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President: Gender justice 'social necessity' for country's progress

Social Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian emphasized that gender justice is not merely a moral principle but a vital social and economic necessity for the country's advancement. Speaking during a ceremony in Tehran on National Women's Day on Sunday, Pezeshkian asserted his government's commitment to fostering women's active participation across all sectors, including cultural, economic, and social fields, president.ir reported. "The country's sustainable development needs a comprehensive view and cooperation. Achieving development goals will not be possible without women's active participation," he stated, highlighting that respect and opportunity should be granted based on individual

abilities, rather than gender, ethnicity, or religion. "If a woman has a better performance than a man in a specific field, she should receive more respect," he added. The president drew attention to the significance of Islamic teachings regarding the respect and status of women, noting that the birth of Lady Fatima (PBUH), the daughter of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), symbolizes the high standing of women in Islam. He remarked, "This divine gift signifies the importance and status of women in Islam," pointing out that, contrary to the societal norms of 14 centuries ago, daughters and women hold a revered position in the Islamic faith. Pezeshkian recognized the crucial role mothers play in nurturing future generations,

stating, "Mothers are the main pillars of families and shape the personalities of children." He underscored that the love and care mothers provide are fundamental to human and social development, assuring that improving the status of women and mothers guarantees a brighter future for the nation. Plus, he acknowledged the recent advancements women have made in leadership roles within the government, citing the presence of female governors, deputy ministers, and senior managers as evidence of their capabilities. He expressed the need for gender equality in policymaking and management, asserting that women's competencies must be recognized and utilized for national development. The government is determined to support working mothers,



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks at a ceremony in Tehran on National Women's Day, December 22, 2024. ● president.ir

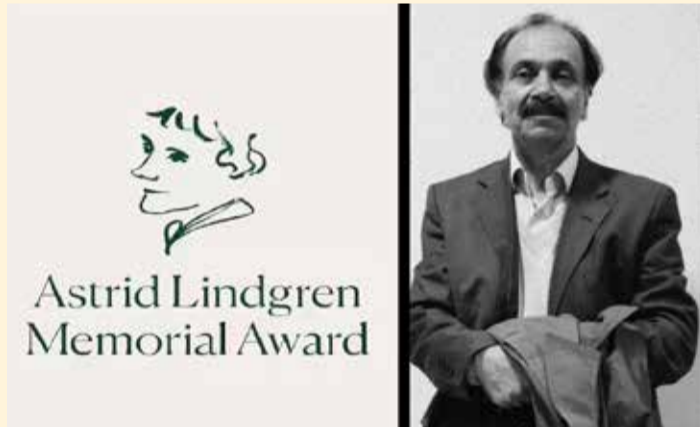
striving to create a balance between professional and personal lives. "Women constitute half of the country's human capital, and without their active participation, achieving developmental objectives will not be possible," Pezeshkian reiterated. Before the president's address, Zahra Behrouz-Azar, the Vice President for Women and Family Affairs, highlighted the vital role of women in society, culture, and the economy. She described women as "the light of hope and the driving force of life," reinforcing the government's commitment to



gender equality and the elimination of barriers that hinder women's participation in all spheres of society. In her speech, Behrouz-Azar emphasized the importance of policies that support working mothers and prioritize family values,

affirming the government's dedication to upholding equal rights and social justice for women in Iran. "With the collaboration and efforts of Iranian women, we can create a desirable and promising future for our country," she concluded.

Iranian author Razi Hirmandi picked for ALMA



Arts & Culture Desk

Razi Hirmandi, a renowned Iranian author, translator, and humor researcher, was chosen as Iran's representative for the translation category of the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (ALMA). The International Federation of Translators (FIT) has expanded its award categories for 2024, including

the addition of a translation award to the ALMA. Following FIT's call for submissions from member associations, including the Translators and Interpreters' Association of Tehran, the association's Children and Young Adult Literature Translation Working Group held coordination meetings to select a representative despite the short notice. After reviewing

candidates' backgrounds, Razi Hirmandi was chosen as Iran's representative for the inaugural translation award, IRNA reported. Hirmandi began his literary career for children and young adults in 1976 with the translation of "The Giving Tree" by American author Shel Silverstein. He has worked in both translation and authorship, producing over 170 works that have earned him several prestigious awards. The Translators and Interpreters' Association of Tehran has been a member of FIT since 2016 and has actively participated in various FIT working groups, aiming to enhance international opportunities for Iranian translators. The association holds international positions within FIT, including the secretariat of the Asian Center and membership in the Book Translation and Copyright, Translation and Artificial Intelligence, and Legal Translation working groups.

