

# TPO: Exports to Africa jump 25% as continental trade expands

## Economy Desk

Iran is conducting trade with 39 African countries, with the value of each ton of Iranian exports to the continent rising by 25%, a senior Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) official said, according to IRNA. Amir Roshanbakhsh, deputy head for the development of international businesses at the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran, provided details on the country's trade trends with Africa. "At present, Iran's trade exchanges with 39 countries across the African continent are ongoing, and export and import processes with these countries are underway," he said.

Roshanbakhsh said the value of each ton of Iranian exports to Africa had risen from \$442 to \$554. "The value of each ton of exported goods to the African continent was \$442, which has increased by 25% to \$554, meaning the value of Iran's exported goods to this continent has increased," he said. He added that the value of imports from Africa had declined by 11%, indicating that Iran was importing lower value-added goods while exporting products with higher added value. Roshanbakhsh said Iran's trade activity in North Africa remained relatively limited despite what he described as strong potential for expanding commerce in

the region. "If we divide the African continent into regions, our trade activities in North Africa have been relatively limited, despite the good capacity and potential these countries offer for our trade," he said. He added that Iran's trade ties with West Africa were stronger, with an active trade center operating in the region and efforts underway to increase exchanges between merchants. Roshanbakhsh also emphasized the development of emerging opportunities in Africa, saying trade relations with East African countries such as Tanzania had existed for years and continued to this day.



IRNA

## IKIA says foreign airlines in talks to resume Iran routes



IRNA

## Economy Desk

Foreign airlines are in talks to resume flights to Iran and have announced their readiness to return to the market, the chief executive of Tehran's Imam Khomeini International Airport (IKIA) City told ILNA. Ramin Kashef-Azar said foreign carriers were negotiating a return to Iranian routes as conditions stabilized following the conflict. The country's airspace gradually reopened after a ceasefire was reached between Washington and Tehran on April 8, halting a 40-

day conflict launched by the US-Israeli coalition in late February. "International flights are operating according to schedule. Domestic airlines are maintaining their international flight programs and flight conditions at this airport are normal," Kashef-Azar said. "For foreign airlines, Iran is an attractive market, and with every day they lose access to Iranian routes they incur losses. They do not want to lose this market, and multiple rounds of negotiations have so far taken place on returning to Iranian routes as conditions

stabilize," he said. He said domestic carriers were continuing to meet market demand until foreign airlines resumed operations. "Domestic airlines are continuing to meet existing market demand, and with longer operating hours, the number of flights at Imam Khomeini Airport is also increasing," he said. Kashef-Azar said Iran Air was currently operating Hajj flights without the participation of Saudi airlines and had encountered no problems. He added that foreign airlines had also moved to remove parked aircraft from Imam Khomeini airport during the period of conflict. Kashef-Azar said development projects at Imam Khomeini airport were continuing without interruption. "Development is our right, and during this period no project was halted or left unfinished," he said.

## IRCS pharmaceutical firms suffer \$83m wartime damage

Mohammad Reza Shanesaz  
IRCS

## Economy Desk

Two pharmaceutical and medical equipment companies affiliated with the

Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) suffered an estimated \$83.3 million (1.5 trillion tomans) in damages during the US-Israeli war against Iran, the head of the organization's medical procurement body told ISNA. Mohammad Reza Shanesaz, head of the Iranian Red Crescent Society's Medical Procurement Organization, said nearly 40-day war damaged the pharmaceutical and medical equipment companies. He said laboratories, production halls and other

sections of the companies were damaged, forcing the Medical Procurement Organization out of production for two days. However, Shanesaz said employees, most of them women, quickly resumed operations. "Without any fear, they immediately got to work, removed the obstacles that had halted production, and the company's production resumed," he said. He added that both companies had also come under attack during the earlier 12-day Israeli-imposed war in June.

Shanesaz said preliminary estimates put the damage to the two companies at around 1.5 trillion tomans, though he said the figure would "certainly increase." He also said eight containers carrying materials needed for the production of hemodialysis filters had been seized aboard the vessel Tosca. He said obtaining the materials had been difficult and time-consuming, and that their seizure would complicate the production of medical equipment for dialysis patients until the cargo was released.

