



Pezeshkian calls for sweeping educational overhaul to meet modern needs

Social Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Saturday urged a fundamental re-design of the country's schools, saying the education system must evolve into a "living organism" that blends teaching with sports, culture, and technology. Speaking at a government session on education reform, Pezeshkian pressed for a model that goes beyond "four or five classrooms" to serve the demands of a young and growing population, president.ir reported. He said schools should provide libraries, sports facilities, teamwork resources, and digital tools to keep pace with global standards. "The education system must nurture a capable generation," he said. "Our children deserve the best quality education so they can become committed profes-

sionals in their homeland." Pezeshkian warned that past decisions were often based on "unfounded" ideas and not rooted in the realities of a rapidly changing world. He called for planning that reflects both global benchmarks and Iran's social and economic conditions. That, he said, requires close coordination between ministries, local education officials, and urban planners. The president emphasized the need to upgrade electronic infrastructure, including online learning platforms, smart boards, and digital content. He singled out the state-run "SHAD" educational network, saying it must be strengthened to prevent students from falling behind. With 16 million pupils nationwide, Pezeshkian said budgets should cover teacher training, digital equipment, and vocational education while taking into



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (c) addresses a government session on education reform in Tehran, on September 13, 2025.
● president.ir

account the financial limits of families. He argued that vocational schools and technical training must be better aligned with the labor market to prevent a glut of graduates in oversaturated fields like law and engineering. "Education should prepare students to work, to cooperate, and to innovate," he said, stressing that hands-on skills and teamwork are just as vital as classroom instruction. Pezeshkian also urged education officials to weave schooling into urban development, insisting that every new city plan should designate space for schools. Local directors of education and school



construction, he added, must "draw up joint strategies" instead of working in isolation. He said that Iran's future depended on

investing in human capital. "If we stop, we will fall behind," he said. "We must show the right path and build a system that our children will not want to leave."

Minister: Iran-Russia ties lay groundwork for multipolar world



Iran's Culture and Islamic Guidance Minister Abbas Salehi (L) speaks at St. Petersburg State University, Russia, on September 13, 2025.
● IRNA

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Culture and Islamic Guidance Minister Abbas Salehi told professors and students at St. Petersburg State University on Saturday that cooperation between Tehran, Moscow and other like-minded states is helping shape what he called a "genuinely multipolar world." Speaking during an academic forum, Salehi argued that cultural and educational

exchange is as vital as political and military alignment in building a new balance of power. He described St. Petersburg, with its 301-year-old university, as "a city of knowledge and culture," and urged closer collaboration between Russian and Iranian institutions, IRNA reported. Salehi's trip to Russia came at the invitation of Culture Minister Olga Lyubimova for the XI St. Petersburg International Unit-

ed Cultures Forum. Since arriving on Sept. 10, he has met Russian officials, toured the State Hermitage Museum, addressed a conference of Orientalists, and joined prayers at the city's historic Grand Mosque. His remarks at St. Petersburg University underscored how cultural diplomacy underpins Iran's outreach to Russia at a time when both countries face Western sanctions. "The foundation of a multipolar world is cultural," he told the gathering. "It means understanding that values and ideas worth learning are not confined to one land, even if that land sees itself as superior." He warned that a unipolar order had emerged from "a narrow economic theory," sidelining the traditions of nations and pressing others into conformity. By contrast, he said, diversity in culture fosters balance. Salehi reminded his audience that Iran and Russia have been more than neighbors. "For centuries, we have been in conversation," he said, noting that formal diplomatic relations stretch back 500 years, while literary and artistic exchanges predate them. He cited the popularity of Russian classics in Iran, pointing out that "Tolstoy's works

were among the bestsellers" at this year's Tehran International Book Fair, one of the Middle East's largest cultural events. He stressed that new generations in both countries should not be cut off from their shared heritage. "Western media are shaping new tastes and promoting other cultures," he said. "The risk is that young people in Iran and Russia may grow up without knowing their own great writers and artists." Salehi said the closeness between the two nations was not simply the product of sanctions or geopolitics. "We have been near each other always," he told students, adding that Persian printing presses once operated in St. Petersburg and helped circulate newspapers back in Tehran. Russia's early adoption of modern technology, he noted, influenced Iran's cultural modernization. Digital media, he said, now opens another door. "We no longer need the BBC or CNN to show us each other," he remarked. "Iranian and Russian bloggers and citizen journalists can offer a real picture." He also praised Russian scholarship in Iranian studies, highlighting "over 10,000 works" produced by leading Orientalists in

