

Pezeshkian  
vows  
Ayatollah  
Khamenei's  
flag 'will  
never fall'



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## Tehran awash with sorrow in lachrymose adieu to martyred Leader

Delegations from nearly 100 countries pay last respects

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Hundreds of thousands of people gather in Tehran's Grand Mosalla on July 4, 2026, to say farewell to martyred Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

MIZAN

### Culture at Heart of Ayatollah Khamenei's Legacy



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OPINION  
EXCLUSIVE

Wars are often remembered through the number of lives lost, the scale of destruction they leave behind, and the geopolitical shifts they trigger. Yet what ultimately shapes the destiny of nations is the body of ideas that live on long after the guns fall silent. At such pivotal moments, revisiting the intellectual legacy of national leaders is more than an act of paying tribute to the past; it is an effort to understand the theoretical foundations of the future. From this perspective, the cultural and social thought of Iran's martyred Leader, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, constitutes one of the most significant components of the Islamic Republic's intellectual legacy—a body of thought that has, for more than three decades, been reflected in many of the country's major cultural, educational, and social policies. Within the late Leader's intellectual framework, culture was never confined to artistic and literary activities or official ceremonies. Rather, it was viewed as the spirit that permeates society and shapes both individual and collective identity. It influences patterns of thought, social relations, consumer behavior, public morality, civic responsibility, social trust, and even the quality of

governance. It was for this reason that, in numerous meetings with members of the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution, he described culture as the foundation upon which all other sectors of the country rest. He consistently argued that economic development, political progress, and national security cannot achieve sustainable and balanced advancement without a strong cultural foundation. This perspective was articulated with greater clarity during his landmark speech in North Khorasan Province in October 2012, where he introduced the concept of "lifestyle" as the software dimension of the New Islamic Civilization. In that address, he distinguished between the instruments of progress—such as science, technology, the economy, and national power—and the ultimate objective of development: the quality of human life. From this perspective, development acquires meaning only when it is reflected in people's everyday conduct, social ethics, interpersonal relations, respect for the rule of law, sense of responsibility, discipline, cooperation, and commitment to society. In other words, if the economy and technology serve as the engine driving society forward, culture is the compass that determines its direction. One of the defining characteristics of this vision is the close connection it draws between culture and everyday life. Within this framework, cul-

ture is neither an abstract concept nor something confined to official institutions. Rather, it manifests itself in the smallest aspects of social behavior—from interactions among family members and neighbors to work ethic, respect for the rights of others, use of media, consumer habits, observance of the law, and even the manner in which people engage in public discourse. Consequently, cultural reform is understood not as something that can be achieved through administrative directives, but as a gradual transformation of lifestyles accompanied by a stronger sense of social responsibility. The family also occupies a central place in Ayatollah Khamenei's cultural thought. It is regarded as the primary institution through which values, ethics, identity, and social capital are passed from one generation to the next—the environment in which an individual's character is formed before entering school or society. Strengthening the family is therefore viewed not merely as a social or demographic policy but as an integral part of a broader cultural strategy aimed at building a society founded on trust, solidarity, and responsibility. Within this framework, many of society's broader challenges—from reducing social harm to strengthening social capital—are understood to stem from the quality of family relationships and the upbringing of future generations. Education is viewed through the

same lens. Schools are not merely institutions for transmitting knowledge; their primary mission is to cultivate character, nurture identity, and reinforce social ethics. Universities, meanwhile, are expected not only to produce scientific knowledge but also to educate specialists who are committed and responsible toward the future of society. Scientific advancement, in this view, can lead to genuine progress only when it is accompanied by ethics, responsibility, and a strong cultural identity. Within this same framework, the roles of the media and the arts extend far beyond information and entertainment. In Ayatollah Khamenei's speeches, the media is portrayed as one of the principal forces shaping public opinion and lifestyle. It has the capacity either to strengthen hope, trust, identity, and civic responsibility or, conversely, to foster mistrust, individualism, and social fragmentation. From this perspective, the media does more than report events; it also plays an active role in shaping social and cultural reality, thereby assuming responsibilities that go well beyond the simple dissemination of news. A similar perspective applies to the arts. In his thought, art is not merely a means of creating beauty but a powerful language through which values, identity, and human experience are conveyed.

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