Economy minister begins Russia, India visits to 'counter sanctions, economic war'

Economy Desk

Iran's economy minister began a two-leg trip to Russia and India on Sunday aimed at "using foreign relations to counter sanctions and economic war," while boosting domestic production, trade and investment, the ministry said.

Ali Madanizadeh arrived at Moscow's Sheremetyevo International Airport at the head of a delegation for talks with Russian officials which would be followed by in a meeting of BRICS finance ministers in India over the weekend, IRNA reported.

Before departing Tehran, Madanizadeh said the two visits should not be viewed as separate events and were intended to use foreign relations to strengthen the domestic economy, expand trade and production, attract financing and investment, and create new opportunities for Iran's economy.

"The trip to Moscow is for bilateral consultations, while the trip to India is to attend the BRICS summit and hold extensive talks with the economic ministers participating in the meeting, particularly under the current circumstances of confronting the economic war against our country," he said.

Iranian Economy Minister Ali Madanizadeh (R) shakes hands with Iran's Ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali after arriving at Sheremetyevo International Airport in Moscow on September 6, 2026.
● IRNA

In Moscow, Madanizadeh was scheduled to meet Russia's finance minister, hold talks within the BRICS and Shanghai Cooperation Organization frameworks, and attend a meeting with Iranian and Russian businesspeople.

He said one of the main objectives of the Russia visit was to pursue bilateral economic discussions and follow up on memorandums of understanding and agreements that had previously been coordinated and are expected to be signed.

Madanizadeh described Russia as an important partner for Iran, saying, "There are very broad opportunities to expand economic relations between the two countries, from trade and investment to financial links, transportation, energy and infrastructure."

Developing int'l North-South corridors

Madanizadeh said one of the key issues on the agenda was the development of international north-south corridors.

"Iran can play a very important role along this route by connecting the Russian economy and the countries to the north of the region with markets in the south, particularly India," he said.

"Therefore, developing transport and transit infrastructure is not merely a construction project, but part of Iran's long-term economic development plan to become an important regional trade route."

Madanizadeh described his second trip, to India, as being aimed at attending the BRICS meeting.

"BRICS is now one of the most important economic groupings of emerging countries, and Iran's presence in this group provides new opportunities to expand the country's economic and financial cooperation," he said.

The meeting will address issues including development financing, banking and financial cooperation, facilitating trade and investment, and the role of emerging economies in the international financial system, he said.

"Creating markets for strategic commodities, establishing a BRICS energy market, setting up joint investment funds and developing bilateral or multilateral monetary agreements are among these issues," he added.

Madanizadeh said the Ministry of Economy was seeking to turn economic diplomacy from a largely political and ceremonial concept into a practical tool for economic growth and development.

"Our goal is clear: to use the potential of foreign relations to counter sanctions and economic warfare, strengthen the domestic economy, expand trade and production, attract financing and investment, and create new opportunities for Iran's economy."

Already hit by Western sanctions over its nuclear program, Iran's southern ports remain under a US naval blockade imposed as part of a pressure campaign following a 40-day US-Israeli war that began on Feb. 28.

Madanizadeh expressed hope that the two visits would have a tangible impact on the country's economy and people's lives.

Exports to Pakistan jump 45% in four months

Economy Desk

Iran's exports to Pakistan soared 45% to $520 million in the four months through June 2026, according to Pakistan's Ministry of Commerce, while shipments for the first half of the year rose 29% from a year earlier.

Iran exported $520 million worth of goods to Pakistan during the period, compared with $358 million in the same period last year, Eqtesad-e Moaser reported on Sunday.

Separately, Pakistan's Ministry of Commerce said Iranian exports to the country reached $750 million in January-June 2026, nearly 30% up from $580 million in the same period of 2025.

The surge in Iranian exports to its neighboring country comes as US hostilities with Iran and the resulting disruption to trade through the Strait of Hormuz have affected regional commerce.

Pakistan is among the alternatives Iran has turned to since coming under a US naval blockade, with Tehran increasingly relying on these corridors.

Iran produces record 14.1m tons of wheat in H1

Economy Desk

Iran has produced 14.1 million metric tons of wheat in nearly six months, a record level, Deputy Agriculture Minister said on Sunday.

"So far this year, for the first time in history, we achieved wheat production of 14.1 million tons in the country, which is a significant figure," Majid Anjafi said, referring to the Persian calendar year that began on March 21, according to IRNA.

