

Iran, Kyrgyzstan target cooperation in digital technology, creative industries

Economy Desk

Iran and Kyrgyzstan have agreed to strengthen cooperation in digital technologies, creative industries and technology entrepreneurship, including through joint innovation projects, during a meeting on the sidelines of the fifth World Conference on Creative Economy in Indonesia, IRNA reported on Saturday.

Esfandiar Ekhtiari, deputy for policy and development at the Iranian presidential office for science, technology and the knowledge-based economy, met Benazir Nurlanova, Kyrgyzstan's deputy minister of economy and commerce, according to the Kyrgyz National News Agency, as reported by IRNA.

The two sides discussed ways

to expand trade and economic cooperation, focusing on innovation, digital technologies, creative industries and technology entrepreneurship.

Nurlanova outlined Kyrgyzstan's economic growth, ongoing reforms to improve the investment climate, and progress in developing technology parks and creative industry parks. She also described the country's potential in these areas.

Ekhtiari praised Kyrgyzstan's social and economic development and highlighted its progress in the creative economy. He expressed Tehran's interest in drawing on Bishkek's experience, particularly in the operation of creative industry parks. The Iranian official also emphasized the importance of the two

countries' fraternal relations and mutual respect.

The two sides stressed the need to establish direct cooperation among technology parks, scientific institutions and business communities in Iran and Kyrgyzstan. They also agreed to expand bilateral cooperation through experience-sharing, support for technology startups and joint innovation projects. Preliminary data from Kyrgyzstan's National Statistical Committee showed that bilateral trade with Iran rose 37% in 2025 to nearly \$80 million, including \$43.5 million in imports from Iran and \$36.3 million in exports to Iran. Both sides underscored the importance of deepening mutually beneficial cooperation in areas of common interest.



Gov't seeks to remove export barriers to Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan Baghdad warns against border closures



Economy Desk

Iran is seeking to remove barriers to exports to neighboring Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan, the foreign ministry's economic diplomacy deputy said, as transport disruptions and restrictions at some border crossings complicate trade with neighboring countries. Hamid Qanbari said on Saturday that proposals to address export barriers would be pursued through talks with foreign counterparts, with Iranian embassies and consulates tasked with following up.

The proposals were discussed at the 12th meeting of the Economic Relations Coordination Committee, hosted by the Foreign Ministry and attended by economic deputies from government agencies, IRNA reported.

Qanbari also said Iran would review procedures and regulations governing exporters unable

to meet their obligations because of transport and logistics disruptions caused by the war.

The arrangements cover exporters unable to fulfill their commitments because of transport problems, as well as those who received foreign currency to import raw materials but could not complete the imports because of disruptions along transport routes. The proposed regulatory changes had been accepted by the relevant agencies, he said.

Since late February, when a US-Israeli coalition launched a 40-day war, Iran has been operating under wartime conditions and facing a maritime blockade from the south. The United States has also imposed sanctions targeting Iran's aviation industry as part of its broader pressure campaign. The measures include secondary sanctions against foreign companies and intermediaries that provide Iranian airlines with fuel, airport services, spare parts or other support.

The sanctions have led to restrictions affecting some Iranian flights to other countries, including Iraq. Baghdad, however, secured a waiver from US sanctions after its government held talks with Washington to seek an exemption

from restrictions on Iran's aviation sector.

Qanbari said he hoped the measures would help preserve existing exports and make future shipments more targeted while improving their overall level.

The initiative comes as Iraq has closed some land crossings with Iran. The Al-Sheeb crossing, opposite Iran's Chazabeh crossing, was closed to passengers and cargo from October 21 until further notice. An Iraqi government official told Al Jazeera last week that the decision had been made by order of Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi and that several other crossings with Iran were expected to close gradually in the following days. The official reason for the directive has not been formally announced. Al Jazeera's correspondent in Baghdad, citing a government source, attributed the restrictions to administrative and logistical arrangements at certain crossings, without providing further details. Zaidi warned on Friday that closing Iraq's border with Iran would harm both countries' interests and risk economically isolating Iraq, Al-Iraqiya News reported.

"Closing the Iraqi-Iranian border is not in Iraq's interest or Iran's

interest. Closing the border with Iran means that we would economically besiege ourselves," Zaidi said in an interview.

Iraq has not closed its entire border with Iran but has shut specific crossings, including Al-Sheeb in Maysan province and parts of the Shalamcheh crossing.

Meanwhile, Jalal Mousavi, deputy head of Iran's truckers' association, said the Rimdan crossing remained closed to Iranian trucks and that some other crossings with Iraq had yet to reopen, ILNA reported.

Chazabeh was also closed, Mousavi said, while the status of some other Iraqi crossings remained unclear. Mehran and Khosravi appeared to be open, he said, but drivers lacked definite information about whether they had resumed operations.

