

NEWS IN BRIEF

Customs
generates over
\$1.5b in five
months

Economy Desk

In the first five months of the current Iranian year (started March 20, 2024), the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) collected over \$1.5 billion (907.11 billion rials) in revenues, depositing them into the National Treasury.

According to ISNA, this registered a 40% increase compared to the same period last year.

Based on the Customs report, the collected import duties on goods in the first five months of this calendar year increased by 67% to over \$594 million (353.72 billion rials) compared to the same period last year.

Additionally, the collected import duties on goods, cars, mobile phones above \$600, and industrial, mining, and agricultural equipment, along with 22 other sources of customs revenue, reached \$876 million (521.79 billion rials) in the first five months of this year, indicating a 78% growth compared to the same period last year.

Furthermore, the report states that the value-added tax collected by the IRICA in the first five months of the Iranian year 1403 amounted to \$647 million (385.32 billion rials), representing a 9% increase.

Oil, non-oil
exports from
Bandar Anzali
up 46%

TASNIM – Oil and non-oil exports from Bandar Anzali port complex in the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (started March 21, 2024) rose by about 46%, an official at Ports and Maritime Organization in Iran's Gilan Province said.

Mojtaba Nazari noted that more than 854,000 tons of goods were loaded and unloaded at Bandar Anzali Port Complex from March 21 to August 22, 2024, showing a 46 percent growth compared to the same period last year.

He added that more than 216,000 tons of the oil and non-oil products were exported to the Caspian Sea littoral states. He went on to say that 2,357 containers (TEU) were loaded and unloaded at Bandar Anzali Port Complex and that 294 vessels entered the port complex in this period.

Iran eyes gas hub through deals
with Turkmenistan

Leader stresses 'ample capacities' for bilateral ties

International Desk

Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei underscored on Wednesday the expansion of bilateral ties with neighboring Turkmenistan as a high priority, saying, "Relations between Iran and Turkmenistan have adequately developed in recent years, but there are still ample capacities for further cooperation that need to be tapped."

The Leader also expressed his satisfaction with the expansion of bilateral ties between Tehran and Ashgabat over the past years, stressing that there is still room for further cooperation.

"I hope that the newly-elected Iranian government will pursue the development of relations between Iran and Turkmenistan with more vigor," he noted. Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks after Turkmenistan's National Leader Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian signed four strategic agreements.

Pezeshkian stated that the deals would prove to be key in turning Iran into a regional gas hub and serve the interests of both countries, promising to personally oversee the implementation of the finalized deals. Berdimuhamedov arrived in Tehran earlier in the day and was welcomed by Farzaneh Sadegh, Iran's Minister of Roads and Urban Development, who will head the joint committee between the two countries.

The documents, signed at a ceremony attended by Berdimuhamedov and Pezeshkian, included a cooperation plan spanning from 2024 to 2026 and was signed by Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and his Turkmen counterpart Rashid Meredov. Also, a sisterhood agreement was inked between Iran's Amirabad Port and Turkmenistan's Turkmenbashi Port by Iranian Minister Farzaneh Sadegh and Mohammad Khan, CEO of the Turkmenistan Company.



National Leader of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov (2nd-L) and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (2nd-R) watch as Turkmen Foreign Minister Rashid Meredov (L) and his Iranian counterpart, Abbas Araghchi, pose for photographs with a signed cooperation document in Tehran, Iran, on August 28, 2024.

● IRNA

Additionally, a document on enhancing natural gas collaboration



National Leader of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov (L), heading the Turkmen delegation, discusses cooperation documents with the Iranian side, headed by President Masoud Pezeshkian (R), in Tehran, Iran, on August 28, 2024.

● IRNA

was signed by Majid Chegini, Iran's deputy oil minister, and the CEO of

Turkmen Gas Company.

Officials from both countries have signed a joint action plan aimed at enhancing and expanding customs cooperation between the two countries from 2024 to 2026. At a joint press conference with Berdimuhamedov, Pezeshkian stated that the forthcoming meeting in Ashgabat would be focused on implementing the signed agreements.

Other joint projects such as Iran's participation in the development of Turkmenistan's gas pipeline were raised by Berdimuhamedov, which was termed as important by Ayatollah Khamenei. "The implementation of such huge projects in the presence of Iranian experts will boost the already close relations between the two countries," the Leader added.

