Cement production rises 7% in first seven months

Exports to Afghanistan, northern routes up 15%



IRNA

Economy Desk

Iran's cement production rose 7% in the first seven months of the current Iranian year, which began on March 21, reaching 40.4 million metric tons, despite a sharp decline in exports through southern borders, an industry association official said.

Ali Akbar Alvandian, secretary of the Cement Industry Employers Association, told ISNA that cement production increased from 37.9 million tons in the same period last year, driven by higher domestic demand.

Cement clinker production, however, fell 11% to 38.9 million tons from 43.8 million tons in the same period last year, he said.

On exports, Alvandian said shipments through Iran's southern borders fell 67% from a year earlier, as exports through southern ports and to Iraq were severely disrupted by economic conditions, fewer import permits issued by Iraq and conditions at southern border crossings.

Exports to Afghanistan and via Iran's northern routes, however, rose by about 15% year on year, offsetting part of the decline in clinker exports.

Overall, cement and clinker exports fell 29% compared with the same period last year, he said.

Iran has been under wartime conditions since US and Israeli attacks began in late February, in a 40-day conflict. Its southern ports have also faced a US naval blockade, as Washington seeks to bring Iran's trade and oil sales to zero to pressure Tehran into accepting its terms for peace.

Alvandian said improved coordination over electricity allocations and consumption had given producers more room to increase output. Production conditions improved in the Iranian month of Aban, which began on Oct. 23, allowing factories to prepare for the coming months, he added.

Regarding potential gas shortages in the final months of the year, Alvandian said a schedule and guidelines for gas restrictions and cutoffs had been issued. Gas consumption by cement producers had fallen to almost zero since last week, with gas still available only to white cement plants, which account for a small share of total industry output. The rest of the cement industry will use fuel oil, he said.

The association is working with the ministries of petroleum, energy and industry to coordinate production plans and limit disruptions and losses during the cold season, Alvandian said, adding that the aim was to keep winter restrictions less severe than the challenges faced during the previous summer.

He said the industry expected no problems supplying the country's domestic cement needs.

Road minister raises truck transit issues at Uzbekistan-Turkmenistan border

Economy Desk

Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Farzaneh Sadeq visited the Alat-Farap border crossing between Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to review obstacles facing Iranian truck drivers and road transit with transport and customs officials from both countries, the ministry said.

Sadeq traveled by land into Turkmenistan on Sunday, at the end of her official visit to Uzbekistan, to follow up on transport and transit issues at the border, according to a statement from Iran's Ministry of Roads and Urban Development.

During separate talks with transport and customs officials from Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, she reviewed the latest status of road freight traffic, the movement of trucks across the border and obstacles affecting transit. She was also briefed on the concerns and demands of industry operators.

Sadeq also met with several Iranian truck drivers at the crossing and spoke with them directly to hear about the problems and difficulties they face while traveling through the border.

The visit was aimed at identifying border bottlenecks, following up on outstanding issues, facilitating the movement of Iranian road transport fleets and removing obstacles facing transit operators, the ministry said.



Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Farzaneh Sadeq visits the Alat-Farap border crossing between Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan on November 15, 2026.

IRNA

Iran and Uzbekistan are also working to expand rail and road transport cooperation, improve transit flows and strengthen logistics and trade ties through regional corridors.

During a meeting with Uzbek Transport Minister Ilkhom Makhkamov in Tashkent on Thursday, Sadeq described bilateral cooperation in road, air and rail transport as positive. She proposed a trilateral railway meeting involving Iran, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to improve coordination and accelerate rail cooperation among the three countries.

She also highlighted the two countries' potential in logistics and transit, describing Iran's northern and southern ports as valuable assets for expanding regional trade.

Iranian light, heavy crude prices surge

Iran reportedly exported 600,000 bpd to China in Sept. despite naval blockade



Iran's Reshadat oil rig in the Persian Gulf

Economy Desk

The prices of Iranian light and heavy crude rose, with light crude gaining 76 cents, or 0.84%, to $91.50 a barrel, while heavy crude increased by the same amount, or 0.86%, to $89.60 a barrel.

