

Leader's funeral should symbolize national unity: Pezeshkian

Political Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian on Wednesday called on Iranians to attend the upcoming funeral ceremonies for the late Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei in "large numbers and with grandeur," saying their presence should send a message of unity and solidarity to the world as the nation is gearing up to bid farewell to him nearly four months after his martyrdom.

Ayatollah Khamenei was assassinated on February 28, the first day of the US-Israeli war against Iran, when his residence in Tehran was bombed. Dozens senior officials, military commanders and several members of his family were also martyred in the airstrike.

A two-day farewell ceremony will begin on Saturday, July 4, at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Mosalla, the capital's main venue for large state religious gatherings. The main funeral procession will take place

on Monday along a 10-km route stretching from Imam Hossein Square to iconic Azadi Square.

Tehran's mayor has described the event as "the largest gathering in the city's history" and said about 20 million people are expected to take part.

Ceremonies will continue in the holy city of Qom on Tuesday before the Leader's body is taken to the Iraqi shrine cities of Najaf and Karbala on Wednesday. Ayatollah Khamenei will be buried on Thursday at the shrine of Imam Reza (PBUH), the eighth Shia Imam, in the northeastern city of Mashhad, Iran's holiest city and the Leader's birthplace.

Iranian authorities estimate between 8 to 10 million mourners will attend the burial ceremony. Foreign officials and delegations are expected to begin arriving in Iran from Friday to partake in the events. Speaking during a cabinet meeting, Pezeshkian described the funeral as "an important and historic event" and hoped

it would become "a lasting scene in the contemporary history of the country."

"There may be different opinions and preferences on some issues, but what must be demonstrated at this historic juncture is unity, solidarity, coordination and national cohesion," he said.

"Today, more than ever, it is essential that all political factions and all sections of society emphasize our national and Islamic common ground and refrain from any action that would undermine national unity," the president added.

Pezeshkian described the slain Leader as an influential figure across the Muslim world whose significance extended beyond Iran.

"He always defended Islamic ideals, the unity of the Muslim world, solidarity among Muslims and resistance against oppression and bullying, and defended his righteous positions against global hegemonic powers with clarity and courage," he said.



President Masoud Pezeshkian (c) speaks during a cabinet meeting in Tehran, Iran on July 1, 2026. [president.ir](#)

The president also said Iran would continue to press ahead with its path toward dignity, independence and progress by relying on domestic unity and strengthen-

ing cooperation among Islamic countries. "The Iranian nation will not allow any power to force Muslim nations into submission," Pezeshkian said.

Working groups for final Iran-US deal formed after Qatar talks: Deputy FM

International Desk

Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi said on Wednesday that working groups had been set up to oversee implementation of the recent Iran-US peace memorandum of understanding and prepare negotiations on a final agreement, although formal talks within those frameworks had not yet begun.

Gharibabadi made the remarks after meeting Qatar's Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani in Doha and later holding trilateral talks with senior officials from Qatar and Pakistan, according to IRNA.

Heading a delegation that included officials from Iran's Foreign Ministry, Central Bank and Agriculture Ministry, Gharibabadi said the discussions were focused on following through on implementation of the memorandum. Addressing prospects for a permanent settlement, Gharibabadi said: "Working groups for implementation of the memorandum and negotiations on a final agreement have been formed, but no negotiations within these frameworks have yet begun."

He added that consultations through the mediators to determine the time and venue for those negotiations were continuing and that talks within the working groups would begin once the necessary conditions had been established.

According to Iran's Foreign Ministry, Gharibabadi and Sheikh Mohammed



discussed implementation of the peace deal, obstacles to its execution and ways to accelerate the process. Developments in Lebanon and expanding bilateral cooperation were also on the agenda.

The trilateral meeting between Iran, Qatar and Pakistan also reviewed progress in implementing the memorandum. Separately, AFP reported that Iran and the United States held indirect technical talks in Doha on Wednesday through Qatari and Pakistani mediators.

A diplomat familiar with the discussions, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the talks, told AFP that the lower-level negotiations focused on the details of the memorandum of understanding and would "build on the progress made at the Lake Lucerne Summit".