Even if the government announced that Rimdan had reopened, drivers remained reluctant to use the crossing because of prevailing conditions and their concerns, he said. Mousavi added that cargo traffic through Rimdan had become more significant as maritime restrictions diverted some freight to alternative routes, increasing the volume passing through certain land crossings.

Iran's flag carrier begins maintenance on Boeing 747 freighter

Economy Desk

Iran's flag carrier, Iran Air, has begun heavy maintenance on its only Boeing 747 freighter, including a 20,000-flight-cycle inspection being carried out in Iran for the first time.

The project began on September 28 and includes a D-check, structural inspections, specialized repairs and an overhaul of the aircraft's landing gear. The initial estimate is that the work will take at least six months, although the final timeline will depend on inspection findings, IRNA reported on Saturday.

Among the project's main tasks is the first non-destructive testing inspection in Iran of the aircraft's Section 41, along with non-destructive testing of all riveted joints in the upper deck. The work also includes reinforcing the fuselage structure where the landing gear attaches.

Another major task is implementing a modification to the aircraft's horizontal stabilizer assembly, known as the THS. The specialized tools required for the modification have been



manufactured by Iran Air's own engineering and maintenance specialists, according to IRNA.

The landing gear overhaul will also involve replacing sensitive components with limited service lives in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

The work is being carried out with the participation of Iran Air's engineering, mechanical and avionics specialists, alongside its specialized workshops. The completion date could be pushed back if inspections reveal cracks, corrosion or damaged components requiring further assessment and corrective work.

Iran Air expects the Boeing 747 freighter to return to service after the D-check, the 20,000-flight-cycle inspection, the landing gear overhaul and the required THS modifications are completed.

Military superiority without ...

The developments of 2026 in the military confrontation involving the United States, Israel, and Iran have once again highlighted the importance of this distinction. Analyses of the consequences of the war suggest that the use of military force, even on an extensive scale, does not necessarily resolve fundamental political and security disputes. Under such circumstances, the parties' ability to absorb costs, manage escalation, and reach a sustainable agreement becomes as important as the outcomes on the battlefield. (See analyses by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, April 20, 2026, and Chatham House, September 14, 2026.)

This reality is particularly significant in the Persian Gulf, where

regional security is closely intertwined with global energy markets, vital maritime shipping routes, and the economic stability of numerous countries. The Strait of Hormuz is not merely a geographical passage; it is part of a complex strategic equation in which the interests of Iran, the Persian Gulf Arab states, major Asian powers, and the global economy are deeply interconnected. Any military escalation in this region could generate consequences far beyond the immediate theater of conflict, ranging from heightened uncertainty in energy markets to disruptions in trade and declining investor confidence. Persian Gulf security, therefore, cannot be reduced to the military protection of maritime

routes or the deployment of foreign forces.

The US military presence may serve as a deterrent for some regional governments. However, if confrontation intensifies, that same presence could expose host countries to the consequences of a wider conflict. Reports concerning Arab states' reassessment of their security arrangements following the recent war suggest that reliance on external security guarantees is no substitute for regional dialogue. This does not mean that the Persian Gulf Arab states' defense relationships with Washington have become irrelevant. Rather, it underscores the limitations of any security framework that seeks to protect some actors'

interests while disregarding the concerns of other principal regional stakeholders.

In this context, Iran cannot be excluded from the Persian Gulf's security equation. Its geography, population, military capabilities, economic connections, and proximity to one of the world's most strategically sensitive energy chokepoints give it a position that cannot be ignored without considerable cost. What matters is the recognition of a principle of reciprocal security: no country can reasonably expect its own security concerns to be acknowledged while those of other states are consistently disregarded.

The way out of this impasse lies in establishing a regional mechanism for reducing tensions,

managing military incidents, safeguarding maritime security, and maintaining reliable channels of communication. Such a mechanism must be founded on the participation of Iran and the Persian Gulf Arab states and should draw on the potential mediating role of actors such as Pakistan. External powers can help facilitate agreements, but they cannot manufacture political legitimacy or mutual trust on behalf of the countries of the region.

Ultimately, the central question facing Washington is not whether it possesses the capability to strike Iran militarily. It is whether the United States can control the political and security consequences of such strikes and construct a stable order in

their aftermath. Military superiority may alter the balance of power, but a durable regional order requires mutual recognition of geopolitical realities. The future of Persian Gulf security will be shaped not by Iran's exclusion, but by the creation of a framework capable of accommodating strategic competition, managing disputes, and safeguarding shared interests.

If the United States genuinely seeks lasting stability in the region, it must recognize that military power alone is insufficient to build such an order. Iran's participation, with due consideration for reciprocal rights and legitimate security concerns, is an indispensable component of any sustainable solution.