

Pezeshkian promotes preventive healthcare, empowerment of vulnerable children



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks during a visit to eastern Tehran's health centers on June 1, 2026. president.ir

Social Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian called for a sweeping shift in Iran's health governance model during a visit to eastern Tehran's health centers on Monday, urging authorities to move beyond treatment-centered policies and build a system rooted in prevention,

mental well-being, and community resilience.

Speaking during a review of the Family Physician Program and the referral system, and neighborhood-based health initiatives, Pezeshkian said the health network should evolve into a platform that coordinates medical, social, and preventive services, president.ir re-

ported. "Health is not limited to physical well-being," he said. "The health network must regard mental health, social health, and the prevention of social harms as inseparable parts of its mission."

Pezeshkian stressed that successful implementation of the Family Physician Program requires a clear assessment of existing infrastructure, service capacity, population coverage, and public access to care. Such data, he said, should guide resource allocation and future expansion plans.

He also called for strengthening primary healthcare services to reduce unnecessary referrals and improve efficiency across the healthcare system.

The president linked social factors such as poverty, unemployment, social isolation, and marginalization to mental health challenges, emphasizing the need for early intervention and community-based support.

He said local institutions, including mosques and community leaders, could help improve health literacy, strengthen social cohesion, and identify local

needs.

"Religious and cultural assets can play an important role in promoting mental well-being, reducing social harms, and increasing social resilience," he said. Pezeshkian also urged greater public participation in health initiatives, highlighting the contribution of charitable organizations and community partnerships to the development of the healthcare sector.

Empowering children beyond care

Pezeshkian also visited Roshnaye Omid Foundation, a welfare-supervised non-profit center that supports orphaned and vulnerable girls aged 9 to 18, where he stressed the need to move from basic assistance toward long-term empowerment.

"The most important responsibility before us is to ensure these children can build independent, successful, and hopeful futures through education, skills, and sustained support," he said. Touring educational and vocational training facilities, including sewing and technical workshops, the president

described empowerment and skills development as central pillars of social justice and equal opportunity.

He emphasized the importance of preparing young people for life after leaving care centers, calling for mechanisms that help them enter the labor market, continue their education, and integrate into society with confidence after reaching adulthood.

"Real support is achieved when individuals can rely on their abilities and skills," Pezeshkian said. "They should become productive and capable citizens rather than remain dependent on assistance."

He also called on government agencies and public institutions to purchase goods produced in vocational workshops at support centers, saying such measures would boost self-confidence, strengthen job skills, and help pave the way toward economic independence. Pezeshkian further urged closer cooperation among government bodies, charities, and civil society organizations to expand educational, vocational, and employment opportunities for vulnerable children and adolescents.

Private-sector tourism investment in West Azarbaijan tops \$114m

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's West Azarbaijan Province is rolling out more than 50 private-sector tourism projects worth over 200 trillion rials (about \$114mn) across the northwestern Iranian province, a senior cultural heritage official said on Monday in Urmia.

The investment drive underscores the province's growing appeal as a tourism destination and highlights efforts to channel private capital into hospitality infrastructure and heritage-based development, IRNA reported.

"Such a volume of projects reflects West Azarbaijan's substantial capacity for tourism expansion and investment attraction," said Morteza Safari, director-general of the province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts

Department.

Safari said authorities had launched studies on the Khan Takhti-Sirv-Silvana-Oshnavieh tourism corridor to map its historical and natural assets and prepare the ground for future investment. The initiative aims to turn the route into a new tourism hub in the mountainous border province.

He also pointed to progress on the Shams project in Khoy, which began in 2018. After receiving only 140 billion rials (\$80,000) during its first seven years, funding accelerated in recent years. The project secured 300 billion rials (\$171,000) in 2024 and a further 320 billion rials (\$183,000) last year, lifting physical completion to 54%.

An additional 300 billion rials (\$171,000) would help

speed up construction and expand work shifts, Safari said.

