

President opens 246 tourism projects, calls for broader ties with neighbors

Economy Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian on Sunday inaugurated 246 tourism and cultural heritage projects online, creating 3,200 jobs, as Iran marked the start of Tourism Week. Pezeshkian called for broader cultural, tourism and trade ties with neighboring countries, saying US restrictions made stronger regional relations necessary to put Iran on a path toward development and growth, according to his website, president.ir. He also said regulations that hinder tourism businesses would be revised and stressed the need for balanced development of tourism infrastructure in line with population distribution.

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"Despite the wartime conditions prevailing in the country over the past two years, significant steps have been taken to develop tourism infrastructure across the country, but balanced development remains essential," Pezeshkian said. Since late February, Iran has been operating under wartime conditions and a maritime blockade from the south following a 40-day U.S.-Israeli war. Already under decades of Western sanctions, Iran also faces a new wave of U.S. sanctions targeting its aviation sector. Israel also launched a 12-day war against Iran in June 2024. Pezeshkian said sanctions imposed on Iran should be turned into an opportunity to expand regional ties and create jobs, adding that neighboring countries represented an important capacity for Iran and that broader engagement could open new ways to serve the country.



President Masoud Pezeshkian (c) inaugurates 246 tourism and cultural heritage projects online in Tehran on September 27, 2026. president.ir

At the ceremony, Tourism and Cultural Heritage Minister Mohammad-Reza Salehi Amiri said 1,471 projects had been completed over the past two years under Pezeshkian's government, which began in August 2024, creating 19,000 direct jobs.



Iran-Uzbekistan trade exceeds \$280m in five months



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Trade between Iran and Uzbekistan exceeded \$280 million in the first five months of the current Iranian year, which began on March 21, Iran's commercial attaché in Uzbekistan Rahmatollah Khormaly said on Sunday. Khormaly said agricultural exports, technological cooperation and joint investment were among the main areas for expanding trade between the two countries, according to IRNA. He said coordination between the agriculture min-

istries of Iran and Uzbekistan had paved the way for a 120-member delegation, led by Iran's agriculture minister and comprising agricultural, fisheries, machinery and food-processing specialists and businesspeople, to visit Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan, one of the most populous countries in Central Asia, is Iran's second-largest export destination among the Commonwealth of Independent States, he said, adding that the country has significant potential for expanding trade ties with Iran.

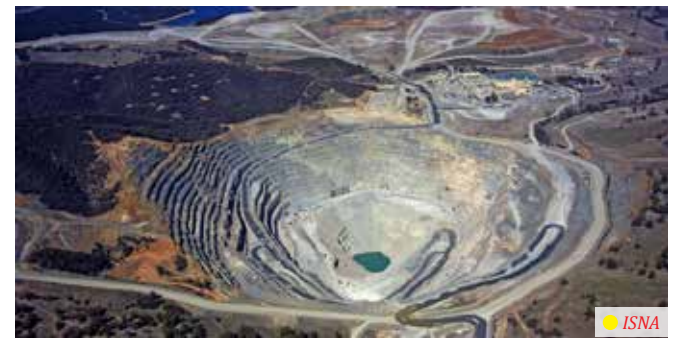
Agriculture is one of the priority areas for developing bilateral trade, Khormaly said, noting that Iran currently exports citrus fruits, apples, kiwis, pistachios, dates, dairy products, powdered milk and fish feed to Uzbekistan. Given the capacity of the Uzbek market, there is also room to expand and diversify Iran's agricultural exports, he said. Khormaly also highlighted the potential for technological cooperation, saying about 30 projects worth \$770 million in various fields, including agriculture, are currently being implemented in Uzbekistan by Iranian companies. He said the projects demonstrated the significant capacity of Iran's private sector to operate in the Uzbek market. Khormaly said specialized meetings and greater interaction between officials and businesspeople from the two countries, particularly in agriculture, could help expand bilateral cooperation and increase trade between Iran and Uzbekistan.

Iran expands aerial exploration of deep mineral deposits 40-fold

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Iran expanded aerial geophysical exploration of deep and hidden mineral deposits to 2 million linear kilometers last year from 51,000 kilometers two years earlier, according to the latest official data from the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade.