the past two centuries. Salehi proposed practical steps to strengthen ties, including new chairs in Persian and Russian studies at universities, joint research programs in anthropology and arts, and direct translations of modern literature. He also called for more exchanges in cinema, music and theater. "Every day in Iran at least one Russian play is staged," he said, adding that Russian symphonies by Tchaikovsky remain staples for Iranian audiences. Iranian poetry has also inspired generations of Russian writers, he reminded his hosts. "Pushkin and Tolstoy drew from Persian literature," he said. "And Russian giants like Dostoevsky and Chekhov shaped our own intellectual life." Salehi described this as "mutual inspiration" and proof that the two nations share "a love of beauty, grandeur and art." The minister concluded with a warning against letting relations rest only on politics or trade. "Those bonds are fragile," he said. "When ties are rooted in culture and in people's hearts, economic and political relations become deeper and more enduring."

Iran pavilion named best at Guangzhou tourism fair

Arts & Culture Desk

The Iran pavilion was named the best stand at the China International Tourism Industry Expo (CITIE) in Guangzhou on Saturday, organizers said, after drawing crowds with historical motifs, traditional designs and cultural performances. The award marked Iran's first showing at CITIE, now in its 17th year, and underscored Tehran's efforts to step up its cultural footprint in China's fast-growing tourism market. More than 40 countries and regions are taking part in this year's three-day event (September 12-14) in southern Chin, IRNA reported. CITIE's deputy director handed the plaque to Mohammad Hos-

sein Soufi, head of the Iranian delegation and managing director of the Touring and Automobile Club of Iran. Soufi called the recognition a tribute to his team's focus on "aesthetics, cultural themes and direct interaction" with visitors. "We are pleased that our presence boosted the number of people coming to the expo," he said. "This event was a valuable opportunity to introduce Iran." The pavilion featured eight Iranian travel companies, a handicraft artisan, traditional clothing displays and Iranology workshops. Its vibrant design helped turn it into one of the most visited stands, according to organizers. Soufi said Iranian representatives also floated proposals for



future editions, including separating business talks from performances to give professional agencies more room to engage. The suggestions were welcomed by the Chinese hosts, he added. Local and national Chinese media highlighted Iran's participation, coverage that Soufi said reinforced his country's standing in international tourism exhibitions and opened the door to deeper exchanges with China.

Persian arts, handicrafts on display at Greek Thessaloniki Int'l Fair

Arts & Culture Desk

The 89th Thessaloniki International Fair, which opened on September 6 and runs through September 14, is featuring a special exhibition of Iranian art and handicrafts, drawing attention from visitors and cultural enthusiasts. The showcase, organized by Iran Embassy in Greece in partnership with its cultural center and the private company Almas Neshan, highlights the country's centuries-old artistic traditions, IRNA reported. The Iranian pavilion, located in Hall 16, booth A02, presented what organizers called a "rich heritage" of art and authenticity. Visitors were drawn to intricate ceramics, detailed wood carvings, miniatures and other handicrafts that, according to the embassy, show the

country's centuries-old artistic traditions. The warm reception from local and international guests underscored the enduring appeal of Iranian craftsmanship on the global stage. Iran's cultural center used the event to broaden exchanges with Greek institutions. Meetings with professors, researchers and students from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and Ionian University were described as a "valuable platform" for strengthening academic and cultural cooperation. Iran's participation, according to the organizers, aimed not only to promote its art but also to serve as a bridge for wider people-to-people ties. "Direct exchanges and constructive talks," the cultural center said, could pave the way for deeper cooperation between the two countries. The Thessaloniki International Fair,



regarded as Greece's most prestigious trade exhibition and a major commercial event in Southeast Europe, is held annually with the support of HELEX-PO, the country's national exhibition body. This year's fair focuses on trade, innovation and foreign investment, providing companies from around the world with opportunities to introduce products, expand exports and forge new partnerships.