

Pezeshkian urges skills-based learning during visit to smart school

Social Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian visited a smart girls' high school in Shahriar County, west of Tehran, on Monday, highlighting the need to expand skills-based education in schools.

The institution has been designed around the "fourth-generation education" model, which emphasizes modern teaching methods and technology-driven learning. During the visit, Pezeshkian held direct discussions with teachers and students and stressed that, in addition to text-book-based instruction, schools must provide the necessary environment to develop students' individual and group skills, the president's official website reported. He stressed the need to establish skills-development workshops and expand the use of visual content to enable teachers and students to build deeper and more effective connections with educational content.

"Through skills development and the expansion of visual content-based learning,

we can present the practical applications of academic content to students," he said. He also underlined the importance of creating challenges and encouraging problem-solving in educational settings, adding that such approaches would help students practice teamwork, interaction, resilience, and creative thinking.

Pezeshkian said the ability to gather information, process data, and turn it into knowledge and practical products is another key requirement of fourth-generation education.

"Our goal is not to train one-dimensional students. They should form scientific and research groups and develop a sense of responsibility toward their surroundings and their country," he said.

During the visit, vice president for science and technology, Hossein Afshin, also outlined the features of the fourth-generation education model, saying it transfers valuable skills and patterns to students.

"In this approach, we move beyond rote memorization and focus on fostering students' creativity. The student becomes the

main axis of learning, while the teacher plays a facilitative role," he said.

He added that in fourth-generation education, schools and teachers aim to develop students' decision-making skills so they can identify their own educational paths in line with their talents and goals.

The fourth-generation education model moves beyond the simple transmission of knowledge and focuses on problem-solving, creativity, interactive learning, broad access to global resources, and personalized learning.

Facilities at the mentioned school, which serves as a pilot for this model, include a cognitive learning hall, a play terrace, a virtual space and advanced prototyping workshop, a science laboratory, a study hall, a content production studio, an IT and planning center, an artificial intelligence laboratory, an animation workshop, and a creativity and technology lab.

Advanced educational tools such as 3D printers, optical kits, augmented reality technology, and virtual reality headsets have also been introduced to create new



President Masoud Pezeshkian (R) visits a smart girls' high school in Shahriar County, west of Tehran, on February 16, 2026.

president.ir

learning environments for students and support the facilitative role of teachers. During the visit, a 3D-printed proto-

type bust of Pezeshkian, which was programmed, designed, and produced by students, was presented to the president.

4,000-year-old Elamite mounds unearthed in western Iran

Art & Culture Desk

Iranian cultural heritage officials have announced the discovery of four ancient mounds dating back around 4,000 years to the Middle Elamite period in the western province of Kermanshah, in what experts say could reshape the historical understanding of the region.

Saeed Boroushan, head of the Cultural Heritage Department in Sahneh county, said the sites mark the first confirmed evidence of the Middle Elamite period in the province and could represent a major historical breakthrough. He told ISNA that archaeological surveys of Kermanshah's ancient mounds began in 2003 under the supervision of researchers including Yaghoub Mohammadi Far and Abbas Motarjem. One of the surveyed sites was the Chogha Sabz mound in Sahneh.

About two years ago, a pottery fragment found in



IRNA

the area drew attention because it differed from previously discovered ceramics. A renewed survey of the Chogha Sabz mound later confirmed that the site was ancient and dated to the Middle Elamite period, roughly between 1500 and 1100 BC. "This was the first time a historical artifact from the Middle Elamite period had been discovered in Kermanshah, which could mark a transformation in the province's historical narrative," Boroushan said. Further investigations in

the surrounding area led to the identification of three additional mounds which yielded pottery evidence similar to that found at Chogha Sabz.

He noted that Elamite rulers were generally based in regions such as Susa and Anshan, leaving behind major monuments including the Chogha Zanbil. Until now, however, no clear archaeological evidence of their presence had been found in Kermanshah.

"These ancient mounds may represent an extension of the Kalmakareh

route, which also contains evidence of Elamite activity," he said.

