

Pezeshkian urges economists to propose blueprints for spending cuts, foreign trade boost

Economy Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Tuesday called on economic experts to provide the government with "the best solutions to optimize spending without causing dissatisfaction or problems" and to present proposals to boost foreign trade amid efforts to improve ties with neighboring and friendly countries. At a meeting with a group of economists, Pezeshkian said his administration is working to steadily enhance Iran's international relations and is engaged in talks with various parties to manage tensions. He added that the government aims to control spending in the next year's budget and asked economists for concrete recommendations, president.ir reported. The meeting was held to review economists' proposals for addressing the country's main economic challenges, including the budget deficit, inflation, imbalances and structural reforms. The president said experts agree inflation and the budget deficit are the most pressing issues facing Iran's economy, and that managing them is the government's first step toward reforms. He stressed that the administration is determined to resolve such problems at their root, noting that a recent joint session with Parliament also focused on this agenda. Another goal of the meeting, he said, was to exchange views on prioritizing reforms in various sectors and on how to implement them. He acknowledged that most state-run enterprises are loss-making and urged economists to advise on improving their performance, privatization or at least transferring their management. The government's central objective, he added, is to raise efficiency across all sectors. Pezeshkian also cited subsidy reform as



a key element of economic restructuring, emphasizing the need for targeted distribution to maximize benefits for end consumers. He said the current system merely wastes limited national resources. However, he pledged that any changes would be carried out with full consideration of economic and social impacts, along with complementary measures. He added that fourth-generation universities worldwide now focus on solving societal problems and meeting public needs, and said Iran should also delegate issues to universities, assigning them problem-solving responsibilities

for specific demographic groups based on practical frameworks. The president, announcing readiness to hold such meetings regularly, said, "holding these meetings will be more effective when experts from each field – taxation, banking, structural, public services and others – debate within specialized working groups, and the conclusions are presented to the government." Pezeshkian said his administration also seeks to strengthen social capital through initiatives such as community-based programs and improving education and healthcare services. By

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian meets with a group of economists in the capital Tehran on September 17, 2025. president.ir

delegating authority to provinces, the government aims to create a platform for greater participation from capable individuals in solving problems and managing affairs. If people feel a sense of ownership in the outcomes, he said, their motivation and determination for social engagement will grow.

'Unique capacity': China highlights Mazandaran's economic potential

Economy Desk

Chinese Ambassador to Iran, Zhong Peiwu, praised the northern province of Mazandaran for its "unique capacity for strategic cooperation" during a visit on Wednesday, saying the region could play a role in advancing global goals and strengthening bilateral ties. During his visit to Mazandaran, meetings were held with local officials, academics and business leaders, promising the start of a new chapter of scientific, industrial, agricultural and tourism cooperation between the two countries. "With the wisdom of Iranian officials, we hope relations between the two countries will also flourish at the provincial level," ISNA quoted Zhong as saying. Zhong highlighted Mazandaran's abundant natural resources, diverse agricultural products, vast forests and attractive tourism potential along the Caspian Sea. He also noted the province's academic strength, saying the University of Mazandaran has a long history and a prominent place in Iran's higher education system. The ambassador said Mazandaran could play an important role in trade, investment, renewable energy, forest economy and tourism, and pledged that China would work to encourage Chinese companies to invest in the northern province and help remove existing obstacles.

Iran-Kuwait trade rose 17% in 2024, hit \$130m in Q1 2025



By Sadeq Dehqan
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INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

Official trade between Iran and Kuwait reached about \$300 million in the Iranian calendar year starting March 21, up by around \$100 million from the previous year, according to Arash Nikpey, vice president of the Iran-Kuwait Joint Chamber of Commerce. Kuwaiti media, however, reported that bilateral trade rose 17% in 2024, with Iran's exports to Kuwait more than seven times its imports. The trade balance last year favored Iran by \$280 million, Nikpey told Iran Daily. He said dollar-denominated transactions also increased in the first quarter of 2025, with total trade hitting \$130

million, up 16% from the same period in 2024. Iranian exports to Kuwait stood at \$116 million during the three months, a 19% rise from \$97 million a year earlier. Imports from Kuwait fell 7% to \$14 million from \$15 million in the same period last year, leaving Iran with a positive trade balance of \$102 million, mostly due to export growth.

