New production line for hybrid vehicles to be launched by yearend: *Minister*

Economy Desk

Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Mohammad Atabak announced on Sunday the unveiling of a new production line for domestically manufactured hybrid vehicles by the end of the current Iranian year in March 2026.

The rollout, scheduled for next year, marks a major step toward modernizing Iran's auto industry and reducing environmental emissions, Atabak said. The first hybrid models produced by local manufacturers will be introduced as part of the government's upcoming initiatives, IRIB reported.

Production volume will depend directly on market demand, the minister added. "As consumers purchase these vehicles, production capacity will naturally expand," he said, noting that higher output could improve consumer access and ultimately lead to lower prices.

Most new vehicles currently in development will feature advanced engines designed to meet a presidential directive requiring fuel consumption below 5 liters per 100 kilometers. According to Atabak, these engines will significantly enhance efficiency and reduce fuel costs for drivers.

Hybrid models entering the market are expected to achieve substantially lower fuel consumption compared to older vehicles, the minister emphasized.

Meanwhile, gasoline types that have passed rigorous 85- and 125-item quality tests will continue to be produced. Such tests ensure fuel quality and performance, enabling automakers to rely on high-grade gasoline for new engine technologies, Atabak said.

IRNA

The announcement builds on recent milestones in Iran's push toward vehicle electrification. In March 2022, an Iranian automotive company based in the southern city of Shiraz unveiled the country's first all-electric vehicle (EV).

In October 2025, Iran's second-largest carmaker introduced the country's first domestically developed Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicle (PHEV), as part of broader efforts to align with global trends in automotive electrification. Separately, the country's largest automaker had already unveiled a Hybrid Electric Vehicle (HEV), which it says is in the late stages of development or pre-production.

Economy posts slight expansion in H1 calendar year: *SCI*

The Iranian economy expanded slightly in the first half of the calendar year that began in late March 2025, according to figures from the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI).

SCI data published on Monday showed that Iran's gross domestic product (GDP) reached 50,568 trillion rials (over $42.14 billion at free-market prices) in the six months to September 22, up 0.1% from the same period last year, Press TV reported.

Using 2021 fixed prices as its baseline, the SCI reported that Iran's GDP excluding oil contracted by 0.5% year on year to 38,189 trillion rials in the six months to late September. The figures indicate that the Iranian economy returned to positive growth after a 0.1% contraction in the June quarter, the first negative rate in four years.

The continued growth has come despite a harsh regime of US sanctions that seeks to restrict Iran's ability to sell oil and recover its export proceeds. The SCI generally produces more conservative growth estimates than the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), which typically reports higher GDP figures. The agency had reported a 3% economic growth rate for the year to late March, while the CBI put the rate at 3.1%.

Figures released on Monday showed Iran's manufacturing and mining sector, which includes the country's large oil industry, expanded by 0.3% year on year in the six months to late September, while the petroleum sector itself grew by 1.8% over the same period. Agriculture was one of the worst-performing sectors of the economy during the April–September period, contracting by 3%. By contrast, the services sector expanded by 0.5% over the same timeframe.

Tehran University to set up Baghdad tech park branch in regional outreach push

Economy Desk

Tehran University is moving forward with plans to establish an international branch of its Science and Technology Park (STP) in the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, as part of a broader push to expand Iran's science-based diplomacy across the region, the organization's head said.

Ali Asadi, head of Tehran University's Science and Technology Park, told ISNA that the university is actively pursuing the creation of a branch in one of the neighboring countries, with Baghdad selected as the location.

"The international campus of Tehran University has already taken shape in Baghdad, and we hope to establish a branch of the Science and Technology Park alongside it," Asadi said.

He emphasized that the initiative aligns with Iran's focus on science diplomacy, noting that the university is not limiting its efforts to domestic development. "We are developing knowledge-based diplomacy and aiming to add an international dimension to these activities in regional countries," he said.

Asadi stressed the university is not limiting its activities to domestic development. "We are advancing knowledge-based diplomacy and seeking to add an international dimension to these efforts in regional countries," he said.

Companies capable of commercializing their products will be hosted at the international branch of the park, he added.

"We are currently in the negotiation phase and working on infrastructure development for this project," Asadi said. "We are striving to place marketable products from Iranian companies within this park and are actively pursuing the necessary arrangements."

