

points, and it was evident that his replies were rooted in the country's priorities and the matters that truly resonate with the public.

Could you highlight the most important issues raised during that meeting?

The president addressed the chronic problems the country is currently facing — issues like shortages in energy and water supplies. When a matter is completely transparent and exposed in society, a notable feature of Mr. Pezeshkian is that he neither denies nor hides it. Perhaps one reason some of our problems have piled up unsolved is because, at times, certain people took the approach of denial, insisting: “There’s nothing to worry about!” But today, the president takes a straightforward, honest approach, openly acknowledging these issues and presenting solutions. He also listens to criticism that comes with constructive suggestions and follows through on corrections as necessary. As someone who has always maintained a critical perspective, I believe this approach sets us on track toward problem-solving. That day, the president candidly discussed the various challenges with the assembled media heads and requested their support. He urged journalists to help, offer proposals, and share these matters openly and honestly with the public. The outcome of the session was a real sense of sympathy among participants of all views, acknowledging that the president is sincerely raising these issues and seeking help from the media.

As you pointed out, the president, not only in this meeting but also on other occasions, reached out to the media for solutions and to help move forward with various issues. In your view, how can the media pitch in to assist the government? For instance, we are currently facing a crisis of shortages; Water and electricity problems exist in Tehran and several other provinces. How can the media lay out these issues for the public, and what role can it play in alleviating these challenges?

I always believe that the media must strike a balance between two points. While setting out the problems and crises — which people have a right to know because an informed public will, when



A woman holds an edition of Iran Newspaper featuring portraits of top negotiators, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (R) and Steve Witkoff, White House special envoy, in Tehran, Iran, on April 9, 2025. ● MORTEZA NIKOUBAZI/NURPHOTO

needed, step up to help — the media also walks a fine line where overemphasizing issues can tip over into despair and a dead-end narrative. There’s a big difference between saying “these problems exist and nothing can be done” and breaking down the issues step by step for the public, explaining where we currently stand, what the challenges and characteristics are, then bringing in the perspectives and solutions of experts and officials who are responsible for tackling these problems and opening up the conversation with the people. The media is the platform for dialogue, something that sometimes gets lost in translation in our society. We even need to brush up on talking to ourselves — and the media is exactly the space where this begins to take shape. I believe that major influential media outlets, shaped

by the past year and the spirit of unity, can pull off this achievement. Yesterday’s session with the president was one such example. These are signs of progress in the media sector, which I think could lead to another positive breakthrough. Another important point I want to stress concerns the president’s remarks on negotiations during that day’s meeting, followed by interpretations of his remarks circulating in the media and on-line. I must clarify that what guarantees the national interests and preserves the country’s territorial integrity is sacred. That’s the thing that gives weight to our words, speech, and actions. But neither negotiation in itself is sacred, nor is war for the purpose of defense sacred. Each carries value only according to its specific context and realities. Mr. Pezeshkian, who said in front of me-

dia managers that “we must enter this space (negotiation),” is the same person who showed that during the imposed 12-day war, he stood firm in the heart of the battlefield, managing the country with courage, zeal, and patriotism. So, if that same man says negotiation is a solution one day, and we also saw him stand his ground in defense during war, frequently emphasizing that what he does is fully in line with the Leader of Iran’s Islamic Revolution, then we should give credit to this president and let him get on with his work with the least distraction and speculation. Of course, Dr. Pezeshkian has demonstrated that he welcomes criticism — even when it sometimes lands in the territory of sarcasm or accusations — because he feels that all voices need to be heard and the best decisions made.

Hence, I want to say that sometimes we need to stand shoulder to shoulder in defense of the homeland and the people, and at other times, we need to step into negotiation. All this is to safeguard national interests in the best possible way so that no one can breach the country’s territorial integrity. Therefore, I believe the president’s important remarks on negotiation were clear, honest, and straightforward within this framework. We should not put on a pedestal things that are not sacred by nature or bicker over them; If conflict and war are necessary, they belong elsewhere. Today, if the president says, in coordination with the Leader, “We want to negotiate,” let us trust this president.

The interview first appeared in Persian on IRNA.

# Pezeshkian does not deny crises

By Hossein Kanani Moghadam  
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## OPINION

The truth is that our elites have a comprehensive awareness of the Iranian society's realities in all their dimensions. For example, in the joint meeting of party secretaries with the president, much harsher topics were laid out than in the media managers' session. The gathering of party secretaries included reformists and conservatives, naturally a place for a clash of views; Yet despite the tougher remarks, it was free of controversy. Regarding positive and negative reactions to the media meeting, we must bear in mind that the Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution has consistently advised officials not to send out signals of weakness. On the other hand, the Leader's firm advice is to maintain fair criticism and avoid politicization. Therefore, it is wrong that some, due to political rivalry or attempts to gain prominence, go after the president with attacks. We must not play ball on the enemy's turf. Pezeshkian has repeatedly shown that he graciously accepts

fair and benevolent criticism. Even in his discussions with elites, tough words are spoken, but the president listens to opposing views with an open demeanor. Accordingly, it is wrong to turn a statement or comment we believe should not be publicized into a tool for settling scores. What Pezeshkian stated in the media managers' session were realities that must be addressed among elites and officials in order to find a solution. Because in facing any crisis, three approaches are possible: slipping from one crisis into another, finding a solution, or outright denial of the crisis. Based on what I know of Pezeshkian, I am confident he is not one to deny or sweep problems under the rug, nor is he aiming just to ride out the crisis. Pezeshkian seeks to tackle the crisis and find answers. That is why those remarks needed to be brought to the table among elites. We must not make the proper approach to dealing with problems an issue for the country and its people. One of the sweet fruits of the recent war was unity and cohesion, which must under no circumstances be undermined.

The article first appeared in Persian on IRNA.



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (3rd-R) listens to the secretaries of political parties during a meeting in Tehran, Iran, on November 25, 2024. ● president.ir