

Iran's foreign exchanges surpass \$103b

Normal flow of trade, essential goods, imports continues

Economy Desk

The deputy head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) announced that the country's foreign trade is continuing without disruption and that the import of essential goods remains stable under the current conditions.

Morteza Salehi emphasized the strategic role of the Trade Promotion Organization in managing exports and imports, stating that the organization has focused all its efforts on reducing the challenges facing trade so that merchants and traders can carry on their business activities with minimal concern, according to ISNA.

Salehi reaffirmed the organization's readiness to respond to the needs and questions of economic actors, announcing that necessary measures have been implemented to facilitate trade processes — particularly regarding the import of essential goods required by society.

Concluding his remarks, the TPO deputy and advisor noted that trade cycles



are operating smoothly and that the organization continues to support producers and traders.

"Our main priority under current conditions is to accelerate trade processes, and so far, no major issues have been reported in this regard," he said.

Iran's 11-month trade figures

The Iranian Customs Administration announced that the country's foreign trade reached \$103.209 billion over the first 11 months of the current Iranian calendar year of 1404 (started March 21, 2025).

Based on the latest data released by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the country's trade in the 11 months of 1404 (March

2025–February 2026) amounted to 180.447 million tons, up two percent in weight compared with the same period last year.

The total value of trade during this period stood at \$103.209 billion, showing a 12.8 percent decrease compared with the same time last year.

The report added that 143.299 million tons of goods worth \$49.290 billion were exported to various countries, marking a 1.5 percent rise in weight but a 7.7 percent decline in value year-on-year.

Meanwhile, imports totaled 37.148 million tons valued at \$53.919 billion — representing a 4.3 percent increase in volume and a 17 percent drop in value compared with the corresponding period last year.

Over \$660k earmarked to support war victims

Economy Desk

The president of the Iranian Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture announced that the chamber's executive board has approved the allocation of IRR1 trillion (over \$660,000) in credit to provincial chambers of commerce to assist those affected by the ongoing imposed war.

Samad Hassanzadeh, president of the national chamber, stated that the heads of provincial chambers, in coordination and cooperation with provincial crisis management headquarters and the Iranian Red Crescent Society, will take action to address the situation of those impacted by the recent conflict.

Expressing condolences to the families of those killed in the American-Zionist attacks, Hassanzadeh emphasized: "In these difficult times, we are confident that the people of Iran, driven by their sense of altruism and patriotism, alongside the government's efforts, will make sacrifices to help compensate for the damages suffered by citizens, their fellow human beings, and their homes. The country's private-sector economic

actors also bear an important social responsibility in this regard."

Rental accommodation for displaced

Iran's Minister of Roads and Urban Development said the reconstruction process will be led by the Housing Foundation, adding that the assessment of damaged residential units and the formation of case files should be carried out immediately and as a matter of urgency by the relevant organizations.

For those homes deemed uninhabitable, the Housing Foundation will provide rental housing for residents, prioritizing relocation within their original neighborhoods or villages. Farzaneh Sadeq added that particularly in villages and small towns, efforts will be made to begin temporary housing using prefabricated units where possible.

In a virtual meeting with housing officials, the minister said that daily progress reports must be submitted to the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development's central headquarters.

Sadeq noted that, despite enemy media claims that the attacks targeted only military and security sites,

field evidence shows significant damage to infrastructure as well as private and civilian buildings.

She stressed the need to document the destruction and the response efforts to support potential legal action.

in preserving Iran's security and territorial integrity, and that swiftly addressing their problems is one of the government's priorities.

The minister further highlighted the importance of continuous public commu-



An employee of Tehran municipality discusses the state of a residential building with a civilian after a recent bombing by Israel and the United States in Tehran, Iran, on March 7, 2026.
 ● DAVOUD GHAHRDAR/ISNA

"These actions can be taken to international bodies as war crimes and crimes against humanity, and should not be overlooked," Sadeq emphasized.

She also underlined the need for special attention to border cities and regions of Iran with harsh climatic conditions, saying that the needs of these areas must be addressed with greater sensitivity to prevent the enemy from achieving its goals.

Sadeq added that residents of border regions have always played a crucial role

in communication about the ongoing measures, asserting that people must be kept informed of the services and actions underway so they can trust that their problems are being monitored and resolved.

She concluded, "We will certainly overcome this critical juncture. What matters most is how the people remember the officials' efforts and services. Therefore, with empathy, agility, and an active presence on the ground, we must respond effectively to the needs of the people."

Isfahan's historic heart damaged by nearby airstrikes

Wave of attacks harms cultural landmarks nationwide

Arts & Culture Desk

Explosions triggered by recent US and Israeli strikes have damaged several historic monuments across Iran, with the most extensive impact reported in the historic city of Isfahan, where blast waves struck parts of the Safavid-era Chehel Sotoun Palace and surrounding heritage complexes.

The attacks, which began on February 28, have raised alarm among cultural authorities who say the shockwaves have endangered key elements of Iran's architectural heritage, including Safavid mirrorwork, historic wall paintings and delicate wooden lattice windows known as orsi, IRNA reported. Among the most heavily affected sites is the Chehel Sotoun garden palace in Isfahan, part of the UNESCO-listed "Persian Gardens" ensemble. Field inspections on March 9 reported shattered wooden doors and windows, damaged mirrorwork and Safavid decorative layers, and harm to sections of the palace's double-layered roof. The central pavilion's columns were also pushed slightly out of alignment, raising concerns about structural stability.