Installing small solar farms in urban spaces could help supply clean energy

By Reza Yari
Renewable energy researcher

PERSPECTIVE
EXCLUSIVE

Renewables play a vital role in the economic, social and environmental activities of every country, as the limitations of fossil-fuel resources and the global warming caused by greenhouse-gas emissions are forcing policymakers and planners to grapple with new and rapidly evolving economic realities. For this reason, economic strategies built on the assumption of unlimited and cheap fossil-fuel supplies can no longer sustain economic growth as they once did—nor for very long in the future.

The interplay of factors such as rising energy consumption, increasing energy prices, dwindling resource availability, climate change and the declining capacity of ecosystems to provide essential services has heightened vulnerability and introduced major environmental, economic and social uncertainties.

According to expert assessments, global energy demand will increase by around 60% over the next 25 years. In addition, thermal power plants remain among the key sources of air pollution in both quantitative and qualitative terms. Given the high volume of converted energy and the considerable energy losses across thermal power plants, shifting attention to renewable sources can lead to substantial fuel savings and meaningful reductions in environmental pollutants.

In Iran, a large portion of the country's electricity is generated by fossil-fuel power plants. Increasing the use of renewable-energy plants as an alternative to fossil-fuel facilities can prevent power outages and reduce other damages caused by reliance on fossil fuels. Solar power is one of the most important renewable resources, though solar irradiation levels vary across different parts of the world; the highest levels lie along the Earth's solar belt. Iran is in high-irradiation zones, and studies show that through innovative ideas, modern technologies and mobile mechanical structures that track sunlight at the time of panel installation and during energy generation, a considerable share of the country's power needs could be supplied.

Iran enjoys more than 300 sunny days in more than two-thirds of its territory, with an average solar irradiation of 4.5–5.5 kWh per square meter per day, placing it among countries with strong solar potential. The metropolis of Tehran lies between 51°17′ to 51°33′ E longitude and 35°36′ to 35°44′ N latitude, at an elevation range of 900 to 1,800 meters above sea level. According to the latest official census conducted in 2006, Tehran had a population of 8,694,000. In this context, meeting part of Tehran's electricity demand through renewable sources is of great importance.

In 2017, I set out to focus research on establishing and operating small-scale renewable-energy power stations installed on taxi terminus shelters, BRT stations, pedestrian bridges, car parks of recreational and sports centers, and the rooftops of mosques and schools—using mobile mechanical structures that track sunlight and deploying equipment designed to maximize power output at the time of installation. Evaluating available equipment and systems to identify weaknesses, update their data inventories, conduct feasibility studies for expanding renewable-energy projects, and train stakeholders across Tehran's urban network remain key requirements for improving the management and development of renewable-energy initiatives.

Importance & necessity

With rising demand from end-users, the need for electricity generation has increased. At the same time, higher natural-gas prices and regulatory emphasis on limiting greenhouse-gas emissions have pushed up the cost of fossil-fuel-based electricity production. This has encouraged a shift toward alternative energy sources, including solar electricity generation through photovoltaic systems.

Major advantages of distributed generation across most renewable-energy power plants include civil-defense resilience, enhanced energy security, and reduced grid losses due to their proximity to consumption points. A notable portion of electricity generated in renewable-energy facilities is injected directly into distribution networks, where it is consumed at the same voltage level. By contrast, electricity produced by thermal power plants lacks these advantages and must pass through transmission, sub-transmission and distribution stages before reaching end-users. As a result, when grid losses are taken into account, electricity generated by renewables can be considered equivalent to higher-volume thermal generation.

Furthermore, the consumption of various energy carriers—particularly fossil fuels—remains the primary cause of air pollution, greenhouse-gas emissions and climate change. Greenhouse gases, produced largely by human industrial activity, not only contribute to pollution but also alter atmospheric composition and drive climate shifts.

IRNA

Given Iran's position on the solar belt, the need for stable power generation, the imperative to avoid blackouts for end-users, the importance of environmental protection, and the requirement to curb air pollutants and greenhouse-gas emissions—alongside national objectives outlined in the country's Seventh Development Plan concerning energy management, sustainable consumption, integration of renewables into public transport and urban infrastructure, and the establishment of strategic energy-management systems in major municipalities—the deployment of small-scale renewable-energy power stations has become essential.

In addition, the scalable nature and lower costs of such plants enable private-sector participation and help foster a broader culture of clean-energy consumption.