

# Parliament okays Pezeshkian's entire cabinet

Unanimous approval 'valuable' support for gov't: *President*



AFP

## National Desk

Iran's Parliament on Wednesday approved all members of Reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian's cabinet, the first time in over two decades a president has been able to receive a vote of confidence for all of his proposed ministers. Former president Mohammad Khatami, also from the Reformist camp, was the only president who had managed to do so both in 1997 and 2001. The approval marks an early win for Pezeshkian, a longtime lawmaker who succeeded the late president Ebrahim Raisi after he

died in a helicopter crash in May. Pezeshkian submitted the list of his proposed ministerial picks to the parliament for a vote of confidence on August 11, twelve days after his swearing-in ceremony. The Iranian lawmakers commenced the process of reviewing the qualifications of the proposed ministers on Saturday, which last until Wednesday. Among those in Pezeshkian's 19-member cabinet is Abbas Araghchi, 61, a career diplomat who will be Iran's new foreign minister. Araghchi was a member of the Iranian negotiating team that

reached a nuclear deal with world powers in 2015. The candidate who received the most support from lawmakers was the country's new defense minister, Aziz Nasirzadeh, who received 281 votes out of 288 present lawmakers. The chamber has 290 seats. Nasirzadeh was chief of the Iranian air force from 2018 to 2021. Health Minister Mohammad Reza Zafarghandi received the lowest number of votes with 163. Farzaneh Sadegh, the only female minister proposed for Ministry of Roads and Urban Development, a 47-year-old architect, re-

ceived 231 votes. She is the first female minister in Iran in more than a decade. The parliament also approved Pezeshkian's proposed Intelligence Minister Ismail Khatib, as well as Justice Minister Amin Hossein Rahimi, both of whom served under the late president Ebrahim Raisi. Pezeshkian also put Raisi's minister of industries, Abbas Aliabadi, in the post of energy minister. Ahead of the voting on Wednesday, Pezeshkian addressed the parliament and urged them to approve his ministerial nominees while also calling for "unity and cohesion."

In a message after the voting, the president thanked the lawmakers for their unanimous approval of all his nominees, saying that such a cooperation by the parliament is a "valuable support" for the government to implement its plans. Pezeshkian's cabinet lineup had drawn criticism by a number of individuals in the Reformist camp but he has defended his proposed ministers and called on critics to "wait for the cabinet to start work and criticize it based on its performance." Here's a breakdown of the total number of votes for each nominee:

- Minister of Communications: Sattar Hashemi, 264 votes
- Minister of Intelligence: Seyed Esmaeil Khatib, 261 votes
- Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance: Abdolnaser Hemmati, 192 votes
- Minister of Foreign Affairs: Abbas Araghchi, 247 votes
- Minister of Education: Alireza Kazemi, 268 votes
- Minister of Health and Medical Education: Mohammadreza Zafarghandi, 163 votes
- Minister of Cooperatives, Labor, and Social Welfare: Ahmad Meidari, 191 votes
- Minister of Justice: Amin Hossein Rahimi, 268 votes
- Minister of Defense: Aziz Nasirzadeh, 281 votes
- Minister of Roads: Ms. Farzaneh Sadegh Malvajerd, 231 votes
- Minister of Industry, Mines, and Trade: Mohammad Atabak, 231 votes
- Minister of Science: Hossein Simayi Sarraf, 221 votes
- Minister of Culture: Seyed Abbas Saleh Shariati, 272 votes
- Minister of Agriculture: Gholamreza Nouri Ghezalje, 253 votes
- Minister of Interior: Eskandar Momeni, 259 votes
- Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts: Mohammadreza Salehi Amiri, 168 votes
- Minister of Oil: Mohsen Paknejad, 222 votes
- Minister of Energy: Abbas Aliabadi, 255 votes
- Minister of Sports and Youth: Ahmad Donyamali, 253 votes

## Japan, India felicitate new FM after confidence vote



### International Desk

Japanese and Indian foreign ministers congratulated Abbas Araghchi after Iran's Parliament on Wednesday voted in favor of him to become Iran's new foreign minister. In a letter to Araghchi, Japan's Foreign Minister Kamikawa Yoko said she seeks to work together with the new Iran's foreign minister - a former ambassador to Japan and an expert on Japan - to further develop the bilateral relationship based on the historically friendly relations and to cooperate closely to ease tensions and stabilize the situation in West Asia. The Japanese foreign minister also expressed her high hope for Iran to play a more constructive role towards peace and stability in the Middle East and to advance cooperation with the international community. Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar also sent a congratulatory message, saying that he "looks forward to working" with his Iranian counterpart "to further relations." On Wednesday, Araghchi won the vote of confidence with 247 votes in favor.