The province is also pressing ahead with a series of museum and heritage projects, including the expansion of the Urmia Archaeological Museum, the Chaldoran War Site Museum and new galleries at the Shams Tabrizi memorial complex in Khoy.

West Azarbaijan's museums currently house 34,700 artefacts, including 16,000 historical and cultural objects. Around 14,000 of those items have been registered in the national heritage database. Museum attendance reached 160,000 visitors last year, marking a 33% increase from a year earlier despite closures and operational restrictions, according to provincial data.

Iranian documentary on embroidery honored at US festival

Arts & Culture Desk

An Iranian documentary spotlighting the centuries-old art of Pateh embroidery won an honorable mention for Best Narration at the 23rd Archaeology Channel International Film Festival, held in Eugene, Oregon, from May 13 to 17.

Directed by Azam Ramezani and produced by the Yazd center of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), 'Pateh, An Intangible Heritage' explores the history, identity and cultural significance of Pateh, one of Iran's most distinguished traditional handicrafts, ILNA reported.

The film traces the roots of the intricate needlework tradition across central and south-east-



ern Iran, portraying its artistic techniques, cultural functions and enduring place in Iranian society. Through interviews with artisans, researchers and handicrafts specialists, it sheds light on the craftsmanship behind the embroidery while highlighting its role in preserving cultural identity. The Archaeology Channel International Film Festival

is regarded as one of North America's leading events dedicated to archaeology, cultural heritage and indigenous traditions. The annual gathering brings together filmmakers, scholars and heritage enthusiasts from around the world to showcase outstanding works focused on ancient cultures and humanity's shared heritage.

Iran seeks to broaden visual arts reach through provincial galleries

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance has placed the expansion of provincial art galleries high on its cultural agenda, officials said at a meeting with provincial arts and cinema deputies in Tehran on June 1.

Speaking at the gathering held at the Iran Mall Museum Gallery, Director General of the Visual Arts Office Aydin Mehdizadeh, said strengthening galleries across the country would serve as a key driver for the development of Iran's visual arts sector. Mehdizadeh identified support for provincial galleries, the reinforcement of visual arts associations and the recognition of specialized visual arts experts in the provinces as the ministry's main priorities.



He said provincial cultural departments play a central role in shaping and directing artistic activities nationwide.

He also underscored the ministry's policy of devolving authority to the provinces, noting that Culture Minister Abbas Salehi and senior arts officials support transferring more responsibilities, including gallery-related licensing and administration, to local authorities. "The development of visual

arts passes through the development of galleries," Mehdizadeh said, urging provinces to strengthen exhibition spaces and accelerate the completion of contemporary art museum projects where they exist.

The official further called for stronger professional structures for artists and cultural practitioners in the provinces, saying local visual arts associations should take a greater role in talent development, networking and the delivery of artistic projects.

He also highlighted the need to formally establish visual arts specialist positions in provinces that currently lack dedicated experts, arguing that stronger institutional capacity would help ensure more coherent and effective cultural programming.

Iran dam inflows surge 74%, running 11% above decade average

Social Desk

Water inflows into Iran's dams soared 74% year on year to 40.21 billion cubic meters by May 30 and stood 11% above the 10-year average, according to data released by Iran Water Resources Management Company, lifting reservoir occupancy to 67% and strengthening the country's water reserves ahead of the summer season. The latest figures show a marked improvement in Iran's

water resources, with stronger inflows boosting storage levels across the country's dam network.

The volume of water stored in reservoirs climbed 31% from a year earlier to 35.01 billion cubic meters. Storage levels also exceeded the long-term average by 8%, highlighting a firmer position for strategic water reserves.

The combination of rising inflows and higher storage has reinforced water security and

improved the overall balance of the country's reservoir system.

Meanwhile, total dam outflows reached 23.97 billion cubic meters during the current water year which began September 23. While releases increased 14% compared with the same period last year, they remained 10% below the 10-year average, supporting efforts to maintain strategic reserves while meeting water and energy demand.