

President urges integrated, science-based reform of transport networks

Minister: Iran seeks to reclaim role as regional logistics, transit hub

Economy Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Saturday said the country's transportation networks must be reformed through an integrated, science-based approach aligned with international standards, as the government simultaneously moves to reposition Iran as a regional logistics and transit hub. Speaking at a ceremony marking Transport Week, Pezeshkian said short-term and fragmented measures would not meet Iran's long-term transportation and development needs, stressing the need for appropriate technology and sustainable quality in reforming the sector, president.ir reported.

"Reforming the transportation network must be based on international standards, suitable technology and sustainable quality, and short-term, temporary measures will not meet the country's needs," he said. Describing transportation as the backbone of national development, Pezeshkian warned that deficiencies in core networks would lead to imbalance, inefficiency and rising pressures across the economy.

"Transportation is the backbone of the country's development. Any failure in the main transport networks will result in backwardness, imbalance and higher costs, and correcting this path is only possible through a scientific, integrated approach and broad-based participation," he said.

Outlining the government's infrastructure strategy, the president stressed the need for a unified and forward-looking vision across road, rail, urban, air and maritime transport, saying all components of the network must function in coordination. The president emphasized the importance of long-term corridor planning, noting that many developed countries designate wide land reserves from the outset to allow for future expansion of rail and road networks, roadside services and complementary infrastructure. Pezeshkian also stressed the need to align route capacity with traffic volumes, warning that both shortages and unplanned surplus capacity could disrupt



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian addresses a ceremony marking Transport Week in Tehran on December 20, 2025. [president.ir](#)

network performance. "If this balance is not observed — whether due to insufficiency or unplanned excess — the network will face dysfunction," he said. Citing global experience, he said urban, road, rail, air and maritime transport must be governed within a single coordinated framework under unified policymaking, adding that the government is designing and implementing a model of integrated transport management. Pezeshkian said the administration is prepared to delegate executive authority to professional associations, organizations and the private sector within a structured framework aimed at improving efficiency and service quality. "This process requires dialogue, interaction and the definition of clear and accountable frameworks," he said.



At the same event, Minister of Roads and Urban Development Farzaneh Sadeq Malvajerd said restoring Iran's position as a regional logistics and transit hub is a central objective of the ministry's agenda, ISNA reported. "Our effort is to bring Iran back as a transit hub, so that we can say we are a logistics and transit hub," she said, adding that transport corridors are a top priority

for the ministry.

Sadeq Malvajerd said transport and transit diplomacy, along with renewed cooperation and practical engagement with neighboring countries, is embedded across all of the ministry's programs. She added that removing obstacles facing the private sector is a key focus, describing the government's role as one of facilitation

rather than interference.

Sadeq Malvajerd cited recent steps as examples of the stated approach, including the addition of 2,000 airline seats over the past week, the signing of contracts with private companies in the rail sector, agreements in road, freeway and rail projects, and investment packages scheduled to be unveiled over the next two months.

Eslami: Rising demand drives Iran's nuclear exports to dozens of countries



Economy Desk

The Islamic Republic is currently exporting nuclear products, including radiopharmaceuticals, heavy water, and its derivatives, to dozens of countries, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) said, noting that about 56 nations have requested and continue to seek such items. In an interview with the Iranian Labour News Agency (ILNA), AEOI chief Mohammad Eslami said, "About 56 countries have requested our products and continue to do so. For those not affected by transport sanctions,

we are exporting. For those facing transport sanctions, we are seeking solutions to deliver products to end users." Eslami emphasized that Iran's nuclear products enjoy strong and growing international demand. "Our product balance is global, and there is a worldwide market for them," he said. "We also receive formal programs from interested countries that wish to become regular consumers of our products." The remarks follow Iran's unveiling of four new strategic achievements in nuclear technology last week at the 26th

International Research, Technology, and Innovation Exhibition, which included two radiopharmaceuticals for the early diagnosis and treatment of metastatic melanoma, an automated system for producing bone pain palliation drugs, and the launch of a national nuclear education network. At the ceremony, Eslami highlighted the AEOI's dual scientific and industrial role, noting that its innovations carry significant social and economic impact.