## IRISL ranks 17th among world's top container shipping lines

## Economy Desk

The Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL) ranked 17th among the world's top container shipping companies in the latest Alphaliner rankings, according to Tasnim news agency. Swiss-based Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) retained its position as the world's largest container shipping company with a capacity of 7.319 million TEU. Denmark's Maersk and France's

CMA CGM ranked second and third, with capacities of 4.661 million TEU and 4.289 million TEU, respectively. China's COSCO Group ranked fourth with a capacity of 3.597 million TEU. Germany's Hapag-Lloyd, Singapore-based Ocean Network Express (ONE) and Taiwan's Evergreen Marine ranked fifth through seventh, respectively. South Korea's Hyundai Merchant Marine (HMM) ranked eighth with a capacity of 1.03 million TEU, while Taiwan's

Yang Ming Marine Transport ranked ninth with a capacity of 741,908 TEU. IRISL ranked 17th globally with a container shipping capacity of 142,180 TEU. IRISL, Iran's state shipping carrier, has operated under multiple rounds of US sanctions in recent years targeting Iran's shipping and logistics sectors. Washington reimposed sanctions on IRISL and dozens of affiliated entities and vessels in 2018 and expanded measures in subsequent years.



The company has also faced operational pressure amid heightened tensions in regional shipping routes following the recent US naval blockade on Iranian ports and shipping activity linked to the Strait of Hormuz.

## UAE pursues breakaway ...

In summary, these ties are likely to grow stronger in the medium term and could eventually develop into a stable and strategic partnership in the long run. However, this does not necessarily mean the outcome will benefit the UAE. The Palestinian cause remains a central issue in the Arab world and is not something that can simply be brushed aside. The growing rapprochement between Arab states — particularly the UAE — and Israel effectively amounts to a direct abandonment of that cause, and it will undoubtedly carry consequences. Moreover, given the nature of the confrontation that unfolded between Iran and the UAE, it has become evident that the UAE could, because of its provocations against Iran, face setbacks that push it years backward. Abu Dhabi is also likely to recognize that its foreign policy must ultimately place reliable

neighbors — including the Arab Persian Gulf states and Iran — at the center of its strategic calculations, rather than shaping its policies primarily around the interests of the United States and Israel.

**Before the recent escalation, many believed Saudi Arabia was moving toward normalizing ties with Israel and joining the Abraham Accords. In light of the war and the growing tensions between Riyadh and Abu Dhabi, can Saudi Arabia still be expected to move toward an agreement with Israel?**

Prior to the war, there were many concrete indicators suggesting that Saudi Arabia could eventually join the Abraham Accords. However, considering Iran's role in the region and its emergence as an undeniable regional — if not extra-regional — power, it can now be argued that the approach of both re-

gional and international actors toward Iran is likely to change.

This shift could push many countries, including neighboring states such as Saudi Arabia, to reconsider and potentially recalibrate their foreign policies and alliance structures. One of the most significant aspects of this process would involve redefining Riyadh's relationship with the United States and, subsequently, with Israel.

As for whether Saudi Arabia will join the accords in the short, medium, or long term, it is still too early to say with certainty. Much will depend on the final outcome of the war.

If positive negotiations emerge between Iran and the United States, Saudi Arabia could remain in a state of uncertainty regarding the Abraham Accords, or at least continue to weigh its options cautiously. However, if no agreement is reached between Washington and Teh-

ran and the military costs of instability in the region continue to rise, there is a possibility that Saudi Arabia could, under a form of compulsion — partly voluntary and partly imposed by circumstances — become directly involved in the confrontation and eventually join the Abraham Accords. In this regard, the outcome of the war will be highly consequential.

**Could the widening rift between the UAE and several key Arab actors, including Abu Dhabi's withdrawal from frameworks such as OPEC and OAPEC, create new diplomatic, economic, or security opportunities for Iran in the post-war period?**

After the war, Iran's regional role has changed in a fundamental way. From a realistic standpoint, Iran has entered a new phase of power, having demonstrated both a degree of deterrence ca-

pability and its broader strength in both offensive and defensive arenas.

The UAE's withdrawal from OPEC and Arab alliances, as well as its confrontational posture toward Iran, could create several opportunities for Tehran, including strengthening Iran's regional standing. Now, Iran could use this opportunity to enhance its leverage — both through control over the Iranian islands and through its oil leverage and the strategic importance of the Strait of Hormuz. This could allow Tehran to emerge as a more influential and powerful regional actor.

That said, a more precise assessment will require additional time, as the full consequences of the war have not yet become entirely clear and the situation remains, so to speak, in a gray zone. More time is needed before more definitive and accurate analyses can be offered.