

ICT minister outlines plan for 10% digital economy share in GDP

Minister of Information and Communications Technology Sattar Hashemi announced plans to expand the digital economy to achieve a 10% share of Iran's gross domestic product (GDP).

Speaking on Friday, Hashemi highlighted ongoing efforts to support startups and new technology-based firms (NTBFs) while focusing on digital economy initiatives tailored to the country's needs.

Addressing energy, communication challenges

Hashemi noted that energy shortages have caused disruptions in communication networks and payment infrastructures, negatively impacting businesses and daily lives.

"To address this, the Ministry of ICT has finalized projects aimed at smart energy consumption, which have been submitted to the president," he said.

Pursuing tech diplomacy, global engagement

The minister emphasized the importance of technological diplomacy, particularly in regions such as West Asia, Latin America and East Africa.

He stated that Iran's technological advancements now allow it to have international participation and offer services on a global scale.

"This progress boosts motivation among young talents, generates forex revenues, prevents brain drain, and encourages elites to remain in the country and contribute to its development," Hashemi said.

Satellite connectivity for remote areas

Hashemi revealed plans to establish telecommunications satellites in geostationary orbit at 35,000 kilometers above Earth.

"This initiative will facilitate connectivity in remote and hard-to-reach areas and ensure communication access for villages where terrestrial infrastructure is not feasible," he explained.

The minister projected that these efforts would be realized by the end of the current administration (August 2028).

Advancing e-government services

Despite progress in developing e-government and smart governance, Hashemi acknowledged that such advancements have yet to significantly integrate into people's daily lives.

"Our goal in the current administration is to leverage the country's smart infrastructure to deliver services to the public with minimal effort or physical presence in offices," Hashemi emphasized.

Iran seeking greater cooperation with China in renewables

The head of Iran's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA) announced plans to deepen the country's collaboration with China to expand renewable energy projects, emphasizing the critical role of advanced technologies in achieving such goals.

Speaking at the 14th International Iran Renewable Energy and Energy Saving Expo, Mohsen Tarzatab told ISNA that Iran has initiated cooperation with China — a global leader in solar and wind energy technologies.

"China holds cutting-edge expertise in renewable energy, and by increasing cooperation with Chinese manufacturers and private companies, we can benefit from their knowledge and technology," the official said.

Int'l tenders on renewable energy projects

Tarzatab also highlighted ongoing preparations for international tenders to attract foreign investment in Iran's renewable energy sector, which have already drawn interest from several countries.

"Under a law on electricity industry facilitation, investors in renewable energy can export 10% of their generated power, creating additional incentives," Tarzatab noted, adding that the current administration has planned 5,000 megawatts of wind power generation, with projects already underway in wind-rich regions such as Khaf

and Sistan and Baluchestan.

"We plan to launch 2,500 megawatts of wind farms in these areas soon, offering incentives to investors, including the ability to export 10% of their installed capacity through existing transmission lines," he said.

Tarzatab also added that the \$5-billion credit by the National Development Fund for the development of renewable energy is being paid.

Clean energy capacity to quadruple

Iran's current renewable energy capacity stands at 1,400 megawatts which is expected to rise to 1,800 megawatts by the end of the current Iranian year (March 20). Tarzatab projected further increases to 3,500 megawatts by next summer and 4,800 megawatts by March 2026.

He added that construction permits for nearly 17,000 megawatts of renewable projects have been issued.

Policies on private sector collaboration

Tarzatab emphasized the need for public-private partnerships and a regulatory framework to ensure sustainable growth in renewable energy.

"With support from domestic and foreign investors, along with close cooperation with the private sector, we aim to enhance renewable capacity and improve energy efficiency," he said.

The official also pointed to man-



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datory energy standards for domestic appliances and industrial processes as part of broader energy management reforms.

The launch of the Energy Saving Certificate Exchange Market in the Iran Energy Exchange is expected to accelerate these efforts, potentially reducing electricity demand by 10,000 megawatts in the long term.

Call for cross-sectoral support

Achieving the ministry's target of 30,000 megawatts of renewable energy capacity over the next four years will require

coordinated support from Parliament, the government, and financial institutions, Tarzatab said.

