

President calls 'public trust, support' nation's main asset

Social Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian pledged to strengthen public trust and social unity during meetings with senior Shia clerics in the holy city of Qom on June 29, saying his administration remained committed to improving people's well-being, expanding equitable access to public services and preserving public confidence as "the country's greatest social capital." Meeting Grand Ayatollah Javad Alavi Boroujerdi, Pezeshkian said the government was working to safeguard national interests while improving living conditions for ordinary Iranians, adding that policy decisions should reflect the realities and needs of society,



president.ir reported. He said the administration's overriding goal was "to improve people's lives," despite obstacles facing the government. Alavi Boroujerdi praised the administration's management under difficult circumstances and said officials should remain focused on realistic poli-

cymaking and the public interest. "The welfare of the people must remain the highest priority," he said, adding that greater hope and social well-being would reinforce the country's stability. Later on June 29, Pezeshkian met Grand Ayatollah Mousa Shobeiri Zanjani, thanking Ira-



President Masoud Pezeshkian meets separately with Ayatollah Javad Alavi Boroujerdi (Left Photo) and Ayatollah Mousa Shobeiri Zanjani in Qom, Iran on June 29, 2026.
● president.ir

government officials for their service and urged them to remain steadfast despite criticism. He said dedication to serving the public would endure beyond political debate and expressed confidence that the people would strengthen the nation.

A day earlier, on June 28, Pezeshkian also met Grand Ayatollah Naser Makarem Shirazi, outlining government efforts to rebuild damaged infrastructure,

expand access to education and healthcare, strengthen social protection programs and improve public services.

Makarem Shirazi urged the government to give greater attention to household livelihoods, particularly by addressing rising housing and rental costs, supporting young people with marriage, employment and affordable housing, and reinforcing oversight of consumer prices. He said sustained coordination among state institutions and tangible improvements in people's daily lives would help foster greater public confidence and social hope.

Pezeshkian said the government had introduced measures to regulate the rental market, broaden social support and reduce disparities in access to education, healthcare and welfare services.

He reiterated that public trust remained the government's most valuable asset and pledged to continue policies aimed at strengthening social cohesion and improving the quality of life for all Iranians.

Quiet strength of Simin-Dokht Vahidi's verse lives on

Arts & Culture Desk

The passing of poet Simin-Dokht Vahidi marked the end of a remarkable literary life, but her true legacy reaches far beyond the mourning ceremonies that followed. While tributes at her funeral celebrated her place among the pioneers of post-revolutionary Persian poetry, those who knew her work suggest her greatest achievement was not simply what she wrote, but how she shaped generations of poets through a language that remained accessible, compassionate and deeply rooted in faith, patriotism and lived experience.

Born in Jahrom in southern Iran, Vahidi began writing as a teenager and remained active in literature for decades as a poet, teacher, editor and mentor. Before the 1979 Islamic Revolution, she wrote politically charged poetry; afterwards, her works increasingly reflected themes of the Revolution, the Sacred Defense, national identity and spiritual resilience. Yet readers often found that beneath these grand subjects lay an unmistakably human voice, one that spoke in clear, unpretentious language rather than elaborate literary ornament. Her death on June 27 and the funeral held in Tehran drew senior cultural officials, poets and literary figures, many of whom reflected not only on her literary achievements but also on her role in nurturing Iran's contemporary poetic landscape. Speaking at the funeral,



Mourners gather to pay their final respects to renowned Iranian poet Simin-Dokht Vahidi during her funeral ceremony on June 29, 2026.
● MEHR NEWS AGENCY

Gholam-Ali Haddad Adel, president of the Academy of Persian Language and Literature, described Vahidi as one of the few women who helped establish revolutionary poetry during its formative years. He recalled that in the early years after the Revolution, when accomplished revolutionary poets were still few in number, Vahidi stood alongside figures such as Tahereh Saffarzadeh and Sepideh Kashani as a voice that gave confidence and direction to a growing literary movement.

For poet and researcher Reza Esmaeili, however, Vahidi's greatest contribution may have been her literary style. He described her poetry as "soft, fluent and contemporary," noting that her verses remained free of heavy or inaccessible language. That simplicity, he argued, enabled her poems to reach ordinary readers without sacrificing emotional or artistic depth.

Her influence extended well beyond the printed page. Esmaeili recalled that Vahidi transformed her own home into a gathering place for aspiring women poets, hosting regular workshops and literary discussions while editing anthologies that introduced dozens of emerging voices. In doing so, she became, in the words of many colleagues, less a celebrated poet than a patient teacher.

The same theme echoed through other tributes. Poet Fariba Yousefi described Vahidi as someone who championed women writers long before structured support networks existed, helping younger poets find both confidence and an audience. Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Abbas Salehi, likewise praised her poetry as "rooted, candid and responsible," saying her work embodied a lasting connection between Iranian culture, religious belief and love of homeland.

Perhaps that explains why Vahidi's legacy cannot be measured solely by the volumes she published, including 'One Sky of Anemones,' 'I Feel Life,' 'Restless Waves' and 'Hour'. It also lives in the generations of poets who found encouragement around her living room table, in the readers who discovered that poetry could speak plainly without losing its soul, and in the enduring belief that the strongest verses often arrive not with the loudest voice, but with the quiet conviction to remain faithful to one's ideals.

Iran unveils southern tourism corridor to spur rural revival, rebrand travel

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran plans to develop a new tourism corridor stretching from Makran on the Gulf of Oman to Khorramshahr in the southwest, Culture, Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Reza Salehi-Amiri said Monday in Tehran, unveiling a strategy aimed at expanding pilgrimage and coastal tourism while creating jobs across rural communities.

Speaking at a meeting with members of the Iranian Parliament's Commission on Councils and Internal Affairs at the Sa'adabad Cultural and Historical Complex, Salehi-Amiri said the initiative forms the backbone of the government's post-conflict tourism agenda, CHTN reported.

"We will develop a new southern tourism corridor from Makran to Khorramshahr," he said. "The plan will strengthen religious



● CHTN

tourism, capitalize on the unique attractions of Hormozgan Province and Hormuz Island, and present a renewed and authentic image of Iran to the world." The minister said tourism would play a pivotal role in revitalizing Iran's countryside, arguing that sustainable employment is the cornerstone of rural development.

"It is impossible to revive 45,000 villages without employment and tourism," he said. "Our 'Return to the Village' program is designed to encourage re-

verse migration, expand local businesses, and generate lasting rural jobs." According to Salehi-Amiri, more than 29 million trips were recorded during the Nowruz holidays this year, with over four million travelers visiting rural destinations, underscoring growing interest in village-based tourism. To support that trend, the government has earmarked 140 trillion rials in national and provincial financing for rural employment this year, alongside an additional 123 trillion

rials in interest-free loans for handicrafts producers, eco-lodges, and village-based enterprises. Salehi-Amiri said the government also plans to ease administrative procedures, raise lending ceilings, and expand support for family-run handicraft workshops to strengthen local economies and promote balanced regional development. "The future of rural prosperity," he said, "depends on turning Iran's cultural heritage and natural landscapes into engines of sustainable growth."



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