

Pezeshkian urges nationwide curb on fuel waste to boost public welfare

Economy Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Wednesday the government's top priority is supporting household livelihoods and directing national resources toward productive and essential sectors of the economy, adding that Iran cannot allocate resources to importing fuel for "non-essential consumption."

In remarks during a meeting with senior officials of the oil ministry, Pezeshkian stressed the need to present a realistic assessment of the country's conditions to the public, saying citizens must be informed that Iran faces limitations in gasoline supply and certain energy carriers, and that overcoming these constraints requires public cooperation and changes in consumption patterns, according to IRNA.

"The government cannot allocate the country's resources to importing fuel for non-essential consumption," he said.

Pezeshkian said continued unnecessary con-

sumption and widespread use of single-occupancy vehicles, particularly under external pressure and damage to parts of the country's energy infrastructure, amounts to waste of national resources.

The president called for expanding public transportation use and reducing fuel consumption, saying savings should be redirected away from gasoline imports toward improving living standards, strengthening social support systems, and financing food subsidy programs for low-income groups.

The remarks came during a detailed review session with the oil minister, deputy ministers and senior managers of Oil Ministry, where officials presented updates on oil production, exports, gas and petrochemical operations, and the status of energy infrastructure.

The oil minister also provided an assessment of the sector's performance during a 40-day US-Israeli war that began in late February, as well as efforts to maintain production stability, repair damaged facilities, and restore

output capacity.

The country is facing growing external economic and maritime pressure, including US restrictions targeting its shipping and oil trade through a naval blockade imposed since mid-April. The move, part of what Washington has described as "Operation Economic Fury," is aimed at pressuring Tehran into a peace agreement following the aggression. Officials further outlined technical reconstruction work on damaged units and the management of conditions following restrictions and the US maritime blockade in the Strait of Hormuz targeting Iranian ports, alongside updates on crude output, exports and gas network performance.

Pezeshkian praised the energy sector's response during the crisis, saying it prevented disruptions to production, transmission and fuel supply. In separate directives, he instructed the Oil Ministry to prioritize gas allocation to productive, high-value-added sectors in order to reduce waste and generate additional



President Masoud Pezeshkian (R) holds talks with senior officials of the Oil Ministry in Tehran on May 20, 2026.
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national revenue, and to develop a provincial allocation system based on real regional de-

mand to ensure stable energy supply for strategic sectors.

Iran-designated route enables 6m barrels of crude to exit Persian Gulf



Supertankers carrying 6 million barrels Middle East crude exit Strait of Hormuz via Iran transit route.
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Three supertankers carrying 6 million barrels of Middle Eastern crude crossed the Strait of Hormuz on Wednesday en route to Asian markets via a transit route that Iran has ordered ships to use, while another tanker was entering the Persian Gulf, shipping data from LSEG and Kpler showed.

The vessels had been waiting in the Persian Gulf for more than two months before crossing the strait, according to the shipping data. The tankers were among a handful of supertankers exiting the Persian Gulf this month through the Iranian-designated transit route. The US-Israeli war on Iran which began on February 28 has severely curtailed shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, through which around one-fifth of the world's supply of oil and energy normally flows.

South Korean-flagged Very Large Crude Carrier (VLCC) Universal Winner, carrying 2 million barrels of Kuwaiti crude loaded on March 4, was exiting the strait following the departure

of two Chinese tankers on Wednesday, the data showed. Kpler data showed the tanker is heading to Ulsan, where the country's largest refiner SK Energy is located, to discharge its cargo on June 9, according to Reuters.

South Korean Foreign Minister Cho Hyun first disclosed the development during a parliamentary session, saying, "At this very moment, a South Korean tanker is exiting the Strait of Hormuz under coordination with the Iranian side," the Korea Herald reported.

Cho added that consultations with the Iranian authorities had been completed and that the vessel had "begun sailing yesterday and is passing through very cautiously." He also mentioned "2 million barrels," apparently referring to the volume of crude oil aboard the tanker, the Korea Herald reported.

