

# Major gas field holding 7.5 tcf discovered in southern Iran



tensive sectors,” he said. The discovery could provide Iran with an additional source of natural gas at a time when the country is seeking to expand domestic production and meet growing demand from industry and the power sector. Iran has relied on domestic investment and expertise to develop its oil and gas fields since 2018, when the US imposed sweeping sanctions on the country’s energy sector. The find is part of an ongoing, concentrated exploration push stretching from southern Fars province into northern Bushehr province. The site sits adjacent to the Pazan gas field, where exploration resumed last year after an eight-year pause, leading to an additional 10 tcf in-place gas discovery and 200 million barrels of crude oil. Oil Ministry officials expect fields in this southern cluster to take roughly 40 months to fully develop before commercial production yields results. In October 2025, Paknejad announced the discovery of significant gas and oil reserves at the Pazan field in southern Fars province, describing it as capable of playing a major role in addressing Iran’s energy imbalance in the coming years.

**Economy Desk**

Iran has discovered a natural gas field in southern Fars Province with more than 7.5 trillion cubic feet (212 billion cubic meters) of gas in place, Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad said on Sunday. The field holds approximately 5.7 tcf (161 bcm) of recoverable gas, Paknejad told state television. The minister described the

discovery as equivalent to 15 years of production from one phase of South Pars, the world’s largest gas field, which Iran shares with Qatar. Paknejad highlighted a key advantage of the new find, saying the field, known as Takhteh, contains sweet natural gas, which has relatively low levels of sulfur compounds and is therefore expected to reduce development and operating costs.

He added that substantial volumes of gas condensates were also present at the field, which could bring “tens of billions of dollars” in new wealth to the country. “The immediate priority is to plan and carry out development work as quickly as possible so that the field can be brought into production in the shortest possible time and the extracted gas supplied to industry and other energy-in-

## GSI starts studies to map Afghanistan’s mineral resources

**Economy Desk**

Iran has begun studies to identify Afghanistan’s mineral resources and establish a database of the country’s deposits, the head of Iran’s Geological Survey and Mineral Exploration Organization (GSI) said on Sunday. Afghanistan is one of the target countries for mineral studies and could in the future supply part of the raw materials needed by Iranian industries, said Mahmoud Fatemi Aqda, who also serves as deputy minister of Industry, Mine and Trade, according to ILNA. Plans to expand mineral cooperation within the framework of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) are also being pursued, given the region’s potential, he



added. Iran has about 35 of the 114 known mineral types worldwide, Fatemi Aqda said, adding that this potential could play an important role in developing the mining sector, creating wealth and moving toward a non-oil economy. Despite this potential, the

extent of exploration carried out in Iran remains below the country’s actual capacity, he acknowledged, noting that the value of mineral reserves discovered in recent years showed a significant share remained unexplored. “To make the most of the mining sector’s potential, we

need to expand exploration and attract new investment. At the same time, we should move toward a more participatory approach, drawing on the experience of developed countries,” he said. “We must create the conditions for the effective participation of the private sector in producing basic geological data and carrying out exploration projects.” He said about 66 exploration projects had been defined as part of the effort. “In the first stage, we will try, by implementing these projects accurately and systematically, to encourage greater private-sector participation in exploration and direct existing capital in parallel markets toward producing basic data and mineral exploration,” Fatemi Aqda said.

## Oman, Flydubai seek new air route in southern Iran

**Economy Desk**

Oman and Dubai-based airline Flydubai have requested the establishment of a new air route in southern Iran, according to Iran’s Civil Aviation Organization. The proposed route is intended to facilitate and improve air traffic flows, attract more air traffic to southern Iran and meet the operational needs of users of Iranian airspace, Tasnim news agency quoted the organization as saying. The proposal was discussed at a Civil-Military Coordination (CMC) meeting, where the route was reviewed with the aim of improving air traffic

flow management, enhancing the efficiency of Iran’s air route network and creating more favorable conditions for flights covered by the requests, it said. Last week, CAO said that Flydubai and Air Arabia had resumed flights over Iranian airspace after receiving permits from the Iranian organization and coordinating with the air traffic control department of Iran Airports and Air Navigation Company. The move followed continued negotiations and consultations aimed at facilitating and expanding the passage of foreign flights through Iranian airspace. The country’s airspace gradu-



ally reopened after a ceasefire was reached between Washington and Tehran on April 8, halt-

ing a 40-day conflict launched by the US-Israeli coalition in late February.

