-Mohsen Paknejad for Ministry of Oil

-Abbas Aliabadi for the Ministry of Energy

-Ahmad Donyamali for Ministry of Sport and Youth

Among the proposed ministers is Abbas Araqchi for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who joined the Iranian Foreign Ministry in 1989 and served as chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Organization of Islamic Conference in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, in the early 1990s.

Araqchi also served as ambassador to Finland from 1999 to 2003, and Japan between 2007 and 2011.

The senior diplomat worked as the former political deputy at the Foreign Ministry from 2017 to 2021, also serving as Iran's chief nu-

clear negotiator in talks with the P5+1 in former President Hassan Rouhani's government.

Abdolnaser Hemmati for Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance is an academic, politician and economist who served as the Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) from 2018 to 2021.

Hemmati ran as a candidate in the 2021 Iranian presidential election, being the sole representative from the Moderate Front of Iranian politicians, and was placed third overall in the results.

The Iranian Parliament's specialized commissions started deliberations on Pezeshkian's cabinet lineup as of Sunday afternoon and in two work shifts during the next four days.

The proposed ministers are also slated to be discussed in the Parliament's plenary sessions as of August 17.

The Lebanese Hezbollah launched on Saturday explosive-laden drones at a north Israel army base following the killing of a Hamas commander in south Lebanon a day earlier, the resistance movement said.

Hezbollah launched "squadrons of explosive-laden drones" at the Michve Alon base near the Galilee town of Safed "in response to the attack and assassination carried out by the Israeli enemy in the city of Sidon" on Friday, it said in a statement, AFP reported.

Hezbollah's media office said it was "the first time" the group had targeted that base.

The movement said it hit the positions of Israeli officers and troopers at the outpost "with swarms of attack drones, striking them directly and inflicting confirmed casualties."

The retaliation came a day after an Israeli attack targeted a vehicle in the southern Lebanese city of Sidon, assassinating Samer al-Hajj, a field commander with al-Qassam Brigades, which is Hamas' armed wing. The Palestinian resistance movement has acknowledged losing al-Hajj to "a treacherous Zionist strike."

The Israeli regime has been conducting near-daily attacks against the southern parts of Lebanon since October 7, when it launched a genocidal war on Gaza.

Hezbollah has been responding with strikes aimed both at retaliating against the regime and supporting the war-hit Gazans.

Announcing the Saturday strike, Hezbollah likewise underlined that it staged the reprisal "in support of our steadfast Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and in support of their brave and honorable resistance."

The regime, which waged wars against Lebanon in 2000 and 2006, has, meanwhile, been repeatedly threatening to expand its attacks into another wholesale military onslaught against the country.

Hezbollah has vowed to defend the Lebanese soil with all its resources.

China supports Iran in defending security, sovereignty: FM

Iran to hit back at Israel within 'int'l principles'

International Desk

China supports Iran in defending its "sovereignty, security and national dignity," Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told Iran's acting foreign minister in a phone call on Sunday, according to a statement by China's Foreign Ministry.

Wang repeated Beijing's denunciation of the assassination of Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran on July 31, saying the strike had violated Iran's sovereignty and threatened regional stability, Reuters reported.

Iran has vowed to "harshly punish" Israel over the assassination.

Israel has neither claimed nor denied responsibility for the assassination, which has fueled concern that the war between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip was turning into a wider Middle East war.

In a series of posts on X so-

cial media platform on Sunday, Baqeri said Iran is seeking to prevent realization of the Israeli regime's "dream" of triggering an all-out regional war.

At the same time as trying to confront the Israeli provocations of further regional hostilities, the Islamic Republic was seeking to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity in the face of the regime within the framework of the international law and the United Nations Charter, Baqeri added.

In the Sunday phone call, Wang also told Iran's acting foreign minister that the killing of Haniyeh had "directly undermined the Gaza ceasefire negotiation process and undermined regional peace and stability." "China supports Iran in defending its sovereignty, security and national dignity in accordance with the law, and in its efforts to maintain



regional peace and stability, and stands ready to maintain close communication with Iran," Wang was quoted as saying.

