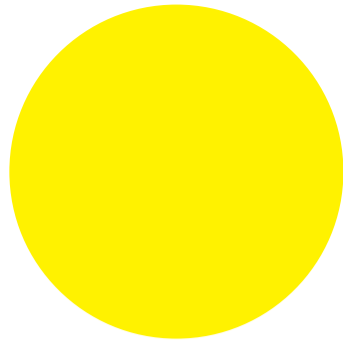


Pezeshkian lauds Lebanese unity as army chief assumes presidency

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President Masoud Pezeshkian (2nd R) visits a local villager in his home during a trip to the southeastern Sistan and Baluchestan Province on January 10, 2025. president.ir

Lebanon's Aoun expected to engage with domestic parties, foreign actors

PERSPECTIVE

International Desk

Lebanon's parliament finally elected a new president on Thursday, choosing Army chief Joseph Aoun as the country's leader for a six-year term, ending more than two years of presidential vacuum. Aoun, a 61-year-old Maronite Christian, is the fourth military commander to assume presidency in decades, following Emile Lahoud (1998-2007), Michel Suleiman (2008-2014), and Michel Aoun (2016-2022). He is known for his independent and non-political stance, which led to a consensus among various political and religious groups and parties in his favor. This consensus emerged af-

ter none of the candidates from other parties could garner majority support, leading to an agreement on a non-partisan, independent candidate. General Aoun has maintained close ties with Western countries, particularly France and the United States. He is the first Lebanese president since 1989 not to be affiliated with the Hezbollah-led camp, as the previous three presidents were. The two main Shia parties in Lebanon, Hezbollah and Amal, initially opposed Aoun's election, advocating for their own candidates. However, after the main candidates from both sides withdrew, Hezbollah and Amal also conceded, allowing for Aoun's election.

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