### ECONOMIC LENS

## Decarbonization: Development opportunity or trade protectionism



By Mohammadreza Hosseini Aliabad  
Researcher in int'l economics

The global economy is entering a new phase in which carbon is no longer merely an environmental concern. It has become a strategic variable influencing international trade, investment, competitiveness, industrial policy, and geo-economic influence. As governments accelerate climate action, carbon emissions are increasingly becoming part of the rules governing access to markets. This transformation raises a fundamental question: Can decarbonization become a genuine engine of sustainable development, or could it evolve into a new form of trade protectionism? From the perspective of international economics, decarbonization should be understood as a structural transformation of the global economy. In the emerging economic order, the competitiveness of a product will depend not only on price, quality, and productivity, but increasingly on its carbon intensity, production technology, energy sources, and the environmental performance of its supply chain. Consequently, climate policy is becoming an integral component of trade and industrial policy. Investment in renewable energy, clean technologies, energy efficiency, low-carbon transportation, green infrastructure, and circular production can stimulate innovation, create new industries, attract investment, and generate employment. Countries that develop technological capabilities in these fields can move beyond being consumers of green technologies and become exporters and influential participants in emerging global value chains. However, the transition also creates a serious challenge for developing economies. Advanced economies generally possess greater financial resources, technological capabilities, and infrastructure for reducing emissions. Many developing countries, by contrast, face limited access to finance and technology and remain dependent on carbon-intensive production. Applying identical environmental requirements to economies with different levels of development may produce unequal consequences. This is where the boundary between legitimate climate policy and green protectionism becomes important. Environmental standards and carbon pricing can correct market failures, reduce carbon leakage, and encourage cleaner production. Yet if environmental requirements are designed in ways that disadvantage foreign competitors, they may function as non-tariff barriers to trade. A policy presented as environmental protection could consequently become a mechanism for protecting domestic industries. Carbon border adjustment mechanisms illustrate this dilemma. Such measures are designed to address differences in carbon costs between domestic and foreign producers and reduce incentives for carbon leakage. If producers in developing economies face additional compliance costs without access to affordable clean technologies and finance, their competitiveness may decline. The central issue, therefore, is not whether the world should decarbonize. The real question is how the transition will be governed and distributed. If the costs of decarbonization are concentrat-

ed in countries with fewer technological and financial resources, while the benefits are captured mainly by advanced economies, the green transition could deepen existing inequalities. Decarbonization is also becoming a major arena of geo-economic competition. Competition will extend beyond oil and gas to batteries, critical minerals, hydrogen, electric vehicles, renewable-energy systems, energy storage, and low-carbon manufacturing. Control over these technologies and resources may determine economic influence. Countries that build strong positions in green value chains will have greater capacity to shape international markets. For developing countries, the strategic response should therefore be proactive rather than defensive. Decarbonization should be linked to industrial upgrading, technological development, research and development, human capital, and export diversification. Without domestic technological capabilities, however, the green transition could create a new form of dependency in which developing economies import green technologies while absorbing the costs of stricter environmental standards. A fair transition consequently requires international cooperation on climate finance, technology transfer, carbon measurement, technical standards, and trade rules. Developing countries need opportunities to acquire the technologies and financial resources necessary to meet environmental requirements. Climate responsibility must therefore be matched by equitable access to the means required to fulfill it. The future economy is likely to be characterized by green competition. Successful countries will be those that combine emissions reduction with productivity growth, innovation, industrial competitiveness, and high-value global market participation. Decarbonization should be treated not simply as a regulatory cost, but as a potential development strategy. The legitimacy of the green transition will depend on whether it creates cooperation or exclusion. If climate policies are transparent, measurable, science-based, and non-discriminatory, they can support both environmental protection and fair trade. If they are used to shield domestic industries, restrict competitors, or consolidate technological dominance, the world may witness a new generation of protectionism — expressed not through traditional tariffs alone, but through carbon standards, sustainability requirements, and climate-related trade measures. The decisive question is therefore not simply who will emit less carbon. It is who will develop the technologies, establish the standards, control emerging value chains, and capture the economic benefits of the low-carbon economy. If decarbonization is built on cooperation, technology transfer, fair finance, and open trade, it can become a defining development opportunity of the twenty-first century. If not, the green transition may deepen inequality and create a fragmented economic order in which environmental ambition becomes another instrument of international competition.