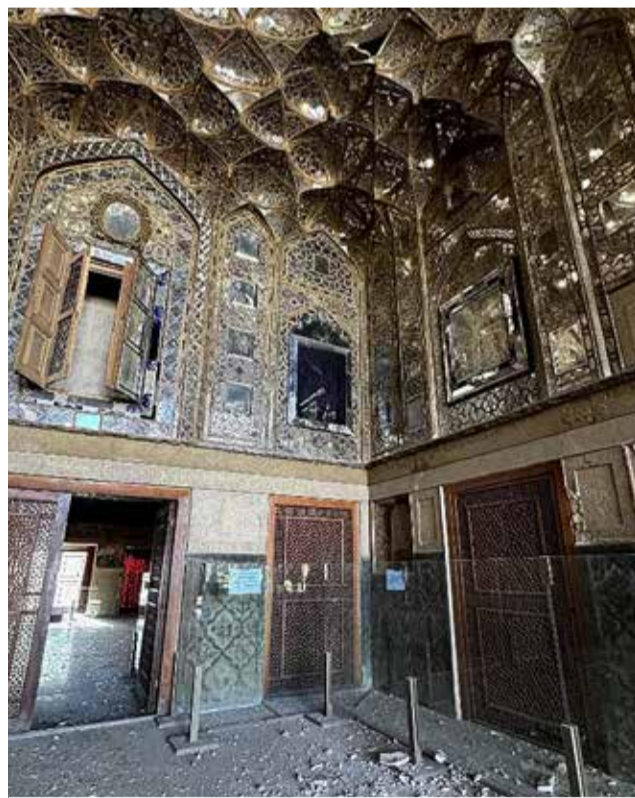
Officials said explosions near the Isfahan governor's compound, located in the heart of the historic district, caused additional damage across the wider Safavid-era Dowlatkhaneh complex surrounding

Naqsh-e Jahan Square. Ruhollah Seyedolasgari, a provincial heritage official, said blast waves damaged Timurid Hall, Ashraf Hall and several historic pavilions in the complex.

Parts of the Jabbehkhaneh building, now used as the Contemporary Arts Museum, also sustained roof damage, while windows and glass panels at the Ali Qapu palace overlooking Naqsh-e Jahan Square were shattered. Storefront windows around the historic square were also broken by the force of the explosions.

Chehel Sotoun itself dates to the Safavid period and is known for murals attributed to court painter Reza Abbasi, whose works helped define Persian miniature painting. Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmail Baghaei said the strikes targeted the historic core of the city. Writing on X on March 10, he said the attack had damaged "a distinguished civilizational monument" and warned that the international community "must not remain silent in the face of crimes against the shared heritage of humanity."

Other heritage sites across the country have also sustained damage. Ali Darabi, deputy minister and head of Iran's cultural heritage authority, said inspections documented structural damage at several historic complexes. In Tehran, parts of the former



The photo shows the damage done to the windows and fittings of the Chehel Sotoun Palace in Isfahan.
 ● IRNA

Senate building, now housing the Assembly of Experts, suffered extensive structural damage, while the former police headquarters building at Enghelab Square was destroyed. In Isfahan, historic buildings belonging to Isfahan University of Art were also affected by nearby explosions. The Sa-

faavid-era Tohidkhaneh complex and several Qajar-period houses known as the Hakim complex sustained damage, while shockwaves threatened the stability of the Safavid Mar-tapeters mansion.

Darabi said blast impacts were also recorded at the Falak-ol-Aflak fortress complex in Khor-

ramabad and several historic mansions in Sanandaj, where wooden windows, stucco decorations and architectural ornaments were damaged.

"These incidents constitute a clear violation of international obligations regarding the protection of cultural property during armed conflict," Darabi said, adding that Iran has begun submitting documentation of the damage to international organizations.

Iran has 29 UNESCO World Heritage sites, placing it among the top 10 countries globally in the number of registered cultural landmarks.

President Masoud Pezeshkian said in a message posted on X on March 10 that Iran is "the heir to a civilization at least 6,000 years old," adding that throughout history "no power has succeeded in erasing this storied name."

Diplomatic reactions have also followed the reported damage. In a letter to Denmark's culture minister Jakob Engel-Schmidt, Iran's ambassador in Copenhagen, Mohammadreza Sajjadi, criticized Western silence over the attack on Tehran's Golestan Palace, a UNESCO World Heritage site since 2013.

Iranian officials say assessments of the damage are continuing while legal and diplomatic efforts are under way to pursue the issue internationally and safeguard the country's historic sites.

Iran to reopen cinemas in calmer cities, eases screening limits

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's national cinema body will allow movie theaters to reopen in calmer cities from Friday, March 13, while lifting key screening restrictions for films seeking release, the head of film distribution at the Cinema Organization said Wednesday. Mojtaba Behzadian, director general of the Office for Film Distribution and Exhibition, told IRNA that cinemas outside Tehran, Tabriz and Isfahan may resume operations in coordination with the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance.

Comedy films remain barred from screening for now, while other genres are cleared to return to theaters.

The move aims to revive a film market disrupted by recent closures while giving producers greater flexibility to roll out new titles. Authorities have approved incentive packages for films entering the screening cycle, including longer theatrical runs and the removal of limits on daily show times and screening days.

Officials expect one or two new films to join the lineup within the next few days, though Behzadian said current conditions do not yet allow a broader slate of releases.

Films that had already premiered before the shutdown will remain in theaters. Titles such as 'Ahmad', 'Yooz', the animated feature 'The Legend of Sepehr', 'Nilo's Visage', and 'Juliet and the King' will continue their runs, with the closure period excluded from their official screening weeks.