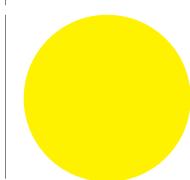
Pezeshkian visits **'Pioneers** of Progress' exhibition





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VP urges leveraging cultural dominance for national prosperity

Time to 'strike while the iron is hot' for Iran's good



By Mostafa Shirmohammadi Editor-in-chief

Positive vibes are coming out of the United States, suggesting that President Donald Trump is willing to have it out with Iran and, in particular, seeks to address the nuclear saga through diplomacy.

In a recent interview with Fox News, Trump implicitly opposed a possible Israeli attack on Iran's nuclear facilities, indicating that he may not support even a surgical strike, let alone an all-out war. This is a blow to Israel's belligerent Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The hawkish PM probably never might have thought that Trump, who once advocated striking Iran's nuclear sites during his electoral campaign, would backtrack and now pursues a diplomatic solution through negotiation and agree-

It appears that a Republican like Trump is more adept at reining in the warmongers in Israel and within the US

Trump's remarks imply that he favors a deal with Iran over pressure, which itself is a sign that he has learned from his first term and become more pragmatic. He has realized that his so-called "maximum pressure" campaign on Iran's economy did not yield the desired outcome of bringing Iran to the negotiating table, nor did it slow down its nuclear advancements.

In fact, what Iranian officials have reiterated for years that the nation will not buckle under pressure has proven true to the septuagenarian businessman-turned-politician.

I have always maintained that a major deal between Iran and the US needs to have a government in Iran capable of conducting fruitful talks and a Republican administration in the US, since it would be more likely to result in a mutually satisfactory agreement that stands the test of time.

Now a Republican administration, led by Trump, is at the helm in the US, the very person who walked out of the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA, almost seven years ago and unleashed the "toughest ever sanctions" on Iran.

In Iran, Masoud Pezeshkian, a reformist president leading a moderate government, has expressed a desire to sit down for talks with the West to get the sanctions on Iran's economy lifted. Pezeshkian's government understands Iran's need for unfettered access to global engagement to boost its economy and attract much needed investments to maintain and develop its infrastructure.

Iran is said to be the world's "most untapped" country after years of sanctions - a ripe investment destination.

And Trump has described Iran as a country that has "great potential," which could indicate that he sees Iran a country with abundant investment opportunities and probably wants American companies to step into

the Iranian market. All countries, be it the world's second-largest economy China, are in need of foreign investment.





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