South Korea's Foreign Ministry later confirmed that "one South Korean tanker has passed through the Strait of Hormuz and is continuing its voyage," suggesting the vessel had exited the high-risk waters around the strait and entered a safer maritime zone. Around 10 South Korean crew members were aboard the tanker that completed the transit, the ministry said in a message to reporters.

An official at South Korea's Foreign Ministry, requesting anonymity, told reporters the vessel's movement was taking place "in coordination with relevant countries, including Iran, to ensure the vessel's safety."

According to the ministry official, the Irani-

an government informed the South Korean Embassy in Tehran on Monday night that one South Korean vessel would be allowed to transit the strategic waterway.

"The government plans to additionally request that all South Korean vessels be allowed to transit freely through the Strait of Hormuz," the official said.

The ministry said one of 26 South Korean vessels currently in or near the Strait of Hormuz began sailing Tuesday morning from waters near Qatar. Officials said the vessel used the same route previously taken by ships that managed to leave the strait after the outbreak of the conflict.

The development comes some 88 days after the outbreak of the West Asia conflict, during which commercial shipping through the Strait of Hormuz has faced severe disruption amid heightened regional tensions and security concerns.

Before the war began, shipping traffic through the strait averaged 125 to 140 daily passages, and 20,000 seafarers remain stranded inside the Persian Gulf on board hundreds of ships. Shipping traffic has averaged 10 vessels going into and out of the strait in recent days and has included cargo vessels and other ships such as chemical and liquefied petroleum tankers, with crude oil tankers still representing a small proportion of the total volume, according to Reuters analysis based on ship tracking data.

Around 10 ships crossed the strait in the past 24 hours and included small cargo ships and a chemical tanker crossing into the Persian Gulf, according to data from Kpler and satellite analysis from data analytics specialists SynMax.

Iran crude trades above \$109 as US blockade lingers in Hormuz

Economy Desk

The price of Iranian oil in global markets rose to as high as \$109.53 per barrel, according to the latest data published by OilPrice and cited by Tasnim news agency on Wednesday.

Tasnim reported that prices for Iranian crude grades increased by \$2.04 on Tuesday, based on the latest available data from the energy pricing website.

Iranian Light crude for delivery to Northwest Europe was priced at \$108.28 per barrel, while Iranian Heavy and Foroza Blend traded at \$106.38 and \$106.63 per barrel, respectively, in the region.

In the Mediterranean market, Iranian Light crude was priced at \$107.63 per barrel, while Iranian Heavy stood at \$105.48 and Foroza Blend at \$105.73 per barrel.

The highest recorded price for Iranian crude was at Egypt's Sidi Kerir port, where Iranian Light crude reached \$109.53 per barrel. Iranian Heavy crude was priced at \$107.38 per barrel and Foroza Blend at \$107.63 per barrel in the same market.

Oil prices continued to hov-



er around triple-digit levels as the prolonged standoff between the United States and Iran kept traders on edge. Brent crude remained above \$110 per barrel on Wednesday as investors anticipated an extended period of tension in the Middle East, after rising sharply from last month's low of \$86.

Market analysts said there was a possibility that tensions between Washington and Tehran could persist throughout the year. US President Donald Trump said on Sunday that the United States would strike Iran to push Tehran toward an agreement. The two sides agreed to a ceasefire on April 8 after a 40-day US-Israeli aggression against Iran.

However, Trump said a day earlier that countries including Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates had asked Washington to delay any attack while negotiations between the two sides were continuing.

Strait of Hormuz; legal ...

Both the 1958 Geneva Convention on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone and the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea recognize the full sovereignty of the coastal State over its territorial sea and preserve the historic rights of coastal States in gulfs and semi-enclosed waterways. Therefore, in light of the continuous and historic exercise of sovereignty by Iran and Oman over the Strait of Hormuz over many centuries, this strait possesses a historic title.