Minister pledges support for provincial theaters, showcasing Iran's artistic diversity

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Abbas Salehi emphasized the vital role of provincial theaters as a "national asset," following his visit to the 20th Tehran-Mobarak International Puppet Theater Festival. He stated, "This asset is something we all must strive to protect, both in the capital and in the provinces." Salehi highlighted that the future of Iranian art lies in the provinces, where theater serves as an essential visual representation of the country's diverse regions, IRNA reported. During the festival, which opened on December 16 and runs through December 23, Salehi noted that provincial theaters are not merely defined by their geography and natural beauty, but also by their human contributions. "When we see the creativity that combines past heritage, history, and human artistic innovation from a province, we establish a multifaceted connection with that region," he explained. The minister pointed out the impressive performances showcased at the festival, specifically mentioning a captivating play from Ardebil that seamlessly blended historical music and mythology, leaving audiences spellbound.



"We can see history combined with myth in the performing arts," he said, urging all stakeholders to harness their efforts to strengthen provincial theater. Salehi acknowledged the challenges faced by the country but insisted that the commitment to enhancing provincial theater must remain unwavering. "I firmly believe that the future of Iranian art lies in the provinces, where we can witness a vibrant rainbow of diverse artistic expressions," he asserted. He praised the festival as a lively event with a long-standing history in both Iran and the world. This year, the festival received 380 entries, with about 40 performances showcased. Salehi emphasized the role of live performances in reviving forgotten or fading traditions. "As the puppet festival concludes, the secretariat will begin preparations for next year," he concluded, signaling a commitment to the continuity and evolution of theatrical arts in Iran.

A project to ...

Analysis of Turkey's media strategies in recent years shows that the country is seeking to expand its regional influence through substantial investments in international media outlets. The experience of TRT World, Turkey's English-language state media arm, has demonstrated that these outlets effectively serve as instruments to advance the geopolitical and geostrategic policies of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) and President Erdogan. Now, with TRT Persian's official launch, this strategy has entered a new phase focusing on disrupting Iran's stability and unity.

What transforms this media project into a serious national security threat is the hostile approach evident in its managers' pre-launch statements, which has now coincided with developments in Syria. This initiative appears to be a prelude to new political and security movements by Ankara in Iran's northwest, particularly regarding the controversial Zangezur Corridor issue. It's important to note that in its initial days, the network will likely attempt to attract audiences through cultural and entertainment content. However, given its management's stated positions, it can be predicted that during sensitive periods, it

will become a tool for provoking public opinion and creating tension. Economically, TRT Persian's launch is part of Turkey's broader strategy to expand its influence in the Iranian market. Turkey, facing serious economic challenges in recent years, seeks to increase exports to neighboring countries. The Persian-language network can facilitate the promotion of Turkish goods and products in the Iranian market through attractive cultural and advertising content. TRT Persian's main strategy will likely focus on sensitive ethnic and religious issues. The network may seek to create

national division by providing one-sided coverage of events and fueling disputes. Experience has shown that Turkish media consistently takes a biased and provocative approach in covering Iranian affairs. In the current complex regional situation, the launch of a television network with declared hostile intentions could have negative consequences for bilateral relations. This action may also indicate a shift in Turkey's foreign policy toward greater confrontation with Iran. Under these circumstances, it is essential for responsible authorities to understand the dimensions of this threat and design appropriate counter-

measures. Strengthening domestic media, improving cultural production quality, enhancing media literacy, addressing concerns and ambiguities effectively, and adopting deterrent policies such as increasing import tariffs on Turkish goods and prohibiting cooperation with Turkish media networks, particularly TRT Persian, are among measures that could reduce the impact of this media soft war. Furthermore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should pursue this unfriendly action in diplomatic forums and utilize legal and international capacities to counter this hostile approach. Experience has shown that silence in the face of such actions

can lead to increased interventionist behaviors. Overall, the author believes that TRT Persian's launch should be analyzed beyond a mere media initiative and within the framework of Turkey's grand strategy to increase regional influence and weaken Iran's position. Previous statements by network managers and its official launch indicate that we face a targeted project aimed at creating instability and tension, requiring an intelligent and multilateral response. Successful confrontation with this challenge requires cooperation among all responsible agencies and utilization of national and international capacities.