

# Pezeshkian: Gov't diplomacy based on interaction with world

**National Desk**

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said his government's foreign policy is based on interaction with the world, especially the neighboring countries. During a televised interview on Monday, Pezeshkian underlined that Iran should open up its economy and expand its cooperation with other countries. Pezeshkian called the interaction with the world a solution for the country to overcome its economic "crises." In this regard, he said, Iran is seeking to expand its economic relations with Eurasian countries and plans to follow up and implement the agreements signed with China and Russia. He also pointed to the agreements that have been reached with India and Iraq, saying that his government will do its utmost to implement them. Since taking office in July, Pezeshkian has vowed to prioritize the consolidation of ties with Iran's neighbors. Relations between Iran and Iraq have

grown closer over the past two decades.

**Negotiations with Europe**

The Iranian president also pointed to recent negotiations between Iran, France, Germany and the UK, saying that the three European countries followed the United States and imposed new sanctions against Iran. Pezeshkian added that, "Despite all this, we are seeking to prove that we are not looking for war and that we are looking for peace."

**Countering terrorists**

Pezeshkian also expressed Iran's resolve to utilize all capacities at its disposal to counter terrorists in Syria in coordination with the country's neighbors. Pezeshkian said that his telephone conversations with his Syrian and Russian counterparts, as well as the Qatari emir and the Iraqi prime minister, focused on the issue that, "Terrorists and conspirators should not be allowed to drag the region into war and bloodshed again."

"We respect the territorial integrity of all countries, which we believe should not be violated under any pretexts," he added.

The remarks came after foreign-backed terror outfits waged a surprise attack on Aleppo, Syria's second largest city, on Wednesday and captured several areas.

In response to a question about a new law on hijab approved by the parliament, Pezeshkian said, "As a person in charge of enforcing this law, I have many reservations about it."

"We risk laying waste to a lot of things in society due to this law," said the Iranian president.

The new law requires the president's signature on December 13 to take effect.

Pezeshkian also complained about the small budget that has been allocated to the universities, which is about \$1.5 to 2 million for a year.

He also referred to the shortage of energy in the country which has one of the largest energy reserves in the world, saying, "To solve the problems,



we must accept that experts and specialists should make decisions and provide solutions. We welcome anyone who can help solve the problem of energy shortage in the country."

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (L) speaks during a televised interview in the capital Tehran on December 2, 2024. [president.ir](http://president.ir)

## Israeli strikes kill 12 in Lebanon in breach of cease-fire



AFP

**International Desk**

Israel unleashed its largest wave of airstrikes across Lebanon since agreeing to a cease-fire with Hezbollah last week, killing at least 12 people. The deadly attacks came after the Lebanese resistance group fired a volley of projectiles as a warning over Israeli truce violations. The projectiles were apparently the first time that Hezbollah took aim at Israeli forces after the 60-day cease-fire went into effect last Wednesday. The increasingly fragile truce aimed to end more than a year of war between Hezbollah and Israel — part of a wider regional conflict sparked

by the devastating Israel's war in Gaza.

Lebanon's Health Ministry said on Tuesday that an Israeli drone strike on a southern town killed one person. An Israeli airstrike on the southern village of Haris killed five people and wounded two while another airstrike on the village of Tal-lousa killed four and also wounded two, the ministry said on Monday. Israel's military carried out a string of airstrikes late Monday against what it said were Hezbollah fighters, infrastructure and rocket launchers across Lebanon, in response to Hezbollah firing two projectiles toward Mount Dov in the occupied Shebaa Farms in Lebanon.

Hezbollah said in a statement that it fired at an Israeli military position in the area as a "defensive and warning response" after "repeated violations" of the cease-fire deal by the regime. It said complaints to mediators tasked with monitoring the cease-fire "were futile in stopping these violations."

Before the Hezbollah projectiles, Israel carried out at least four airstrikes and an artillery barrage in southern Lebanon, including a drone strike that killed a person on a motorcycle, according to Lebanese state media. Another strike killed a corporal in the Lebanese security services.

