Pezeshkian calls for data-driven fight against economic corruption

Economy Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian has called for a data-driven campaign against economic corruption, tax evasion and money laundering, saying government support must reach households that need it.

He made the remarks at a meeting on data and mechanisms for targeting government support programs, attended by the economy minister and senior officials from the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance.

The meeting reviewed measures by the Iranian National Tax Administration to assess the financial circumstances of recipients of government assistance, including beneficiaries of the electronic food voucher program, known as the Kalabarg scheme. Officials discussed checking household declarations and monitoring suspicious transactions to identify possible money laundering and tax evasion. They also examined the identification of shell companies, businesses without valid credentials and entities suspected of irregular economic activities or fictitious transactions, as well as plans to better target public services.

Pezeshkian said integrating economic and social data was necessary for fair distribution of public resources. Incomplete information, he said, could leave eligible people without assistance while allowing others who did not need it to benefit from state support.

He called for preventive measures against the creation of shell companies and fictitious transactions. The qualifications of people seeking to establish companies, including their professional, personal and financial capacity to run a business, should be checked before registration, he said.

The president also called for closer scrutiny of sectors and occupations vulnerable to corruption, including medical, legal and customs-related activities, as well as government managers. Authorities should identify sensitive points where bribery and abuse of authority could occur and investigate them more quickly, he said.

Pezeshkian referred to people allegedly paid to influence legal proceedings, doctors demanding unofficial payments from patients and officials ignoring violations in return for money. Identifying such practices must be followed by effective action to prevent them from continuing, he said.

He said many public complaints stemmed from such misconduct and reiterated that the government was determined to confront corruption, bribery and rent-seeking.

Pezeshkian instructed six government bodies that have not provided information required by the tax administration to submit the data within one month. He warned that failure to meet the deadline would lead to a halt in their cooperation with other government agencies.

Addressing the economy minister, Pezeshkian described the ministry as a key point in the country's economic system. Its approach and performance could influence whether the economy moved toward development and public welfare or corruption and rent-seeking, he said.



President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks during a recent meeting with senior government officials in Tehran.
president.ir

The president welcomed reports on efforts to recover large sums linked to tax evasion and prevent irregular transactions. He asked the ministry to inform the public about these measures and their results, saying people should know about the government's actions against unhealthy economic activities.

He also ordered the provision of funds to purchase equipment and strengthen technical capacity to protect economic data and meet civil defense requirements.

Other issues included reviewing tax exemptions considered excessive or lacking economic justification, requiring the disclosure of property and other assets during transactions and setting clear rules for government agencies seeking access to information held by the Economy Ministry.

The review covered the use of transaction records to detect suspicious financial flows, alongside checks on companies suspected of carrying out transactions without genuine commercial activity.

Officials also considered how information from different institutions could be brought together to provide a more complete picture of household finances and business activity. The administration has been seeking wider access to public-sector records to improve tax assessments and identify undeclared income consistently.

Pezeshkian said access to the ministry's data should follow a defined framework, including arrangements for charging agencies that request information.

Oil industry facilities damaged in war to be rebuilt as national priority

Economy Desk



IRNA

The acting oil minister has called for faster reconstruction of oil industry facilities damaged during the US-Israeli war against Iran, saying the work is directly linked to the country's energy security and national interests.

Hamid Bovard made the remarks on Friday at a meeting reviewing reconstruction projects at damaged refineries. He said progress had been satisfactory but stressed the need to accelerate ongoing work, particularly projects related to Phases 9 and 10, Shana reported.

The projects should not be viewed merely as industrial operations, Bovard said, describing them as national undertakings with a direct impact on the country's interests.

He said around 95 percent of Iran's population has access to natural gas, making the stability of supply essential to people's daily lives. Oil industry workers, he added, play a major role in maintaining that stability.

Bovard said the war had reduced the country's gas production capacity by around 230 million cubic meters per day. Meanwhile, the gas supply-demand gap reaches approximately 250 million cubic meters per day during periods of peak consumption.

Although some lost production capacity has been restored and further recovery efforts are underway, Iran is still expected to face a gas shortage during the coldest days of the coming winter, he said.

The acting minister called for simultaneous efforts to increase production and control consumption across all sectors. He praised oil industry workers for their efforts to keep the country's energy supply stable, describing their work as a service to the nation.

Bovard said oil and gas workers had continued their work while others defended the country on different fronts, adding that their efforts were essential to keeping the country's energy supply running.

He said the government had managed energy supply challenges and restrictions during the months of war to prevent shortages for consumers.

However, gas consumption rises sharply in winter, with household and commercial demand reaching around 700 million cubic meters per day on some days, he said.

Bovard urged households and businesses to reduce their gas consumption by about 20 percent, saying relatively simple changes could help ease pressure on the national network.

