

# Pezeshkian: Iran-EAEU cooperation seen as long-term strategy for regional power hub

## Economy Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said cooperation between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) was a long-term strategy aimed at strengthening national sovereignty and helping build a regional power hub.

In a message to the Supreme Council of the EAEU, read out on Sunday by Iran's ambassador to Russia, Kazem Jalali, at a summit in St. Petersburg, Pezeshkian said Iran was seeking to establish a successful model of regional convergence based on shared cultural and historical commonalities.

The high-level meeting was attended by the presidents of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, as well as the prime minister of Armenia, marking a significant moment in the bloc's expansion.

"The future belongs to nations that pave the way for progress through cooperation and mutual trust," Pezeshkian said.

He identified trade and transport facilitation, energy security and technological development, financial infrastructure and people-to-people ties as key areas for strategic cooperation between Iran and the bloc.



The Supreme Council of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) summit, attended by the leaders of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, as well as Armenia, is held in St. Petersburg, Russia, December 21, 2025.

● IRNA

## Eurasia's central role in Iran's diplomacy

The president noted that while Iran is an active member of several international organizations, including BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and ECO, the EAEU holds a unique position in Iran's foreign policy.

He characterized the implementation of the Free Trade Agreement with the bloc in May as the beginning of a productive presence in this vital geographic expanse.

Pezeshkian described this step as "the most significant achievement of the year," providing a unique platform for national economies and traders to flourish.

According to the president, the real trade potential between Iran and the five EAEU members is far higher than current levels, and Tehran is firmly committed to a "trade leap" that will see volumes surge in the coming years.



Pezeshkian concluded by reaffirming that Iran's participation in the EAEU at the high-

est levels is a testament to its ironclad will to expand relations with all five members,

turning this historic opportunity into a turning point for collective growth.

## Digital economy share of 10% of GDP 'logical and attainable,' Veep says



Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref (c) addresses a meeting of the Digital Economy Development Headquarters in Tehran on December 22, 2025.

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## Economy Desk

Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref said achieving the target of generating 10% of gross domestic product from the digital economy mandated under Iran's Seventh Development Plan is "logical and attainable, not a slogan."

Aref made the remarks during a meeting of the Digital Economy Development Headquarters in Tehran, attended by stakeholders from Iran's digital economy ecosystem, IRNA reported.

He stressed the necessity of embracing digital economy, warning that managing the economy through traditional methods would impose "heavy costs" on the

country.

"We cannot set aside the digital component and manage the economy through traditional methods," Aref said. "If we want scientific, economic, and commercial relations with the world, we have no choice but to tap into digital economy, though it has its own conditions and regulations."

Taking a lead in the digital economy, he said, would enable Iran to export its knowledge and experience to the region. Aref noted that the country's development plans are based on the governance of emerging technologies as a national priority, as explicitly stated in Iran's 20-Year Vision Document, which calls for securing "the

top regional position in science and technology."

"The benefits and risks of technology must be considered together," he said. "We should strengthen the positive uses through a range of tools, including domestic ones, and address the negative impacts with clear and effective mechanisms."

Criticizing Iran's current performance in global tech indicators, Aref said, "Our current rankings are not worthy of our youth. Our best position is 37th, while our national and youth potential is far greater, and we must achieve the top regional position in science and technology." During the session, digital economy ecosystem stakeholders presented their activities and raised their views, proposals, concerns, and challenges related to the sector.

## Iran, Japan sign economic cooperation pact, eye post-sanctions surge



Senior economic and political officials from Iran and Japan pose for a photo during a high-level meeting at the Tehran Chamber of Commerce on December 22, 2025.

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## Economy Desk

Iran and Japan signed a cooperation agreement between the Tehran Chamber of Commerce and the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) during a high-level meeting in Tehran, where Japan's ambassador announced the revival of the economic section of his embassy. The event, held at the Tehran Chamber of Commerce and attended by senior economic and political officials from both countries, came as both sides seek to maintain ties despite ongoing sanctions and prepare for expanded cooperation in the post-sanctions period, IRNA reported.

The memorandum of understanding affirms both parties' commitment to ongoing collaboration in non-sanctioned and emerging sectors, with an emphasis on sustaining the presence of Japanese firms in Iran, strengthening economic diplomacy and laying the groundwork for a future expansion of bilateral ties.