The figures, reported by ISNA, are among performance indicators for the country's Seventh Development Plan and show a 40-fold increase in exploration activity for deep and concealed mineral deposits using modern methods and airborne geophysics. The increase reflects a shift toward identifying deeper and concealed mineral deposits as exploration of surface deposits becomes more limited. The operations involve expanded aerial survey lines, airborne geophysical data collection equipment and monitoring of subsurface geological layers across the country. Most of Iran's identified mineral reserves in past decades were discovered through surface exploration and exposed deposits. As these resources have gradually become less available, the focus has increasingly shifted to identifying



ing deposits hidden beneath the surface. Airborne geophysical surveys can cover large areas quickly and help identify geological structures with mineral potential before costly drilling begins. The surveys use techniques including airborne magnetometry and radiometry, with the results combined with geographic information systems (GIS) and remote sensing to identify prospective areas. Under Iran's development plan, the mining sector is expected to achieve 13.5% growth by the end of the plan period, Zarei said, adding that the government had launched a series of measures, including reactivating idle mines, developing infrastructure and facilitating investment procedures to meet that goal.

Industry Ministry spokesperson Ezzatollah Zarei said in July that 1,200 idle mines has been reactivated and measures introduced to accelerate investment in the mining sector as the country pursues a 13.5% growth target under the Seventh Development Plan (SDP). Zarei said that the government had delegated some decision-making powers to provincial authorities, shortened administrative procedures and introduced investment packages to encourage greater private sector participation in mining. The country is the 15th-largest mineral-rich country globally, and Iranian officials call mining the backbone of industrial development and say it should replace oil as the primary revenue generator.

Sanctions of Iran's ...

At the same time, a 50% to 70% decline in international flight capacity, a doubling of ticket prices under inflationary conditions, the plight of patients requiring transfer abroad, disruption of the air transport chain for vital medicines, and the severance of family and academic ties demonstrate that this measure, in its true nature, constitutes a form of "tangible collective punishment". These objective facts confront Washington's legal claims with a fundamental contradiction: first, violation of sovereign independence and the principle of non-intervention. The extension of the effects of sanctions to air-

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ports, insurers, and service companies in third countries and the prevention of their permitted cooperation with Iran constitute a clear infringement upon the sovereignty of other states and a violation of the established principle of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of states (the subject of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2625). This logic replaces the sovereign equality of states with financial weight and extraterritorial leverage. Second, invalidity of the claim of "countermeasures". Even if Washington justifies these measures within the framework of countermeasures, according to the articles on the responsibility of states for internationally

wrongful acts (particularly Articles 50 and 51), these measures must, first, be "proportionate" to the alleged harm and, second, must never impair obligations pertaining to fundamental human rights and humanitarian norms. Imposing life-threatening risks on ordinary citizens to impose a political demand is a gross violation of the principle of proportionality and binding human rights norms. Third, discrediting of formal exceptions in international jurisprudence. The International Court of Justice (ICJ), in its provisional order of October 3, 2018, explicitly obligated the United States to remove obstacles to the supply of parts, equipment,

services, and financial payments related to the safety of Iran's passenger aviation since the risk of irreparable harm to human lives is a matter for urgent judicial protection. The US Treasury's current claim of "case-by-case review of safety-related requests" constitutes a formal evasion of responsibility; an airplane part whose purchase is licensed on paper but the related banking path is blocked, or a license that becomes entangled in erosive bureaucratic complications, will never reach an aircraft in need of repair in the hangar. According to General Comment No. 8 of the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural

Rights, citizens must not pay the price of political rivalries by losing their subsistence rights, and the claim of the existence of humanitarian exceptions is admissible only if it leads in practice to "effective and timely access". The continuation of this policy, in addition to directly threatening the lives and health of people, imposes a chain of economic damage on tens of thousands of jobs in the aviation industry, tourism, and related services, and deepens the imposed isolation of the Iranian society. The legal solution is clear: The United States must be accountable for the foreseeable and catastrophic effects of this policy on the safety of passengers' lives, and relevant institutions in Iran must also document all instances of refusal to provide services, navigation delays, and imposed risks so that the basis for attributing international responsibility and compensation for damages may be prepared. International law possesses credibility only when it can set limits for the exercise of hegemonic power. Ordinary passengers are not collateral for political disputes. Financial power and the instrument of sanctions may be able to cancel a flight or ground an aircraft, but they can never create legal legitimacy for the systematic endangerment of human lives and safety.