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Hierarchy of applicable rules

In this regard, the rules governing this matter must be examined at three distinct but inter-related levels, given that each level possesses a higher rank and a more fundamental character, and rules at lower levels cannot be interpreted or applied in conflict with the principles of higher levels.

The first level relates to the fundamental principles of international law, including peremptory norms (jus cogens), that is the prohibition of aggression, and those enshrined in the United Nations Charter including prohibition of threat or use of force (Article 2(4)) and the inherent right of self-defence (Article 51). These principles

stand at the apex of the hierarchy of international legal norms and establish the framework and limitations for all other rules.

The second level refers to international humanitarian law (the law of armed conflict), which governs conduct in armed hostilities and determines which conducts are permissible and which are prohibited in situations of armed conflict. This level of rules complements in hierarchical manner; the fundamental principles of the first level.

At the third level, the law of the sea applies as a specialized body of law. The rules governing the regimes of passage through international straits, the rights of coastal States over their territorial sea, and other provisions of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea cannot be applied in a vacuum or by disregarding the higher levels. In other words, the law of the sea must not be analyzed separately from the "root causes" that have shaped the current situation (including aggression, continuous military threats, and the inability of the Security Council to maintain peace), nor separately from the fundamental principles of international law; otherwise, this branch of law would become a tool for justifying aggression and disregarding the sovereign rights of coastal States.

With respect to the third level, it must be noted that the Islamic Republic of Iran has not acceded to the 1958 Convention on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone, nor to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Therefore, Iran is not bound by their provisions, except insofar as they have become part of customary international law.

The regime of "transit passage" set forth in the 1982 Convention does not meet the established criteria of customary international law. The conclusions of the International Law Commission's 2018 work on the identification of customary international law contain key elements generally considered for determining whether a practice has become customary. Two of these conclusions are particularly relevant: first, under Conclusion 5, "State practice consists of conduct of the State, whether in the exercise of its executive, legislative, judicial or other functions". Second, Conclusion 15 provides that "Where a State has objected to a rule of customary international law while that rule was in the process of formation, the rule is not opposable to the State concerned for so long as it maintains its objection".

Through its continuous and persistent objection to the regime of "transit passage" provided

for in Articles 37 to 44 of the 1982 Convention, Iran has not recognized these rules as binding under customary international law. In this regard, Iran's consistent legislative and diplomatic practice since 1982 has established its position as a persistent objector to the binding nature of these rules and has challenged the opinio juris necessary for the formation of a customary norm.

The first notable document registered in the United Nations Treaty Series is Iran's interpretative declaration made at the time of signing the Convention, in which it explicitly stated that certain provisions, including the regime of "transit passage" in Part III (Articles 37 to 44), do not represent established customary international law. Iran's Maritime Law of 1963 (1342), its 2012 (1391) amendment, and Iran's Law on Maritime Zones of the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman of 1993 (1372) are further evidence of this practice. The latter law makes no reference to transit passage and thus does not recognize that regime; rather, it establishes specific regulatory provisions for the strait, including the requirement to obtain prior authorization for the passage of warships, submarines, and vessels carrying dangerous or environmentally harmful substances.

Consequently, the applicable legal framework for passage through the Strait of Hormuz, in the absence of a binding treaty obligation and in the absence of a customary rule of "transit passage", is the customary right of "innocent passage" through straits used for international navigation, as recognized by the International Court of Justice in the Corfu Channel case (1949). Within this framework, the coastal State has the right to regulate passage, collect fees for maritime services, require prior notification or authorization for the passage of warships, and adopt necessary measures for the protection of its security. The measures taken by the Islamic Republic of Iran are consistent with this customary framework.

Accordingly, any legal analysis of the situation in the Strait of Hormuz that proceeds directly to the specific provisions of the law of the sea without first examining peremptory norms, the fundamental principles of the Charter, and international humanitarian law is not only incomplete but also misleading. The law of the sea does not operate in a vacuum and cannot be used as a shield to justify aggression, extra-regional military presence, or the disregard of the historic and contemporary sovereign rights of coastal States.