Under the agreement, Tehran and Tokyo will work together to exchange trade delegations, organize joint training programs, and host business

matchmaking events designed to expand commercial ties between Iranian and Japanese enterprises.

Speaking at the meeting, Japan's Ambassador to Iran, Tamaki Tsukada, noted that Japanese companies "have maintained their presence in Iran despite the challenges posed by sanctions." He described the memorandum with the Tehran Chamber of Commerce as "a practical framework to enhance economic engagement and deepen cooperation between businesses of both nations."

Last week in an interview with Iran Daily, the Japanese ambassador expressed his country's interest in investing in Iran's oil, gas and petrochemical sectors and in partnering on the construction and rehabilitation of the country's energy infrastructure, stressing, however, that any such engagement depends on the removal of Western sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

Iran has been under Western sanctions for decades over its nuclear activities. Beyond affecting the oil and energy sectors, the embargoes have imposed costs even on human-

itarian areas, including access to medicines.

At the event, Takafumi Suzuki, Deputy Director General of JETRO, said the organization was fully ready to operationalize the agreement and outlined the main pillars of future cooperation. "The exchange of trade delegations, market-knowledge training courses and business matchmaking events will be placed on the joint agenda with the Tehran Chamber," Suzuki said.

Meanwhile, Mahmoud Najafi-Arab, head of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, addressed the gathering, which included board members, representatives, the secretary-general, and Japanese companies. He described the agreement as "a major step toward expanding bilateral economic relations," citing the longstanding economic ties between Iran and Japan.

Najafi-Arab stressed that "sanctions will not last forever" and urged Japanese firms to "take advantage of current opportunities to sustain cooperation and secure their place in Iran's future market." He emphasized Iran's official stance, noting that the government is working to lift interna-

tional restrictions, a point he said was intended to reassure Japanese businesses.

## Non-sanctioned sectors in focus

Fereydoun Vardinejad, secretary-general of the Tehran Chamber, pointed to potential areas of Iran-Japan cooperation, naming pharmaceuticals, healthcare, education, food, agriculture and technology as non-sanctioned sectors with immediate potential for collaboration. He also said the Tehran Chamber was ready to engage directly with the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce.

Masahiro Yamada, chairman of the Japan Business Association in Iran, proposed the creation of an "e-sports educational platform" and cooperation in anime film production, which he said could help connect technology specialists from both countries.

Saeed Tajik, head of the Energy and Environment Commission at the Tehran Chamber, called for leveraging mutual capacities to develop infrastructure for air pollution monitoring and research in Iran. Referring to previous cooperation with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) on modeling Tehran's air pollution, Tajik urged the revival of these studies and renewed collaboration on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, including obtaining Japanese carbon-reduction certification within this framework.

## IEA data shows surge in Iranian crude oil output

International Energy Agency (IEA) figures show that Iran has increased its oil production by a significant amount over the past year despite continued US sanctions aimed at restricting the country's ability to produce and export crude oil.

IEA data cited in a Sunday report by the Fars news agency showed that Iranian oil production had reached 3.5 million barrels per day (bpd) in November, Press TV reported.

The figure marked no change from October output but represented an increase of 110,000 bpd compared with production levels reported in December 2024.

The increase has come despite Iran remaining under a strict US sanctions regime that imposes heavy penalties on buyers of Iranian oil and on entities involved in its production and shipment. It has also occurred five months after Iran was involved in a conflict with

Israel, during which the United States carried out targeted attacks on Iranian nuclear facilities.

A series of United Nations sanctions resolutions reimposed in late September have also failed to affect Iran's oil production and export levels.

Figures released by leading energy analytics firm Tanker Trackers in early November showed that Iran had exported an average of 2.3 million bpd of crude oil through much of October, marking

a new record since US sanctions were imposed on the country in 2018.

This compares with oil exports falling to historic lows of nearly 300,000 bpd in May 2019, when Washington tightened sanctions on Iran.

Experts say Iran's growing ability to produce and market its oil highlights the failure of US President Donald Trump's administration and its so-called maximum pressure campaign against Iran.



● SHANA