Reasons for trade growth

Nikpey attributed the rise in trade to reduced political tensions, more frequent exchanges between traders, increased Iranian production capacity, and stronger demand in Kuwait for a wider range of Iranian goods. He also cited export-friendly policies from both governments. The launch of a land route linking Iran to Kuwait through Iraq has further boosted exchanges, lowering transportation costs and improving the competitiveness of Iranian products in the Kuwaiti market.

Joint trade committee

Nikpey said Iran and Kuwait have recently agreed to set up a joint trade committee to explore cooperation, particularly in food, services, visa facilitation and logistics.

He noted that Kuwait has made significant investments in technology, healthcare, financial services and agriculture in recent years, which could deepen bilateral economic ties. Iran, with its industrial and agricultural base and skilled labor, could capture a larger share of Kuwait's import market, especially in food security, technical services and construction. Iran's main exports to Kuwait are non-oil goods and agricultural and industrial products. These include fruits and vegetables, building and mineral materials such as cement, tiles, ceramics and stone, as well as petrochemical and chemical products such as bitumen, plastics and polymers. Iran also ships seafood including fish and shrimp, light industrial products such as small appliances, auto parts and metal goods. By contrast, Iran typically imports from Kuwait higher value-added products, including processed petrochemicals and oil derivatives like industrial oils and specialty chemicals, industrial machinery and equipment, pharmaceuticals and medical devices, and luxury consumer goods such as branded clothing and advanced household appliances.

Azerbaijan-Nakhchivan new bridge on Aras corridor to open by March: Official



Economy Desk

Director General for International Affairs at the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development Amin Taraffo said a new bridge on the Aras corridor in northwestern Iran will be inaugurated by March, boosting road capacity between Azerbaijan and its exclave Nakhchivan via the Iranian route from Kalaleh to Jolfa. Taraffo told ILNA that the Aras corridor is not a new route, but the latest development is the construction of a new bridge along the way. "With the completion of this bridge, the road capacity connecting Azerbaijan to Nakhchivan from Kalaleh to Jolfa will increase," he said. Currently, around 250 trucks

pass through the corridor daily, a number that could rise once the new infrastructure is in place, he said. Construction of the bridge by Azerbaijan on the Kalaleh-Agh Band route, is already completed. On the Iranian side, physical progress has reached more than 70%, Taraffo said. He noted that broader construction works on roads and bridges to connect Azerbaijan and Nakhchivan through Iran are underway and being pursued by both sides. The corridor is already operational, Taraffo said, adding that since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the independence of the Caucasus and Central Asian states, Azerbaijan and Nakhchivan have maintained their connection through Iran.

Iranian steel firm pioneers first mechanized dry tailings project in Mideast

Economy Desk

A steel company in northeastern Iran has launched the Middle East's first "mechanized dry tailings stacking" project, a move aimed at cutting water consumption and improving industrial waste management, the project's director said on Wednesday. Morteza Sharifi, who oversees the initiative, told ILNA that the project has achieved 55% physical progress and represents both an environmental and economic transformation in Iran's steel sector. The plan, implemented with European technology, is designed to reduce water usage, optimize tailings management methods, and lower environmental risks. Iran faces a severe water shortage, and Sharifi said all consumer sectors must adopt scientific and engineering methods to optimize water use. He noted that Sangan Steel Mining Industries Company (SMIC) was the first in Khorasan Razavi Province to build a tailings dewatering system, which returns water to the production cycle. In the new approach, tailings are processed into what is known as "dry tailings," with reduced moisture, and then directed to dumps. The initiative replaces the traditional method of pumping slurry to tailings dams, which consumes large volumes of water, is costly and time-intensive, and carries serious environmental hazards.