'Inherent defense right'

Also, in a telephone conversation with Belgian Foreign Minister Hadja Lahbib on Saturday, Iran's interim foreign minister highlighted his country's inherent right to respond to Israeli acts of aggression in accordance with "international principles and the UN Charter." He said Iran will "legitimate-



ly" and "decisively" make Israel pay for its crimes, including the assassination of the Hamas chief.

Baqeri said that Israel has destabilized West Asia with its strikes on Gaza and Lebanon and the "coward" assassination of Haniyeh on Iranian soil.

For her part, Lahbib voiced deep concern over the unfolding developments in West Asia, saying, "Brussels is worried about the deterioration of the situation in the region as lack of control over the state of affairs will result in a full-blown war." She expressed support for the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and denounced the construction of illegal settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Lahbib added that Belgium supports the right of return of Palestinian refugees and at the same time seeks im-

position of sanctions against extremist Israeli settlers.

The top Belgian diplomat underlined the need for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, stating that all parties should exercise maximum restraint in light of the worsening situation in West Asia and that continued consultation between Tehran and Brussels is highly required in this regard.

Baqeri also held a similar phone conversation with Dutch Foreign Minister Caspar Veldkamp.

The two exchanged views over the Israeli assassination of Haniyeh and the Israeli strike on a school sheltering displaced people in Gaza City that killed more than 100 Palestinians and wounded dozens of others.

Baqeri told Veldkamp that Western countries would have lectured others on the defense of human beings and human rights and employed all their capacities in case the attack on the al-Tabin school in Gaza City's al-Daraj neighborhood had been carried out by an entity other than the Zionist regime.

He criticized some European countries for remaining silent on Israel's terrorist acts which contravene international law, pointing to

the Israeli violation of Iran's national sovereignty and security following Haniyeh's targeted killing in Tehran.

"Such measures have resulted in the continuation of the Zionist regime's brutalities and uptick in its atrocities," he noted.

'Heartbreaking' attack

Veldkamp, for his part, voiced concern regarding the escalation of tensions in West Asia, saying the Israeli attack on the al-Tabin school in Gaza was "heartbreaking."

He also called for a ceasefire and the dispatch of humanitarian aid convoys to Gaza.

Also, in a telephone conversation with Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi on Saturday, Baqeri Kani called upon all Muslim countries to join forces and deter the Israeli regime through effective and unified measures.

Marsudi, for her part, emphasized that Israeli crimes, including Haniyeh's killing in Tehran, pose grave danger to international peace and security.

"Indonesia condemns the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh, and considers it as an example of violation of the national sovereignty of the Islamic Republic of Iran," she stated.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



IRGC holds military drills in western Iran

Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) is holding military drills in the western Kermanshah Province that will continue until Tuesday, a local official told IRNA on Sunday.

The drills, which started on Friday, are ongoing

in an area near the cities of Qasreshirin and Gilanegharb close to the border with Iraq to "enhance combat readiness and vigilance" Morad Babakhani, a deputy governor of Qasreshirin said.

Babakhani said the exercises were being con-

ducted by an artillery and missile unit of the Najaf Ashraf Base of the IRGC's Ground Force.

The drills are taking place as Iran has vowed to retaliate against Israel after the killing of Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh on July 31 in Tehran.

IRGC's deputy commander Ali Fadavi said on Friday that the Islamic Republic of Iran's Leader's orders regarding the harsh punishment of Israel and revenge for Haniyeh's blood were clear and would be implemented in the "best possible way."

Who is Abbas Salehi, Iran's pick for Culture Ministry?

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian proposed Abbas Salehi as the new Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance. Salehi, a moderate figure with a background in religious education, is currently the managing director of Ettela'at Newspaper and the president of the University of Religions and Denominations.

Born in 1963 in Mashhad, Salehi has a long history in Iran's cultural and political scene. He is a well-known figure in the country's religious circles, having studied at the Qom Seminary and earned a reputation as an outstanding student of philosophy and Islamic jurisprudence, IRNA wrote.

Prior to his proposed appointment as minister, Salehi served as the deputy culture minister from 2013 to 2017, during which he worked to promote Iranian culture and art and strengthen cultural

diplomacy.