Iranian auto parts exports to Russia
surge 450% since 2022

Iranian auto parts exports to Russia have soared by 450% since 2022, reaching \$66mn, as both countries seek to deepen economic ties in the face of Western sanctions, industry representatives said at the MIMS Automotive Moscow exhibition.

The surge in exports comes as Russian and Iranian automakers explore opportunities for collaboration in the wake of Western companies' exodus from the Russian market following the Ukraine War, according to bne IntelliNews.

Representatives from Iranian automakers Iran Khodro (IKCO) and SAIPA expressed their hope that the increased exports would significantly boost trade between the two countries and help meet growing demand in the Russian auto parts market. At the exhibition, Iran's Deputy Minister of Industry, Mines, and Trade Farshad Moghimi discussed with AvtoVAZ officials the prospects of supplying parts to meet Russian automotive industry needs. Moghimi proposed creating a consortium to supply Iranian products to Russia.

This development follows earlier announcements of closer cooperation between the two countries' automotive sectors. In April, Iranian carmaker



● IRNA

SAIPA signed an agreement to export 45,000 vehicles to Russia over the Iranian calendar year that started March 21, 2023.

In 2023, the Iranian version of the "Sandero," a car based on the Renault Logan platform and developed with assistance from Russia's AvtoVAZ, was also unveiled for both Iranian and Russian markets. Then-Iranian minister of Industry, Mine, and Trade Reza Fatemi Amin stated at the time that preliminary agreements had been made for this car to be produced in Russia as well as Iran.

However, the road to success in the Russian market may not be smooth for Iranian automakers. Previous attempts by IKCO to export vehicles to Russia between 2007 and 2009 faced challenges, with some buyers

complaining that Iranian cars struggled with cold Russian winters.

Russian automotive expert Alexander Stepanov has expressed scepticism about the viability of importing some Iranian models, citing economic concerns and quality issues. Despite these challenges, both countries see potential in their automotive partnership. AvtoVAZ, maker of the Lada, plans to enter the Iranian market this year, selling models locally as part of a growing relationship with Iranian counterpart SAIPA.

Earlier in April, AvtoVAZ President Maxim Sokolov stated that the company sees Iran, which sold over 1m cars last year, as a promising market for its low-cost vehicles. The company intends to proceed with its plans

despite recent escalations in the Middle East.

As both Russia and Iran face international sanctions, their automotive industries are looking to each other for support and new market opportunities. However, they will need to overcome quality concerns and fierce competition from Chinese imports to succeed in their respective markets.

Auto imports to Russia have not stopped despite the ongoing war in the country, and Moscow has been increasingly collaborating with China on car imports directly or through Central Asian states.

As bne IntelliNews reported, the Russian auto sector has since recovered most of the ground lost from the war and is on course to get back to the million cars a year pre-war production level, but the nature of the sector has changed dramatically. In 2023, the economy recovered, Russians' incomes began to grow, and the car market recovered half of the decline. Chinese models have been Russified, and its factories produce Moskvich and Volga, both modernised versions of Soviet-era brands. Most of the parts and technology are of Chinese origin. Prices have also jumped by one and a half times, or even doubled.

Fruit of
Turkmen ...

The Islamic Republic of Iran has also consistently sought to strengthen ties with Turkmenistan, especially since its foreign policy emphasizes regional cooperation. Given this, the need to strengthen relations between Iran and Turkmenistan has become increasingly apparent. As part of an effort to deepen the understanding of Iranian political, executive, and scientific elites, we are republishing the works of Mr. Berdimuhamedov, as a symbol of the Turkmen government and nation. One such work is the book "Respect for Mother is Respect for the Sacred," which delves into one of the most important issues and the source of fundamental changes in Turkmen culture—the role of mothers in Turkmenistan.

The eloquent and poetic author sheds light on this concept. Through this book, one can discover the secrets behind the success of the Turkmenistan government and nation in securing and developing their country in the turbulent Central Asian geographical context. I am honored to have published this valuable book, fulfilling my duty in cementing Iran's good relations with Turkmenistan while also sharing the ideas and thoughts of the region's progressive leaders with interested Iranian readers.

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