## Response to Haniyeh killing will be 'calculated': Former IRGC chief

A former chief commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) warns of an extremely tough response to Israel, asserting that the Islamic Republic will "definitely" serve a "calculated" response to the Israeli regime's assassination of Hamas's leader in Tehran last month. "We have investigated the possible repercussions. And we will not let [Israeli prime minister Benjamin] Netanyahu, who is sinking in a swamp, save himself," Mohsen Rezaei said in an interview with CNN on Tuesday. "Iran will take action at the right time and in the right place. Based on Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, we have the right to defend ourselves," he added. "If there is no response, the Zionist regime's acts of mischief will continue. Therefore, this (the retaliation) will take place," added Rezaei, who currently serves as secretary of the Supreme Council for Economic Coordination of the Heads of Government Branches. Hamas Leader Ismail Haniyeh was assassinated in a targeted killing operation in Tehran on July 31. He was in the Iranian capital to attend the inauguration ceremony of Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian.

## 28 Pakistani pilgrims killed in bus crash in central Iran

### International Desk

At least 28 Pakistani pilgrims travelling to the Iraqi city of Karbala were killed as their bus crashed in central Iran, state media reported early Wednesday. "A bus carrying 51 Pakistani pilgrims overturned and caught fire in front of Dehshir-Taft checkpoint in the central province of Yazd on Tuesday night," Iranian state television reported. "Twenty-eight people have been killed and 23 injured so far with

the possibility of the death toll increasing," it added. Provincial crisis management chief Ali Malekzadeh told the broadcaster that some of the injured were in critical condition. "The dead consisted of 11 women and 17 men," he added. Head of Iran traffic police, Teymour Hosseini, cited "technical failure in the brake system," and the "high inclination of the road" as the reasons for the crash. Iranian Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref extended his sin-

cere condolences over the deaths of the Pakistani pilgrims. In a telephone conversation with Yazd Provincial Governor Mehran Fatemi, Aref followed up on the medical treatment of those injured, inquired about the causes of the deadly accident, and emphasized on the provision of all necessary services to those affected in the tragic incident. Pakistan's Foreign Office also said the consul of Pakistan in Zahedan has been asked to visit the accident site to ensure medical relief



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to the injured and arrange the repatriation of the dead bodies to Pakistan. Most of the victims are residents of Pakistan's southeastern Sindh Province where the bus journey began. The Pakistani pilgrims were

headed through Iran to Iraq to attend the Arbaeen commemoration, one of the biggest events of the Shia calendar which marks the 40th day of martyrdom of the third Shia imam, Imam Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH).

**Mohammad Ali Rajabi**  
Cartoonist



## Death 'the only certainty' for Gazans: UN official

In war-ravaged Gaza, death appears to be the "only certainty" for 2.4 million Palestinians with no way to escape Israel's relentless bombardment, a UN official said Tuesday, recounting the growing desperation across the territory. "It does feel like people are waiting for death. Death seems to be the only certainty in this situation," Louise Wateridge, a spokeswoman for the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, also known as UNRWA, told AFP from Gaza. For the past two weeks, Wateridge has been in the Gaza Strip, witnessing the humanitarian crisis, fear of death and spread of disease as the war rages on. "Nowhere in the Gaza Strip is safe, absolutely nowhere is safe. It's absolutely

devastating," Wateridge said from the Nuseirat area of central Gaza - a regular target of Israel's aerial assaults. Since fighting broke out in October, Israeli forces have pounded the besieged territory from the air, land and sea, reducing much of it to rubble. Now in its eleventh month, the war has created an acute humanitarian crisis, with hundreds of thousands of people, most of whom have been displaced several times, running out of basic food and clean drinking water. Tens of thousands of people have taken refuge in schools across the Gaza Strip, an increasingly regular target of Israeli missiles. "Even a school is not anymore a safe place," said Wateridge.