He called on entities such as the Central Bank of Iran, the National Development Fund, and ministries to assist in overcoming challenges.

"Direct public funding alone cannot resolve the energy shortages," Tarzatab said, advocating for domestic and foreign investment.

"If we fail to act, the lack of electricity access in the coming years could severely harm GDP, industries, and public welfare."

Green power output up 23%

Meanwhile, Government spokesperson Fatemeh Mohajerani announced a 23% increase in renewable electricity production of Iran since the start of the current administration.

In a post on the social media platform X, she wrote, "The installed renewable energy capacity in Iran, which was 1,231 megawatts at the start of the administration (August 2024), rose by 289 megawatts to 1,520 megawatts by the end of Azar (the ninth month of Iranian calendar year)—indicative of a 23% increase in less than five months."

Paknejad: Oil Ministry prioritizes safe, transparent environment for investors



SHANA

Iran's Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad announced his ministry's readiness to collaborate with the private sector and chambers of commerce to create a "safe and transparent environment" with the aim of achieving the country's overarching economic goals.

"Creating a safe and transparent environment for investors is a top priority for the Oil Ministry," Paknejad said, according to Shana.

On Friday, during a meeting with members of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) and private sector representatives, Paknejad presented a report on the country's energy production and consumption.

He emphasized the need for constructive engagement with the private sector and significant investment in the oil and petrochemical industries and stated that the private sector could play a key role in helping reduce the country's energy shortages.

Highlighting Iran's vast oil and gas potential, Paknejad noted, "As one of the world's largest energy producers, Iran enjoys substantial opportunities for international cooperation. Developing this industry requires sustainable investment and strengthened economic relations with other countries, which

can lead to economic growth and job creation."

He urged ICCIMA members to take a more active role in encouraging domestic and foreign investors to engage in production and refining sectors.

"Collaboration with the private sector in the oil industry can serve as a strategic opportunity for sustainable national development," the minister said.

Paknejad also reaffirmed the ministry's comprehensive support for private sector and Chamber of Commerce partnerships to achieve economic objectives.

Chamber of Commerce calls for supportive policies

During the meeting, ICCIMA members stressed the importance of structural reforms and removing barriers to facilitate cooperation.

They called for supportive policies to strengthen the capacity and effective presence of the private sector in oil-related activities.

Key topics discussed included energy management, leveraging private sector capabilities in bunkering, easing private participation in oil and gas field development, and establishing financial engineering frameworks within the Oil Ministry.

Paknejad issued directives to implement some of the private sector's proposals promptly and emphasized the continuation of such meetings.

The session aimed to foster synergy between the government and private sector for the development of the oil industry as initial agreements were made to pursue joint projects.

Pipeline supplying Bandar Abbas refinery officially inaugurated



SHANA

The pipeline supplying crude oil to Bandar Abbas Oil Refinery, an offshoot of the Goreh-Jask crude oil pipeline with a daily capacity of 300,000 barrels, was officially inaugurated on Thursday. The project aims to enhance production stability and develop the country's strategic infrastructure, Shana reported.

The inauguration ceremony attended by Mohammad Sadeq-Azimir, CEO of the National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC); Mohammad Meshkinfam, CEO of the National Iranian Oil Engineering and Construction Company; Ahmad

Hashemi, CEO of Bandar Abbas Oil Refinery; Mousa Ahmadi, head of the parliamentary Energy Committee; and Mohammad Ashouri Taziani, governor general of Hormuzgan Province. Completion and operation of the 30-inch pipeline, spanning 37 kilometers and branching from the Goreh-Jask line, now provide the Bandar Abbas refinery with a stable crude oil supply of 300,000 barrels per day.

The cost savings achieved by reducing crude transportation expenses are estimated at \$80 million annually. With an investment of approximately €32 mil-

lion, the project was funded by the National Iranian Oil Company as the National Iranian Oil Engineering and Construction Company oversaw execution, while Maroun Mechanic served as the main contractor.

The first crude oil transfer to the refinery's storage tanks occurred on December 25, 2024.

In addition to ensuring a stable crude supply, the pipeline addresses issues related to maritime transportation and adverse weather conditions. Crude oil will now be delivered via an onshore pipeline, reducing costs and improving supply reliability.