



UNCLASSIFIED//AOR CENTCOM, IRAN

## Divisions Emerge Between Elected-President Pezeshkian And IRGC Hardliners Over the War

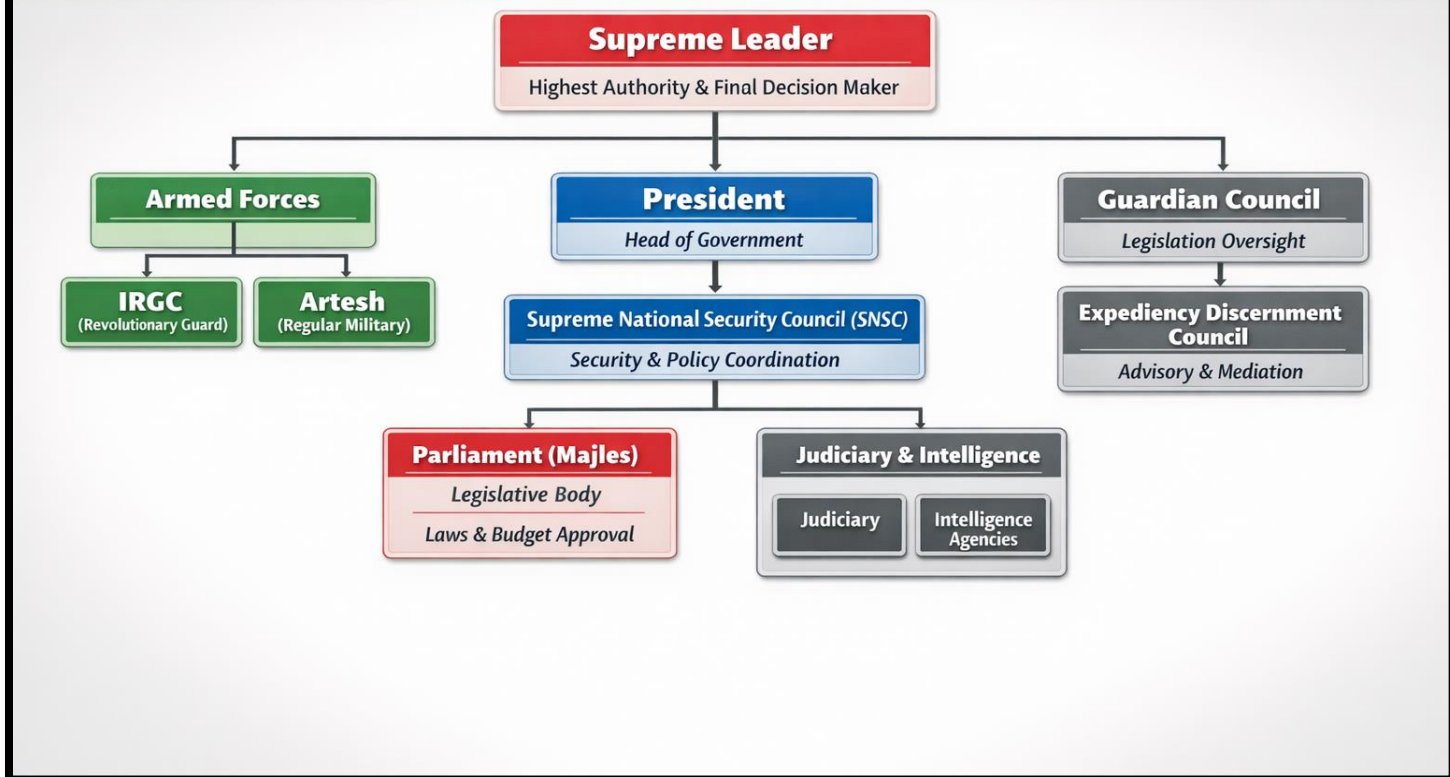
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The personal and institutional clash between President Masoud Pezeshkian and IRGC Commander Ahmad Vahidi has become the central fault line in Iran's wartime leadership, with Vahidi's hardliners rejecting civilian authority and consolidating de facto control over strategy and key appointments. This rift—now openly acknowledged in internal meetings—undermines ceasefire efforts, threatens economic collapse, and signals a potential shift toward unchecked IRGC dominance that could outlast the conflict. Senior executives tracking Iran must view this not as routine factionalism but as a structural crisis that weakens regime cohesion at the precise moment unified decision-making is most needed.

- President Pezeshkian has directly accused Commander Vahidi and senior IRGC figures of unilateral escalations—including attacks on regional infrastructure—that have wrecked ceasefire prospects and pushed Iran toward economic disaster, warning the economy could “collapse within weeks” without civilian-led de-escalation.
- Vahidi has flatly rejected Pezeshkian's demands to restore executive and managerial powers to the elected government, instead blaming the administration for failing to enact pre-war structural reforms and blocking multiple presidential appointments, including a new intelligence minister.
- Tensions erupted in early April when Pezeshkian confronted Vahidi and other commanders in a “tense and highly charged” meeting, charging them with driving escalation and creating a “complete political stalemate” that sidelines the presidency.



## Iranian Government C2 Structure



### IRGC Hardliner Consolidation and Risks to Ceasefire Stability

Vahidi's IRGC has leveraged wartime authority to operate as a parallel executive, obstructing Pezeshkian's reformist agenda and leaving Iran without a coherent post-conflict governance plan—raising the prospect of prolonged internal instability even if the fragile ceasefire holds.

- Under Vahidi, the IRGC has seized de facto control of core state functions, rejected presidential nominees for sensitive posts, and insisted all wartime decisions remain under Guards authority until further notice.
- Pezeshkian has pressed IRGC leaders for a joint post-war economic and reconstruction strategy; Vahidi's faction has offered only vague commitments to "maintain public morale" while sustaining military operations, with no detailed civilian transition plan.
- Public messaging remains contradictory: Pezeshkian continues to advocate restraint and diplomatic engagement, while Vahidi-aligned hardliners reinforce confrontational rhetoric on retaliation and Gulf operations, complicating any unified Iranian position in follow-on talks.

### Conclusion

The Pezeshkian-Vahidi confrontation has transformed latent civil-military tensions into an open institutional crisis. With the IRGC commander openly defying the elected president and consolidating wartime powers, Iran faces the real risk of a de facto hardliner takeover that could render any ceasefire temporary and produce a more militarized, less predictable regime. Open-source monitoring of further leadership friction, appointment battles, and economic indicators will remain critical for assessing long-term stability.



Tal Shiar was founded by Nadeem Iqbal, a national security expert who served over 16 years as an intelligence officer for the Department of Defense from 2006-2022. His career began as a counter-insurgency analyst on the Afghanistan-Pakistan Task Force (2006–2013), followed by 9 years as a military analyst in the Syria Branch (2013–2022). He deployed five times in support of combat operations (3× Afghanistan, 2× Iraq), including two rotations with

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