

12 months of effort, 12 days of defense

Pezeshkian; voice of the voiceless

ANALYSIS

A year has rolled by since the incumbent Iranian government took office; After winning the people's vote, Masoud Pezeshkian stepped up from the parliament to the presidency. He put together a government under the banner of "national unity," one that brought on board all political factions. Even in appointing governors, Pezeshkian's administration called in capable and efficient figures from various groups, regardless of whom they voted for in elections. He lined up the governors and gave this second cabinet the necessary authority to act as the provincial presidents "for Iran," spearheading significant and valuable initiatives. Over the past 12 months, a special guest showed up regularly in most governors' meetings; Pezeshkian would head out from his office to Fatemi Square and the Ministry of Interior building, where he spoke about a road map that must be drawn up and put into play jointly with experts and specialists for Iran's development and progress.

His government also broke new ground with several "firsts". For the first time, a woman was handed over the Iranian government's spokesperson role. The president, who repeatedly promised to tap into the capacities of elites and ethnic groups, appointed for the first time an Arab governor for the Khuzestan Province, effectively breaking the spell. These measures all served one purpose. Pezeshkian had pinned two wings and a motto on his administration: "justice" and "fairness" as the right and left wings, respectively, and "National unity" as the government's slogan. Accordingly, he stuck to this approach and motto in all his moves and appointments. Earlier, Fatemeh Mohajerani, the government spokesperson, stated in an interview that the realization of justice and fairness is only within reach through national unity. She identified the full implementation of the Seventh Development Plan as the government's primary goal and stressed the necessity of justice in sectors like education and health, seen as the infrastructure for development. So, what key actions has Pezeshkian's government carried out over the past year? The Government Week offered an opportunity to lay out the achievements and plans of the executive branch for balanced development across the country, prioritizing underprivileged and deprived areas, along with implementing



justice, eradicating discrimination and injustice with transparency and honesty.

National unity

At the very start, Pezeshkian, campaigning with the "national unity" slogan, managed to win over parliament to fully endorse all proposed cabinet members. Although midway, Abdolnasser Hemmati, minister of Economy, got off the government train following impeachment by parliamentarians, citing the need to solve the economic crisis and lower the foreign currency exchange rates, the unity remained intact. Since then, the chief executive has consistently kept the government on track toward unity.

Over the last year, regular sessions between heads of branches have been held at the presidential compound. Under this banner of unity and cooperation, other agencies and bodies also came on board. On February 4 last year, a meeting was called together to tackle people's issues, attended by heads and deputies of the three branches.

Though Pezeshkian, by his own admission, does not belong to any political party, once he became the president, he sat down to discuss matters with all political parties and groups — from the conservative parties as government critics to the moderate and reformist parties and the central council of the

House of Parties. He took on board their views and concerns. To keep things rolling more efficiently, the president even appointed a political parties and associations advisor, ensuring plans were implemented with tenacity and ideas didn't gather dust in archives. Consequently, Pezeshkian's unity approach over the past year has been greeted warmly by politicians.

Gov't, Parliament converge for unity

In any case, political experts from all three camps — conservative, reformist, and moderate — agree that the government and Pezeshkian himself have been moving positively toward national unity. This means the president has not only remembered his slogan but has vigorously pursued it. He does not see unity as one-sided; He believes "Iran is for all Iranians," and thus it is essential to lend an ear to all who care about the country. Over the year, Pezeshkian's regular meetings with provincial assemblies of lawmakers have become one of the most important symbols of government-Parliament interaction; A chance that not only serves as a platform for airing constituency concerns but also can pave the way for synergy between branches to solve people's issues.

Masoud Pezeshkian, with five parlia-

mentary terms under his belt and essentially a "child of the parliament," has shown from the start that this relationship is a strategic priority. With careful planning of provincial sessions and direct presence in parliament, he has fostered a constructive level of working relations with representatives. His regular consultative meetings with these provincial parliamentary assemblies stand as a primary channel for direct interaction between the executive and legislative branches.

These sessions open the door for issues and demands of constituencies to be conveyed directly by parliamentarians to the highest executive office in the country. Within this framework, the president has shown special attention to the continuity and effectiveness of this connection. Not only has he kept meetings with provincial assemblies in his regular schedule, but by attending multiple parliamentary sessions, he sent a clear message about the importance of unity and constructive cooperation between government and parliament to the lawmakers.

Gov't stands alongside people

During election campaigns, Pezeshkian spoke candidly with the people, showed up among them, and heard their concerns and demands for the future president. Even after securing their votes, nothing about him changed; He remains the same Pezeshkian. He continues to show up alongside the people and has taken the caravan of unity from Tehran to the provinces to prove that centralized, headquarters-based management is not his style. Field supervision has become one of the fixed parts of his work, regularly checking in on most governmental bodies and ministries.

Pezeshkian does not bow down to ceremonial protocols but remains true to the Nahj al-Balagha teachings of Imam Ali (PBUH). His red line is flattery and excessive praise, which he cautions his close aides and colleagues against. On July 31, in an unannounced trip, he dropped by Zanjan Province, and at a session on the school-building movement and educational justice, he sincerely gave a heads-up to his longtime friend Mohammad Jafar Qaempanah, the executive deputy to the president, urging him to keep talking about the issues instead of praising him. When he went to Ilam Province and listened to a young woman's account of problems with school construction, he could not hold back his tears; His eyes filled with moisture as he said, "If the people step up and get involved, they can do things the government [managers and officials] cannot." Pezeshkian's tearful words carry a message: He is one of the people. He feels their pain deeply and strives, far from slogans, to iron out their problems and challenges.

Truly, over the past 12 months, Pezeshkian's down-to-earth, no-frills presence among the people during provincial tours has left behind memorable snapshots. During the president's second provincial trip to Sistan and Baluchestan Province, captivating footage circulated widely online; His conversation with an elderly woman in the rural village of Kolookhi, speaking in the Zaboli dialect, caught on rapidly across social media, earning praise from even fair-minded critics of the government for the leader's humble demeanor. Among these critics is Ali Jafari, who opposes the government. After witnessing the president's informal and heartfelt meeting with the village elder, he took to his personal page to commend Pezeshkian's actions, writing: "If I were to pinpoint one common thread among martyr Raeisi, Dr. Pezeshkian, Dr. Qalibaf, and Dr. Jalili, it



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian
● SHARGH



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Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (L) listens to two elderly women in the rural village of Kolookhi during his second provincial trip to the southeastern Sistan and Baluchestan Province on January 10, 2025.

● ISNA

