

VP calls for enhanced cybersecurity after banking disruptions

Economy Desk

Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref on Monday called for strengthening the country's cyber defenses, saying that national cybersecurity should be a priority to prevent adversaries from inflicting damage through digital means. Speaking at a meeting of the strategic headquarters for the development of information and communication technology, Aref stated that "serious measures must be pursued in this area." He emphasized that while Iran maintains a defensive posture in cyberspace, it must also be prepared to launch offensive operations if necessary, according to IRNA. The remarks came as Iranian authorities worked to restore banking services following a fresh wave of cyberattacks that disrupted card-based systems over the past several days. The disruptions reignited public concern, with local media reporting interruptions in daily financial transactions and delays in the disbursement of state subsidies to some eligible recipients.

On Monday, the CEO of the Informatics Services Corporation (ISC) apologized to customers for the renewed outages affecting Bank Melli and Bank Saderat, and said technical teams were striving to resolve the issues by the end of the day. Bank Melli Iran moved to reassure its clients, stating in a notice that, "No damage has been done to the principal of deposits, financial information, or customer confidentiality, and all transactions are being conducted in a secure environment with full support." Tasnim news agency reported on Sunday that, following the latest incidents, "with the efforts of technical teams, IT specialists, and cybersecurity experts, the problems have been resolved and customers can once again use banking services." In a statement, the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) confirmed that, in light of the disruptions affecting four major banks, lenders have been authorized to utilize the capacity of other information technology firms, in line with approvals from higher



Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref chairs a meeting of the strategic headquarters for the development of information and communication technology in Tehran on June 29, 2026. IRNA

supervisory bodies, to restore service stability as quickly as possible. The central bank added that it "plays no role in selecting service providers,"

and that such decisions rest with the banks themselves in accordance with relevant regulations. A separate cyberattack on June

13 brought down services at four major Iranian banks, though no customer data was compromised, the Banks Coordination Council (BCC) said at the

time. The council said the attack targeted a shared communications infrastructure used by Bank Melli, Bank Tejarat, Bank Saderat and the Export Development Bank of Iran, prompting technical teams to implement protective measures and temporarily affecting some banking services. Authorities did not disclose the parties responsible for the attack or specific details about the attack methods. The cyber incidents occurred against a backdrop of ongoing diplomatic engagement between the United States and Iran, who signed a memorandum of understanding for peace with mediation from countries including Qatar and Pakistan. A US-Israeli coalition launched aggression on Iran on February 28 that was halted by a ceasefire announcement on April 8.

Dubai welcomes first Tehran flight after wartime hiatus



ISNA

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A flight from Tehran landed at Dubai International Airport on Monday, marking the first direct service from the Iranian capital since the US-Israel war with Iran disrupted regional aviation. According to ISNA, the Iranian Consulate General in Dubai announced in a statement, "Sepehran Airlines flight, which departed from Tehran's Imam Khomeini International Airport, landed at Dubai International Airport at 13:18 local time." A return flight from Dubai to Tehran was scheduled to depart later Monday. Before the conflict,

dozens of flights operated every week between the UAE and Iran. UAE operators, including flydubai and Air Arabia, are yet to resume operations between Iran and the UAE. While the route has reopened, flight availability remains limited. Sepehran's website, flysepehran.com, showed only sporadic availability for Dubai services, with the next Tehran-Dubai flight listed for Wednesday and another scheduled for July 8. The reopening follows weeks of disruption after military strikes on Iran on February 28 triggered closure of the region's

airspace. Iran's airspace gradually reopened after a ceasefire was reached between Washington and Tehran on April 8, ending a 40-day conflict launched by the US-Israeli coalition in late February. Last month, Imam Khomeini International Airport City Chief Executive Ramin Kashf-Azar said foreign airlines were in talks to resume flights to Iran and had announced their readiness to return to the market. He said negotiations were underway as conditions stabilized following the conflict.

ICT minister opens digital economy center in Hamedan

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Iran inaugurated a Digital Economy Growth and Development Center in the western province of Hamedan on Monday as part of efforts to expand the country's digital economy ecosystem, support innovative businesses and create jobs.

The center was inaugurated by Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Minister Sattar Hashemi, who described it as the most important project of his visit to Hamedan Province, according to IRNA. Hashemi said 101 communications and infrastructure projects across Hamedan were also inaugurated and brought into operation during the visit. He said expanding communications infrastructure and supporting the digital economy remain among the government's priorities, adding that the new center would help strengthen content production, support innovative businesses and create employment opportunities for skilled young people in the province. Hashemi said developing the digital economy extends beyond



ICT Minister Sattar Hashemi cuts the ribbon during the inauguration of a Digital Economy Growth and Development Center in Hamedan Province on June 29, 2026. IRNA

expanding communications infrastructure, stressing that the production of high-quality, locally developed and value-added digital content is of critical importance and requires targeted planning alongside network expansion. He added that nine digital economy growth and development centers have so far been established across Iran under a national policy, with the Hamedan center created

following provincial studies and research. According to ISNA, the digital economy currently accounts for 7.14% of Iran's gross domestic product, compared with a global average of 15%. To narrow the gap, authorities have set a target under the country's Seventh Five-Year Development Plan to raise the sector's share of GDP to 10% by March 2029.

Tehran, Kabul target \$10b in annual trade within three years

Economy Desk

Iran's bilateral trade with Afghanistan reached \$2.7 billion in the last Iranian year (ended March 21), and the two countries are now aiming to boost economic exchanges to \$10 billion annually within the next three years, Iran's commercial attaché in Kabul said. Hossein Roustaei told the Iranian Labor News Agency (ILNA) that Afghanistan was currently Iran's

fifth-largest trading partner, with total bilateral trade of \$2.7 billion in the previous fiscal year. Roustaei added that the two countries expected to reach their \$10 billion target over the next three years by expanding industrial and mining cooperation, according to Iran's Trade Promotion Organization. Senior officials from Iran's Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade and Afghanistan's Ministry of Industries and Mines met in the northeastern city

of Mashhad early this month, alongside economic actors from both countries, to discuss ways of strengthening economic ties. The talks focused on the development of rail corridors, joint investments in mining projects, and the transfer of technical knowledge. The two sides also explored joint investment opportunities in Afghanistan's mining sector, particularly in exploration, extraction and mineral processing.