Anjafi described the agricultural sector's performance in producing essential commodities as highly successful.

"Current trends show that productivity and increased production in the agricultural sector are on the rise," he said.

According to Agriculture Ministry data, Iran cultivated nearly 11.7 million tons of wheat last year, of which about 7.8 million tons was purchased by the government under a guaranteed procurement program.

Anjafi said 85% of the country's food needs are now met through domestic production, while only 15% of food products are supplied through imports, highlighting the agricultural sector's capacity to contribute to food security.

He also pointed to the difficult conditions facing agriculture last year because of drought.

● IRNA

"Despite drought, uneven rainfall, economic difficulties, sanctions and conditions resulting from the US war against the country, agricultural and horticultural output surged by a total of 7 million tons through the efforts of nearly 10,000 farmers, researchers, experts and managers," he said.

Anjafi said the production sustainability program should not be limited to wheat and should also be planned for pulses, medicinal plants and other crops suited to the capacity of dryland farms.

He described the development and promotion of crops grown in dryland areas as a priority for the agricultural sector, saying sustained production required serious attention to dryland farming.

In provinces where the program has been pursued more actively, farmers have adopted modern farming methods using the latest research findings as well as new machinery and technologies, he said.

ECONOMIC LENS

Logistics: Hidden engine of competitiveness in global economy

By Mohammadreza Hosseini Aliabad
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OPINION EXCLUSIVE

A longstanding misconception is crumbling within the global economy: the notion that a country's competitiveness can be measured solely by its output volume, labor costs, or access to raw materials. These variables still matter, yet there exists a decisive link between "production" and "market" that typically remains overlooked: logistics.

Today, a good may be manufactured in a country at a very low cost; however, if delivering it to market proves time-consuming, high-risk, and expensive, a significant portion of that initial advantage is eroded. For this reason, logistics must be regarded not as a post-production expense, but as an integral component of the true cost of competitiveness.

This shift in perspective carries a major implication for the geography of global production. In the past, firms primarily sought the cheapest locations for manufacturing; but the experience of supply chain crises, geopolitical tensions, disruptions to maritime routes, and escalating commercial risks has introduced a new criterion into their calculations: reliability.

This has given rise to a significant transformation: international corporations are no longer optimizing merely the "cost of production"; they are now optimizing the entire value chain.

This evolution is observable in the emerging concept of "supply chain resilience." Firms are gradually moving away from heavy dependence on a single supplier, a single port, or a single route, and shifting toward multi-sourcing, relocating a portion of production closer to consumer markets, and establishing alternative corridors. Under such conditions, a degree of cost increase may be accepted in order to mitigate the risk of a complete production standstill.

The global economy, therefore, is paying a new price for security: the price of reliable logistics.

Yet the matter is not confined to corporations alone. Trade routes have now become a component of the geoeconomic competition among nations. Ports, railways, transit corridors, and commercial gateways are no longer mere infrastructure; they can serve as instruments of economic leverage. A country situated along a critical trade route—and equipped with the infrastructure necessary for the rapid, low-cost movement of goods—can generate economic value from the very transit of goods itself.

More importantly, the value of a route is not derived solely from transport revenues. Around a successful logistics hub, a cluster of economic activities emerges: warehousing, packaging, distribution, insurance, financial services, maintenance and repair, and even the establishment of new industries.

For this reason, competition over corridors is, in essence, competition over the future distribution of production.

Technology has further complicated this equation. The logistics of the future will not be defined merely by roads, ships, and railways. Data has become equally critical. A company capable of predicting cargo arrival times, demand, inventory levels, route conditions, and the probability of disruption can hold less capital tied up in inventory and make decisions with greater speed.

Here, artificial intelligence is not a decorative tool; it can directly influence the cost structure and risk profile of the supply chain. Consequently, the competition of the future will take place between logistics networks, not merely between factories.

Ultimately, the future of global production may be less about "where to produce" than we imagine, and more about "how to be connected."

A country that produces but cannot connect to markets quickly, securely, and predictably forfeits a portion of the value; conversely, a country capable of transforming production and trade routes into an efficient network—even without being the largest producer—can capture a substantial share of global value.

In the twenty-first-century economy, competition is not only about manufacturing goods; it is about making the route to global markets shorter, cheaper, and more reliable. Perhaps this is why, on the new map of economic power, the value of a route sometimes exceeds that of the destination itself.