He is respected as a moderate and a proponent of dialogue, always striving to foster constructive engagement between artists, writers, and government institutions.

Salehi's other accomplishments include his scholarly and research activities in various cultural and religious fields. He has authored numerous articles and books on religious and philosophical subjects, showcasing his expertise in these areas.

Salehi served as Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance (2018-2021) in president Hassan Rouhani's second term, promoting Iranian culture and art and enhancing cultural diplomacy.

Before becoming a minister, Salehi was the deputy minister of culture (2013-2017), playing a crucial role in cultural policy-making and supporting cultural and artistic endeavors.

He was the managing director of "Information, Wisdom, and Knowledge" Newspaper, focusing on philosophical and intellectual topics.

Salehi contributed to significant cultural decision-making in Iran as a member of the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution. Salehi began his religious studies at the Qom Seminary and pursued advanced levels of religious education, specializing in philosophy and Islamic jurisprudence.

He has written extensively in the fields of culture, philosophy, and religion, including articles and books on Islamic philosophy and religious topics.

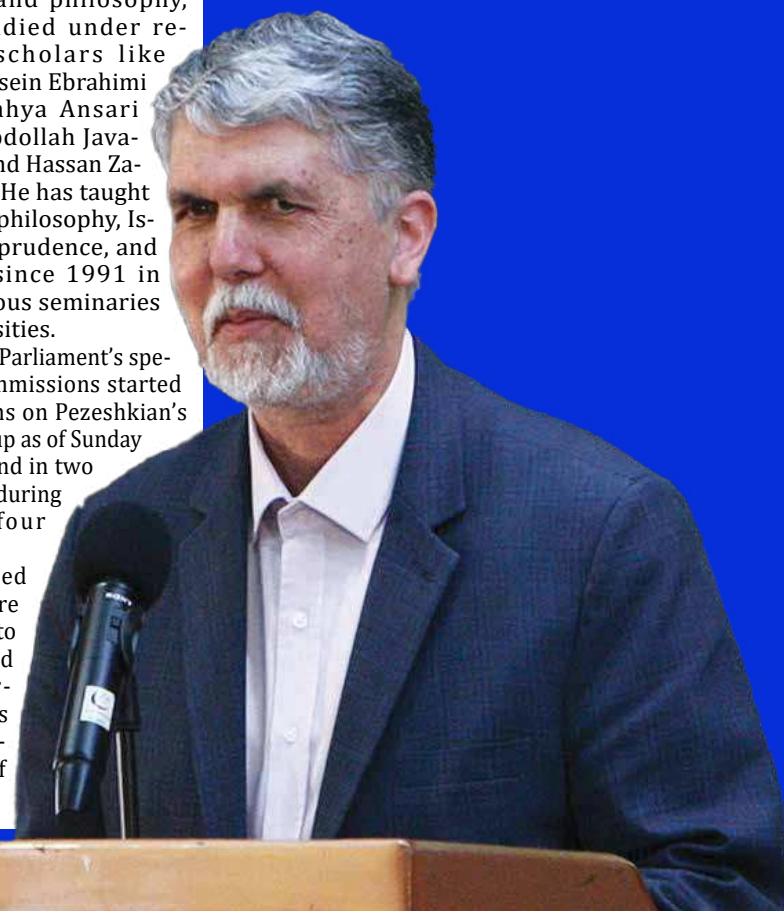
Salehi served as an editor and board member of various scientific and cultural publications.

He has taught a range of subjects, including philosophy and Islamic jurisprudence, in academic institutions and universities.

With a background in both religious and philosophy, Salehi studied under renowned scholars like Gholamhossein Ebrahimi Dinani, Yahya Ansari Shirazi, Abdollah Javadi-Amoli, and Hassan Zadeh Amoli. He has taught courses in philosophy, Islamic jurisprudence, and theology since 1991 in both religious seminaries and universities.

The Iranian Parliament's specialized commissions started deliberations on Pezeshkian's cabinet lineup as of Sunday afternoon and in two work shifts during the next four days.

The proposed ministers are also slated to be discussed in the Parliament's plenary sessions as of August 17.