The memorandum, brokered by Qatar and Pakistan and signed on June 17, established a 60-day ceasefire after the war triggered by US-Israeli strikes in late February, reopened the Strait of Hormuz after the blockade and set a

timetable for negotiations aimed at reaching a permanent peace agreement and resolving disputes over Iran's nuclear program.

US President Donald Trump hailed the latest diplomatic efforts on Wednesday.

"They've had very good meetings, and we'll see," he told reporters.

"We hit them very hard... but we're getting along very well," he said, referring to negotiations intended to dial down tensions after recent military confrontations.

Tehran, however, rejected Trump's earlier claim that direct negotiations would take place in Doha.

The AFP report said US envoys Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff were not participating in the technical talks after meeting Sheikh Mohammed on Tuesday.

Qatar's Foreign Ministry said the meeting reviewed "the ongoing talks between the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran within the framework of the memorandum of understanding", as well as developments in Lebanon.

The diplomatic efforts come after both sides traded fire in the Persian Gulf following the June 17 agreement. Tehran targeted a commercial vessel that it said had deviated from its approved route through the Strait of Hormuz.

US Central Command said it struck 10 Iranian military targets over the weekend, after which Iran launched retaliatory strikes against US bases in Kuwait and Bahrain.

FM warns US to rein in Israeli 'pets' after assassination threat



International Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Wednesday issued a strongly worded warning to the United States, urging President Donald Trump to "muzzle" Washington's "pets" in Tel Aviv after Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz issued threats against Iran's new leader. In a post on X, Araghchi said the United States was bound by the terms of the 14-point memorandum of understanding brokered by Pakistan and several other regional countries, which was agreed last month to end a war the US and Israeli waged against Iran in late February and requires Washington to restrain Israel.

"The terms of the Islamabad MoU

are crystal clear and public for all to see. POTUS has committed the US to muzzling its pets in Tel Aviv. If they ignore their master, Iran will school them. Any threat against our people and leadership will receive immediate powerful response," the top diplomat wrote.

Araghchi posts came with a screenshot of recent remarks by Katz, who had said Iran's Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei was "marked for death."

The exchange comes as Iran and the United States are engaged in a 60-day negotiating process under the interim peace deal.

There are growing concerns that Israel might sabotage diplomatic efforts by carrying out fresh airstrikes or assassinations inside Iran.

US-Iran memo ...

While preserving their strategic ties with Washington, they are likely to expand practical operation and communication with Tehran in areas such as maritime security, energy and environmental protection, reducing their reliance on external security guarantees. This pragmatic approach reflects a growing preference for managing regional risks through engagement rather than military deterrence alone. The agreement nevertheless faces significant obstacles.

The first is Israel's opposition. Tel Aviv does not consider itself bound by the memorandum and sought to derail the diplomatic process through military action against Beirut shortly before the agreement was signed. Some analysts warn that Israel could target Iran's nuclear facilities during the 60-day negotiation period, potentially undermining

the process altogether.

The second challenge comes from within Iran, where hardline factions have criticized the memorandum as overly conciliatory and argued that it grants excessive concessions without sufficient guarantees.

The third lies in the agreement's ambiguities. Foreign Affairs analysts note that it contains no objective benchmarks for measuring compliance and no automatic mechanism for restoring sanctions in the event of violations. Its implementation therefore depends largely on the political judgment and continued willingness of both parties.

For that reason, the memorandum should be viewed not as the conclusion of a conflict but as a strategic pause that offers both sides an opportunity to regroup. It also highlights two broader realities: Washington no longer appears able or willing to impose regime change

or force Iran's complete disarmament, while Tehran has demonstrated that it possesses significant leverage, particularly through its control over the Strait of Hormuz.

Whether this framework evolves into a comprehensive agreement will depend largely on what happens during the next 60 days. The process could redefine relations between Iran and the West while ushering Persian Gulf security into a new phase of coexistence shaped by competition. Equally, a breakdown of the ceasefire by either side could push the region back toward war.

Whatever the outcome, one conclusion already stands out. The era of uncontested American dominance in the Persian Gulf appears to be giving way to a new regional order in which local powers, from Iran to Saudi Arabia, are expected to play a far greater role in shaping their own security environment.



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