"We are a successful symbol of sustaining the cycle of creativity and innovation — where knowledge is transformed into technology, and technology into usable systems and solutions in the shortest possible time," he said. "This transformation — from science to practical, people-centered solutions — has been realized within our organization." Recalling past milestones, Eslami noted that Iran announced 50 domestically produced radiopharmaceuticals in 2023, with 20 more in the research phase. "Today, I am proud to report that we have reached up to 70 radiopharmaceuticals," he said.

Gov't drafts near-zero deficit budget for coming year, vows no CBI financing



Finance Minister Ali Madanizadeh addresses a ceremony marking the opening bell of the Tehran Stock Exchange on December 20, 2025. [meja.ir](#)

Economy Desk

Finance Minister Ali Madanizadeh said on Saturday that Iran's draft budget for the next fiscal year — which begins on March 21, 2026 — has been structured to achieve a near-zero deficit, imposing no pressure on the Central Bank (CBI), and helping control inflation. Speaking on the sidelines of a ceremony marking the opening bell of the Tehran Stock Exchange, held Saturday morning, Madanizadeh emphasized that the government is not using the capital market to cover budget shortfalls. "As the Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance, I categorically state that we are absolutely not pursuing this objective," he said, IRNA reported. He acknowledged that under the current fiscal year's budget law — which started on March 21, 2025 — the government is obligated to privatize state-owned companies. "Naturally, one of the means of privatizing state companies is the capital market, which is highly trans-

parent," he said. "Rather than privatizing behind closed doors, the process is carried out transparently." Madanizadeh added, "Privatizing state companies through the stock exchange is one of the measures that will be implemented. The government is required by law to divest to secure budgeted resources, but our plan is not to turn to the capital market to finance a budget deficit. Rather, we are using the capital market to advance privatization and implement Article 44 of the Constitution." In November, Madanizadeh said the government has seen no decline in oil revenues and will proceed with its budget planning as scheduled, adding, "Oil income will be included in the budget according to the usual plan." Benchmark Brent crude has recently traded around the mid-\$80s per barrel, and the Iranian government typically submits its draft budget to Parliament toward the end of the calendar year (March 20). The government has not dis-

closed its oil export assumptions for next year's budget. Iran does not release detailed figures on crude exports due to US sanctions, which it says require confidentiality. Addressing the reporters on Saturday, the minister expressed hope that, by resolving conflicts of interest, eliminating administered pricing, and reducing interventions in the capital market, "We will have a market that reflects the real economy — and I hope this market can restore public trust." On the upcoming budget, Madanizadeh noted that while the general framework has been approved by the government, details regarding feed pricing have not yet been finalized. "The good news is that the budget has been closed with minimal deficit," he said, "and it has been prepared in strict adherence to the president's directives to reduce redundant agencies and unnecessary expenditures." He explained that many government structures are either being dissolved or merged, resulting in lower state spending. "Currently, the drafted budget has a deficit close to zero and imposes no pressure on the Central Bank — a major step toward the inflation control program for the next year."

ISPA: Steel imports drop in first eight months in boost to domestic industry

Economy Desk

Iran's steel imports fell by 42% in volume and 36% in value during the first eight months of the current Iranian year — from March 21 to end of November — a decline that is being assessed as good news, according to data released by

the Iranian Steel Producers Association (ISPA). The association said nearly \$650 million worth of steel products were imported in this period, with steel sheet products accounting for more than 93% of the total, IRNA reported. Close to \$600 million of those

imports consisted of various steel sheets. Yet the necessity of such imports is under serious doubt, as more than 55% of the country's cold-rolled sheet production capacity and about 70% of its galvanized sheet capacity remain unused. The report added that the downward trend in iron and

steel chain imports over the eight-month period is clearly evident and explicitly described the reduction as "good news." ISPA also warned that, given the ongoing risk of dumping by China and Russia, policymakers must remain vigilant to protect domestic production.