The Elamite civilization emerged in southwestern parts of the Iranian plateau toward the end of the third millennium BC and later became geographically centered around Susa during the Achaemenid period. One of its most significant and well-preserved monuments is the Chogha Zanbil ziggurat near Susa in modern-day Khuzestan province.

Yet, some researchers who have observed this type of pottery during superficial visits to these same sites believe that these artifacts may not be Elamite, but rather date back to the Kassite period.

Morteza Geravand, an archaeologist, told IRNA that determining whether they belong to the Elamites or the Kassites definitively requires more extensive studies and scientific, stratigraphic archaeological excavations.

National tourism innovation award ceremony held in Chabahar

Social Desk

The "Iran National Tourism Award" with a focus on technology and innovation was held as part of the first Creative and Cultural Industries Festival in the Chabahar Free Zone, located in the country's southeasternmost region.

The national event, organized under the secretariat of the Iranian Cultural and Creative Industries Park, began on Saturday and concluded with a closing ceremony on Monday.

Focused on networking, technological collaboration, and strengthening the creative economy, the event served as a platform to promote national synergy in innovative tourism. Alongside the exhibition, specialized workshops were held on topics such as creative economy, cultural entrepreneurship, social dimensions of tourism, and new business models. The sessions drew wide participation and provided a forum for refining ideas, critically assessing projects, and analyzing emerging trends in the tourism sector.

Hassan Rahaei, secretary of the award ceremony, said the initiative was not merely a competition but a framework to identify, evaluate, and guide Iran's tourism innovation ecosystem. He noted that the sector now requires greater cohesion, standardization, and targeted support.

He added that the award's call for submissions, aimed at identifying genuine, technology-driven, and impactful innova-



tions in tourism, received strong nationwide interest. More than 120 entities—including startups, technology firms, and tourism operators—registered for the event.

Following an initial screening process, 48 participants advanced to the final judging stage, where they are set to be assessed based on a structured evaluation model. Rahaei said the results provide a realistic picture of innovation in Iran's tourism sector, highlighting both standout examples and existing defects.

He described one of the award's key achievements as drawing a clear distinction between "ideas" and "effective implementation."

He also stressed that the initiative could serve as a policy tool beyond the competition itself. The data and insights generated during the evaluation process, he said, could inform future decisions on supporting tourism technology companies, expanding digital infrastructure in destinations, strengthening cultural industries linked to tourism, and designing capacity-building programs.

Persian calligraphy on display at Kazakh University

Arts & Culture Desk

An exhibition and workshop on Persian calligraphy was held at the Iran Room of L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University in Kazakhstan, organized by the Iranian Cultural Center to promote cultural and artistic exchange.

In the first part of the program, a collection of Persian calligraphy works was displayed. The exhibition introduced participants to the aesthetic richness of Persian calligraphy while highlighting its deep connections with literature,

poetry, and Islamic thought.

Visitors toured the exhibition and raised questions about writing techniques, as well as the tools and materials used in traditional Persian calligraphy. The event continued with a practical workshop, where participants were guided step by step through the basic principles of Persian calligraphy. The session covered proper pen handling, the structure of letters, word composition, and proportional balance in script. Demonstrations were carried out on boards and paper, allowing attendees

to observe the techniques in practice. Several students took part in hands-on exercises, practicing the writing of simple Persian letters and words under direct supervision and guidance.

During the exhibition and workshop, organizers also presented an overview of the historical development of Persian calligraphy, its role in Iranian-Islamic civilization, and the legacy of prominent calligraphers in Iran's artistic heritage. Alongside the training session, a meeting was held between the acting head of the Iranian Cultural Center and the

dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences. The two sides discussed prospects for bilateral cooperation, exploring practical initiatives such as joint lectures, art exhibitions, support for students of Oriental studies, and academic exchanges. Iranian calligraphy master Hadi Ghaseemi delivered a lecture at the event and performed live demonstrations, showcasing various calligraphic styles. As a memento, he also created and presented personalized handwritten calligraphy pieces of each participant's name on traditional paper.



IRNA