Iranian-Armenian animation wins Italian accolade



Arts & Culture Desk

The Iranian-Armenian animated short film, 'The Song of Flying Leaves,' snagged the Best Animation Award at the 12th Ariano International Film Festival in southern Italy, adding to its impressive haul of 13 awards over the past two years. 'The Song of Flying Leaves' is a 12-minute, two-dimensional animated film about a 12-year-old girl named Sona, who lives in a forest and sleeps among the leaves. She encounters an old man in the forest who offers to teach her a secret knowledge. Directed and produced by Armenian filmmaker

Armine Anda, the film is a collaboration between Iran's Hoorakhsh Studio and an Armenian studio, Mehr News Agency reported.

Anda, who dedicated the film to her father, was inspired by the poetic cinema of Iranian director Abbas Kiarostami. She teamed up with Iranian producers Ashkan and Arman Rahgozar of Hoorakhsh Studio to bring this unique blend of poetry and animation to life. The film's script was penned by renowned Armenian director Roman Balayan.

'The Song of Flying Leaves' has been on a winning streak, picking up several awards at

various festivals, including the Golden Apricot, Rolan, Ajayu, and Paris International Animation Film Festivals. The film has also received honors from Italy, Mexico, Armenia, Georgia, Australia, and more, showcasing its universal appeal and the power of cross-cultural collaboration. The 12th Ariano International Film Festival, held from July 19 to August 4 in the southern Italian region of Irpinia, aims to showcase and promote cinematic works, with a special focus on animation. The festival fosters a positive cultural exchange and provides a platform for filmmakers to connect and inspire each other.

Evaluating cabinet: Focusing ...

In contrast, there are also nominees who are expected to excel in their respective fields and serve as a source of encouragement for both the government and the people. Nonetheless, it is only fair that we give them a chance, however brief, to demonstrate which group's argument holds true. Although the selection process involved a consultative council, the ultimate decision rests with the president, who bears the responsibility for these choices. Pezeshkian is accountable for the performance of each member of his cabinet and cannot evade responsibility by citing constraints and limitations.

We are well aware of the explicit and implicit challenges that presidents face in assembling their dream teams. Pezeshkian's administration is no exception, especially given his emphasis avoiding "conflicts" and engaging with the Establishment and bringing about change desired by the people, which may have set even higher expectations for his cabinet choices. When scrutinizing the proposed cabinet, it is imperative to consider various interests, limitations, and preferences at play. For instance, these

ministers must gain the trust of a parliament that may not be politically aligned with the government or the president, a factor the president likely considered in his selections. Moreover, there are inevitable constraints in choosing certain ministers, and the president must take into account the consultative opinions of higher authorities. Nevertheless, for the government to succeed, it must find common ground with other pillars of the Establishment without sacrificing its own plans and promises. Another important consideration, regardless of one's stance on the proposed ministers, is the coherence and coordination within the cabinet. While individual ministerial performance is crucial, the collective performance of all ministries is what ultimately defines the success of the government. This is where internal cohesion and inter-ministerial collaboration become vital. A well-coordinated government has a higher likelihood of effectively implementing its programs. Thus, it is more prudent to focus on the programs and policies rather than individual personalities. Appointing renowned figures like Ali Tayebnia and Mohammad Javad Zarif to key advisory

roles may address some of the weaknesses, bolster the cabinet and strengthen the government's program-oriented approach. The president also plays a pivotal role in fostering coordination and ensuring the precise and proper execution of programs by the ministers. Lastly, some of the criticisms directed at the proposed cabinet arise from the non-partisan nature of the Iranian government. In such cases, the solution lies in prioritizing plans over personalities. Developing scientifically grounded programs that align with the country's realities and potentials and ensuring coordinated efforts within the cabinet for their implementation may outweigh the focus on individual cabinet members. Each minister contributes to a larger cohesive whole, and by fulfilling their duties, they support the president, the cabinet's commander-in-chief, in delivering on his promises and realizing his vision. It is our hope that Pezeshkian's cabinet will rise to the occasion, address the core demands of the dissatisfied majority of Iranians, and pave the way for a historic reconciliation between the people and the government/establishment.

Page 1 >