

Regional alliances open new investment avenues: *Pezeshkian*

Economy Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Saturday that Tehran's growing ties with BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) are creating new opportunities for investors. Speaking at the annual Iran Capital Market Conference in Tehran, Pezeshkian said such diplomatic engagements are strengthening Iran's economic ties with neighboring states and "shaping new opportunities for investors," arguing that regional connectivity is becoming a key driver of growth for Iran's capital markets, according to the presidential website. Iran, long under US sanctions, has in recent years pivoted toward non-Western blocs to bolster trade and investment. It became a full SCO member in July 2023, joined BRICS on January 1, 2024, and on May 15, 2025, implemented a free trade agreement with the EAEU — comprising Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia. These moves aim to integrate Iran into alternative economic networks and attract capital despite ongoing financial restrictions. Pezeshkian said the government must take "effective steps" to fa-



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian addresses the annual Iran Capital Market Conference in Tehran, on November 22, 2025. [president.ir](#)

cilitate the work of traders and investors and prevent further budget deficits, noting, "One of the drivers of inflation is policies and programs linked to the government." He acknowledged that such fiscal imbalances have persisted "for many years." He said the administration is working to align revenues and expenditures in the current year's budget, holding regular economic meetings to ensure fiscal discipline and curb unnecessary spending. Last week, the president called on lawmakers to help his government draft a deficit-free budget for the next fiscal year, warning that continued overspending would stoke inflation and derail the country's goals under the Seventh Development Plan (SDP). Iran's year-on-year inflation rate up to the seventh month of the Iranian calendar year (Sept. 23 – Oct. 22) climbed to 38.9 percent, marking a 1.4 percentage-point rise from the previous month, the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) reported on October 28. Pezeshkian also flagged chronic



"shortages in the water, electricity and gas sectors," calling them real and longstanding challenges. He stressed that Iran is seeking to secure the energy required for industry "by any means possible" to keep

manufacturers and producers operating. Part of the effort, he said, involves public outreach and discussions aimed at adjusting and improving the country's energy consumption patterns.

According to the president, Iran has increased electricity generation from solar panels and other renewable sources "200-fold compared to previous periods," and expects that figure to reach "700-fold by the end of

the year." His government has set a goal of installing 30,000 MW of renewables in the next three years to help ease daily power shortage which was around 12,000 MW last summer.

Six nations sign Istanbul deal to boost China-Europe rail transit via Iran

Economy Desk

Representatives from Iran, China, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Turkey signed an agreement in Istanbul to expand rail transit along the southern branch of a key transport corridor, a move that positions Iran as a "golden gateway" for container trains traveling from China to Europe. Under the six-party deal, the countries along the route com-



mitted to setting unified and competitive tariffs, speeding up train transit times, reducing ancillary and customs costs, and providing the neces-

sary infrastructure to enable a sharp increase in container train traffic through the corridor's southern branch, which passes through Iran, IRNA re-

ported. Nearly 60 million tons of cargo — transported on about 20,000 container freight trains — moved between China and Europe last year. Officials expect that once the new commitments are implemented, a significant share of that rail transit volume will shift to routes crossing the Islamic Republic of Iran, generating substantial economic and commercial benefits for the country.

Iran plans contract farming, supply deals to fix trade gap

Economy Desk

Iran plans to increase imports from Afghanistan through contract farming and supply agreements for key agricultural goods, a move aimed at narrowing a huge trade imbalance as Tehran exports \$3 billion annually to Kabul but imports only \$100 million, the head of the Iran-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce said. Mahmoud Sadat, speaking to ILNA, said Afghanistan lacked significant export capacity in industry and mining,

but held strong potential in agriculture, livestock, and horticulture. "There are good capacities in Afghanistan in agriculture, livestock, and horticulture for Iran," he said. Sadat noted that Iran would increase Afghan imports from needed goods such as cotton, meat, animal feed, sesame, legumes, and similar items. He acknowledged the trade imbalance had long drawn objections from Afghan officials. "Our major problem with Afghanistan is the imbalance between ex-



ports and imports," he said, adding that Afghan authorities consistently urged Iran to buy more from their country. Beyond trade, Sadat said the initiative aims

to "help create employment and boost security in Afghanistan" by integrating its agricultural output into Iran's supply chains through structured, long-term agreements.

ICT minister pushes regional digital cooperation in meetings at Baku

Economy Desk

Iran's Minister of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), Sattar Hashemi, held a series of bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the 2025 World Telecommunication Development Conference in Baku, discussing expanded regional cooperation in digital infrastructure, technical knowledge exchange and implementation of existing agreements. During talks with Isfandiyor Saadullo, head of Tajikistan's Communications Service, Hashemi emphasized Iran's readiness to share expertise in fiber-optic expansion, 5G rollout, and large-scale telecom project management, ISNA reported. He welcomed Tajikistan's request for academic collaboration and proposed joint educational and research programs in telecommunications, artificial intelligence, and information technology. Noting that a comprehensive cooperation memorandum between Iran and Tajikistan was signed a year ago but has yet to enter the operational phase, Hashemi called for "swift action, a clear timeline, and a jointly developed implementation document" to activate agreed-upon projects. In a separate meeting with Pakistan's Minister of Information Technology and Telecommunications, Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Hashemi described full implementa-



tion of the memorandum of understanding inked during Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian's recent visit to Islamabad as an "urgent necessity and shared priority." He stressed that Iran and Pakistan, as pivotal players in South and West Asia, must leverage their joint capacities to establish secure and sustainable communication corridors. Hashemi highlighted Iran's experience in developing its National Information Network, expanding fiber coverage, and ensuring network resilience during crises, and proposed enhanced technical knowledge exchange, cross-border optical connectivity, traffic exchange centers, and joint participation in new data transit routes. He also advanced Iran's push for "technology diplomacy" through talks with Kenya's and Algeria's communications ministers. In discussions with Algeria's Post and Telecommunications Minister, Sid Ali Zer-

ouki, the two sides explored cooperation in e-government, digital economy, space industry, cybersecurity, and regional connectivity. Meeting with William Kabogo Githau, Kenya's representative, Hashemi cited Kenya's strategic position in East Africa and its role in the African Telecommunications Union as "a significant opportunity for regional collaboration." He offered to share Iran's advances in e-government integration, unified public service platforms, and nationwide digital business ecosystems through joint training programs and expert forums. Throughout the engagements, Hashemi underscored the need for "systematic follow-up on agreements, rapid operationalization of memoranda, and leveraging shared regional capacities" to strengthen Iran's role in continental digital partnerships.