



President backs major expansion of university research funding



Social Desk

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian said the government is seeking to provide up to \$2 billion to strengthen scientific and research activities at Iranian universities, as he met with presidents of the country's leading universities to discuss student services and solutions to energy challenges. Pezeshkian said expanding universities' scientific and research capacity ranks among the administration's priorities, stressing that the government is determined to draw on the expertise of academics and scholars in managing the country's affairs, president.ir reported.

"We need to use the intellectual and scientific capacity of scholars and academics," he said, describing universities as vital partners in improving economic management, efficiency and the effective use of resources.

The president said universities need between \$1 billion and \$2 billion for research equipment and expansion, adding that the government was working with the Planning and Budget Organization to secure the necessary funding. He said resources could be reallocated if necessary to address universities' needs.

The meeting also addressed student welfare, including funding for student support and meal services. Pezeshkian proposed giving students a greater role in university decision-making through surveys and consultations overseen by management faculties.

He said the process should begin during the first month of the current academic year, with university procedures adjusted where necessary after gathering students' views.

Pezeshkian also called for university admissions to better match the country's real needs and approved budgets, arguing that unnecessary spending on fields with limited practical demand should be redirected toward improving educational quality and supporting faculty members. Turning to energy, the president said universities could help the government curb unnecessary consumption and develop a more sustainable culture around fuel use.

He outlined plans for government employees to go car-free at least one day a week and for students to receive public transportation cards.

Such measures, he said, could reduce gasoline consumption and air pollution while conserving energy resources and strengthening national resilience.

Pezeshkian also called on universities to contribute ideas on preparing for winter energy demand, reducing costs and improving efficiency, saying the government had already begun pursuing energy-saving measures across its own institutions.

He described students as "an opportunity" and urged universities to tap their ideas and intellectual capacity in addressing the country's challenges.

In a separate message to the Islamic Association of Students, Pezeshkian called for teenagers to become active participants in addressing the country's challenges rather than merely recipients of information. He urged students to understand national issues, think critically, offer ideas and contribute within their capacity to finding solutions.

He described the Islamic Association of Students as a lasting legacy of the Islamic Revolution and stressed the importance of strengthening young people's analytical, intellectual and spiritual capacities. The government, he said, supports educational institutions that can provide greater opportunities for young people to participate in society and help shape the country's future.

Persian handicrafts on display at BRICS exhibition in New Delhi

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian handicraft artists are showcasing the country's rich traditional arts, including Gilan's distinctive Rashti embroidery, at a specialized exhibition in New Delhi held alongside the 18th BRICS Summit from September 8 to 15.

The exhibition at the Handicrafts and Handlooms House brings together works from BRICS countries and offers a cultural showcase of their diverse artistic traditions. The summit itself is scheduled for September 12 and 13 at Bharat Mandapam in the Indian capital under the theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability."

Iran is represented by two prominent handicraft artists, presenting selected works that highlight the country's long-standing traditions and regional craftsmanship, CHTN reported.

Among them is Gilan-based veteran artist Ameneh Sedighi Chafjiri, a noted practitioner of Rashti embroidery. Her works bring a distinctive expression of northern Iran's artistic heritage to an international audience.

Rooted in the cultural landscape of Gilan, Rashti embroidery is distinguished by intricate needlework, traditional motifs and visual patterns shaped by the region's history and natural environment. The craft carries elements of local identity while reflecting the broader diversity of Iran's handmade arts. Its presentation in New Delhi places a regional Iranian art form within a wider international cultural setting, allowing visitors and representatives from participating countries to engage with a craft tradition passed down through generations. The exhibition forms part of a broader program surrounding India's 2026



BRICS chairship, which has included cultural and people-to-people exchanges alongside political, economic and financial initiatives. India has held the chairmanship since January 1, 2026, with cultural cooperation among the areas highlighted during its year-long



program. The handicraft exhibition will remain open through September 15, giving visi-



tors an opportunity to explore traditional works from participating countries, including Iran.

Wisteria complex nears completion as Iran advances tourism innovation hub



CHTN

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian Tourism Minister Reza Salehi-Amiri visited the under-construction Wisteria Technology Tower and five-star hotel in Tehran on September 10, inspecting its technical works and meeting investors and project managers.

The multifunctional complex, billed as the country's first of its kind focused on innovation and tourism, is being built on a 4,200-square-meter site and combines commercial, administrative, service and hospitality facilities, IRNA reported. Construction is now 80 to 85 percent complete, putting the project on the cusp of its final finishing and outfitting phase. Salehi-Amiri called for faster completion of the development, which is designed to bring together tourism and the knowledge-based economy.

The hospitality section will

feature 70 rooms and suites designed to five-star standards, with the capacity to accommodate specialized tourists, business delegations and technology professionals. The project is also intended to serve as a hub for technology products and innovation-related financial exchanges. Its planned facilities will provide space for showcasing and trading technological products while supporting links between the capital market and the technology sector. Project managers said construction has advanced in line with international engineering and building standards. They expect the complex to open by the end of the current Iranian calendar year, corresponding to March 20, 2027, or at the latest in early April. The development is being positioned as a new platform for combining hospitality, technology and tourism services in the capital.

Persian Gulf's ancient waters helped shape Sumerian civilization

Arts & Culture Desk

The shifting tides and waterways of the Persian Gulf played a decisive role in the emergence of ancient Sumer, one of the world's earliest urban civilizations, according to a new study published in the journal PLOS One.

The research reconstructs the ancient landscape of southern Mesopotamia and argues that the interaction of tides, rivers and a changing coastline created favorable conditions for intensive agriculture and the rise of the region's first cities, ILNA eported.

Led by Liviu Giosan, a retired senior scientist at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, and Reed Goodman, an assistant professor of environmental social science at Clemson University, the study combined satellite data, paleoenvironmental evidence and newly collected sediment cores from Tell al-Hiba, the site of the ancient city of Lagash.

Researchers place Sumer's flourishing during the Uruk period, roughly 6,000 to 5,200 years ago, when communities combined herding, trade and diverse natural resources. Yet those activities alone do not explain how early societies generated enough agricultural surplus to sustain sophisticated city-states such as Uruk, Ur and Lagash before large-scale irrigation systems emerged. The researchers identify tidal irrigation as a possible missing piece. For centuries, tides from the Persian Gulf reportedly carried freshwater twice daily into the lower reaches of the Tigris and Euphrates, nourishing fertile landscapes where small canals and date-palm groves could develop without massive infrastructure.



This stable hydrological system supported intensive and diversified farming, helping populations grow and societies become increasingly complex. As river deltas gradually advanced and the coastline shifted, however, access to tidal waters diminished.

Sumerian communities then turned to larger river-based irrigation projects requiring greater political coordination and more centralized administration.

Holly Pittman, director of the Lagash Archaeological Project at the Penn Museum, said the findings correspond with archaeological evidence, noting that rapid environmental change, inequality and political concentration helped shape the world's earliest urban society.

The study also explores how the changing waterscape may have found its way into Sumerian religious memory. Myths surrounding Enki and the separation of "fresh" and "bitter" waters may preserve echoes of an ancient environment where tidal currents brought freshwater and saltwater into constant contact.

By placing coastal dynamics at the heart of urbanization, the research offers a fresh perspective on Sumer's emergence as a civilization shaped by both human ingenuity and the life-giving waters surrounding Mesopotamia.