## US-backed militants open up new anti-Syria front in northeast

'Terrorists plotting chemical attacks on Aleppo, Idlib'

**International Desk**

Militants from a US-backed, Kurdish-led coalition battled Syrian government forces in northeast Syria early on Tuesday, both sides said, opening a new front for Syrian government which lost parts of Aleppo in a sudden militant advance last week.

Airstrikes also targeted groups supporting Syrian forces in the strategically vital region, a security source in eastern Syria and a Syrian army source said. The sources both blamed the airstrikes on the US-led military coalition which operates in Syria and has a small detachment of American troops on the ground, Reuters reported.



AFP

Foreign-backed Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) terrorist group and allied factions broke through government defense lines in Syria's second largest city Aleppo on Friday and entered the city's western neighborhood. The insurgents launched their shock offensive in Aleppo and Idlib countryside on Wednesday and wrested control of dozens of villages and towns along the way, including a strategic town south of Aleppo.

HTS is an alliance led by Al-Qaeda's former Syria branch, and has faced accusations of human rights abuses. Russia's RIA Novosti news agency, citing an informed source, said that terrorists affiliated with the HTS are planning chemical attacks in the northwestern provinces of Aleppo and Idlib amid advances by government forces.

The heaviest fighting on Monday and overnight was along the frontline just north of Hama, another major Syrian city, where several villages have changed hands repeatedly over recent days. Syrian and Russian warplanes also intensified airstrikes against militants alongside government jets over recent days, both sides have said.

**Jockeying for territory**

The retreat by Syrian forces over the

past several days has led to jockeying for control among other groups that dominate pockets in the northwest, north and east.

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), an umbrella group which controls territory in Syria's east with US support, said early on Tuesday that its Deir al-Zor Military Council had "become responsible for protecting" seven villages previously held by the Syrian army.

The Deir al-Zor Military Council comprises local Arab fighters under the SDF, an alliance mainly led by a Kurdish militia, the YPG.

Syrian state media reported that the army and allied forces were repelling an SDF assault on the villages, the only Syrian government presence along the east bank of the Euphrates River, an area otherwise mostly held by the SDF. A return of fighting to northeast Syria, where the United States, Russia, Iran and Turkey are all involved, underscores the messy global politics at play in the conflict and the dangers of escalation in a potentially crowded battlefield. Iran said late on Monday there would be a foreign ministers meeting with Turkey and Russia in Doha next weekend as part of a diplomatic process used to stabilize borders earlier in the conflict.

## Trump after economic...

Therefore, Iran's national interests need to be prioritized and defined in coordination with all sectors within the country, establishing what international goals the country aim to pursue internationally. Based on this, we need to engage in dialogue with anyone, taking into account their characteristics and attributes and speaking their language. Some of the unconventional actions taken by Trump in the past, including the assassination of General Qassem Soleimani, were due to his lack of experience for president and his limited understanding of international issues. However, with time, he has grown older and become one of the oldest US presidents, gaining more

experience and mellowing out with age. Unconsciously, these factors will impact his decisions, and overall, I believe he has become more "benign" than before. Everyone knows that Trump himself pulled out of the JCPOA. Unfortunately, Iran's partners to the deal have not been reliable or committed and Iran cannot bank on their promises. They have not honored their commitments so Iran cannot put stock in their promises. The negotiations have been stuck in a rut and the broken promises under the JCPOA have rendered the issue stale and lifeless. It seems that the enthusiasm for this topic has waned. However, Iran still seeks to engage with the world and is not looking

for adventure, but any agreement, including the nuclear deal, should be reviewed and negotiated in light of new developments and changes. After all, governments have changed, and issues have evolved since then. In my opinion, Iran's situation regarding negotiations is improving, as the West has tried every trick in the book and imposed every possible sanction on Iran. The West and Trump have come to realize Iran's capacity and strength, and they know that Iran carries significant weight in regional geopolitics. It would be better to resolve issues through negotiations. Moreover, the world has lost its appetite for new tensions and conflicts, and they too are seeking to reach an agreement.

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