These measures include avoiding excessive heating, wearing warmer clothes indoors and adjusting heating equipment to appropriate temperatures. Not all radiators need to remain on throughout the day, and every room does not need to be heated to the highest temperature, he said.

Bovard said addressing the gas imbalance required action on two fronts. The first was increasing production, a responsibility of the oil and gas industry. The second was managing consumption, which required public cooperation.

He said similar efforts to balance production and consumption had produced positive results in the supply of petroleum products. A 20-percent reduction in gas consumption could also help authorities manage the situation during winter.

The acting minister also stressed that industrial production should not be interrupted because of energy shortages. He said the work of oil industry employees supported the daily lives of millions of people and helped keep economic activities running.

Bovard said the oil and gas industry's efforts had helped the country avoid a serious energy crisis during the war. He called on officials and employees to continue reconstruction and production efforts with the wider national impact in mind.

Iran, St. Petersburg agree to expand mining, industrial cooperation

Economy Desk



IRNA

Iran's Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) and officials from Russia's St. Petersburg have agreed to expand cooperation in mining, steel and other industrial sectors.

The agreement was discussed at a meeting between a senior IMIDRO delegation and economic and international affairs officials of the St. Petersburg regional government, held at the governor's office, IRNA reported.

Nizami Mamishev, deputy chairman of the regional government's Committee for External Relations, expressed readiness to expand economic, industrial, scientific and trade ties with Iran. He also highlighted previous cooperation between St. Petersburg and several Iranian provinces, including Yazd and Bushehr.

Russian officials identified mining, shipbuilding, pharmaceuticals, information technology, machinery exports, oil industries and construction as potential areas for cooperation.

Hossein Afshari, IMIDRO's deputy head, who led the Iranian delegation, outlined Iran's mining and steel capabilities and expressed the organization's readiness to strengthen industrial, scientific and commercial relations with Russian partners.

He also introduced major Iranian companies participating in Metal Expo 2026 in St. Petersburg and invited Russian businesses to visit Iran's national pavilion and explore potential partnerships.

The two sides also agreed to appoint representatives to follow up on the proposed partnerships and coordinate future activities.

IMIDRO introduced Hossein Zadboum as its representative, while the St. Petersburg administration appointed an official from a relevant department.

Russian officials also called for St. Petersburg to be kept informed about industrial and economic events involving Iran and Russia, allowing regional businesses to participate more actively.

Iran's economic attaché said the embassy would inform Russia's Foreign Ministry and relevant chambers of commerce about the province's interest in closer cooperation.

The Iranian delegation also announced plans to sign a memorandum of understanding with Moscow's National University of Science and Technology (MISIS) after the exhibition. The announcement was welcomed by Russian officials, who expressed interest in similar partnerships between Iranian institutions and scientific and industrial centers in St. Petersburg.

Can China's robot ...

Advances in robotics and artificial intelligence could help Iran compensate for

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a shrinking workforce, particularly in sectors facing labor shortages or requiring repetitive, physically demanding and time-consuming tasks. Robots could support manufacturing, logistics, agriculture, retail and service industries, allowing businesses to maintain or even increase production with fewer human workers. They could also assist in elderly care and healthcare services, helping reduce the burden on caregivers and medical personnel.

In this respect, China's growing experience in developing and deploying robots could offer useful lessons for Iran, both in terms of technology transfer and the practical integration of robotic systems into different sectors of the economy.

However, robotic labor should be seen as a means of easing the consequences of population aging, not as a comprehensive solution to the demographic crisis itself.

A country's population is not merely a source of labor. It also constitutes its consumer base, supports domestic demand, sustains communities and contributes to its social dynamism and long-term economic and national capacity. Robots can manufacture goods, provide services and perform physical tasks, but they cannot fully replace the human relationships, social participation, creativity and intergenerational bonds that underpin a functioning society.

Nor can they eliminate the growing need for human care as the elderly population expands. Even the most sophisticated machines cannot entirely substitute for the human dimension of caring for older people.

There are also economic constraints. Developing and deploying advanced robots requires substantial investment, technical expertise, infrastructure and access to sophisticated technologies, resources that may not be equally available across all sectors.

For Iran, therefore, the development of robotic labor could become an important part of a broader strategy to manage demographic change. It could help bridge workforce gaps, sustain productivity and reduce pressure on certain public services. But it should go hand in hand with policies aimed at encouraging childbirth, supporting families, improving healthcare and pension systems, and preparing the economy for an older population.

Ultimately, robots may help countries cope with having fewer workers, but they cannot replace the need for a sustainable population. Technology can buy time and ease the economic consequences of demographic decline, but cannot reverse the underlying demographic trend.