According to Mehr News Agency, citing OilPrice.com, both prices were reported with a four-day delay and refer to deliveries of Iranian crude to Northwest Europe.

Meanwhile, Iran exported about 600,000 barrels per day of oil to China in September 2026 despite a US naval blockade, Tasnim News Agency reported, citing the Middle East Economic Survey (MEES).

MEES estimates showed that exports fell from about 990,000 bpd in August and 1.75 million bpd in April 2026.

September's exports marked the lowest level since the beginning of 2024 and were nearly 48% below the approximately 1.15 million bpd shipped to China in the same month last year, according to the report.

Separately, Iran's daily crude oil production capacity increased by 8.3% over two years, reaching 3.715 million bpd in October 2026, up from 3.43 million bpd in September 2024, the official IRNA news agency reported in mid-October.

The increase amounted to 285,000 bpd over the period, while production capacity in October 2026 was 55,000 bpd higher than in the same month a year earlier, IRNA reported.

The Oil Ministry has focused on restoring existing capacity to operation, reviving underperforming wells, developing shared oilfields and strengthening processing and transportation infrastructure, according to IRNA.

The growth in production capacity comes despite the US administration's campaign to reduce Iran's oil exports to zero.

Despite decades of unilateral sanctions, financial blockades and security tensions linked to Washington, Iran has drawn on domestic expertise not only to sustain but also to significantly expand its hydrocarbon production capacity.

Elsewhere in the oil market, prices fell on Monday as expectations of a global supply surplus increased.

Shipments from the Middle East through the Strait of Hormuz have nearly returned to pre-war levels, while reduced activity at Chinese refineries in October has pointed to weaker crude oil demand, according to a Reuters report republished by Tasnim.

By 1114 GMT, Brent crude futures had fallen 52 cents, or 0.5%, to $95.32 a barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate crude had declined 27 cents, or 0.3%, to $88.29, Reuters reported.

Oil prices also settled lower on Friday as markets assessed signs of easing geopolitical risks stemming from the US-Israeli war against Iran, now in its ninth month. Brent and US crude fell 16% and 13%, respectively, last week. "For the first time since the US-Iran conflict began, traders are actively contemplating the possibility of excess supply rather than persistent tightness," said Tim Waterer, chief market analyst at KCM Trade.

The International Energy Agency forecast that global oil supply would average 105 million bpd in the fourth quarter, exceeding projected demand by 1.7 million bpd. The agency had previously forecast a supply deficit for the period.

Upcoming trilateral meeting ...

There are reports of a possible renewed Omani mediation effort

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between Iran and the United States, with China potentially playing a supporting role. How do you assess the prospects for such an initiative, and how actively is Beijing prepared to engage in diplomatic efforts to end the war and bring Tehran and Washington back to negotiations?

I firmly believe that China supports any party actively engaged in mediating conflicts. Given Oman's proven track record as a successful mediator and its discreet diplomatic approach, Beijing is strongly supporting Oman's diplomatic efforts. China's economic size and the nature of its cooperation with Middle Eastern countries make it undoubtedly one of the countries most eager to see the situation in the Persian Gulf return to normal. Beijing will spare no effort to promote an early end to the state of war in the region.

US President Donald Trump, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin are expected to hold a trilateral meeting in Shenzhen. Could this gathering provide an important opportunity to address the war against Iran and its regional consequences? What role could China and Russia play in diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict?

A meeting between the leaders of these three major powers would undoubtedly command global attention. The world today truly needs their cooperation. I believe that the ongoing war involving Iran, which has already had global repercussions, will certainly receive the attention of all three leaders. I would even argue that the intensive diplomatic mediation efforts surrounding the US-Iran conflict in recent weeks are also, at least in part, preparations for this trilateral meeting in Shenzhen. Given that neither the United States nor Iran can achieve a decisive victory over the other, it is time for both sides to make some concessions. Without mutual compromise, peace will remain elusive.

Iran's Parliament Speaker has described relations with China as a strategic priority, stressing the need for practical cooperation rather than formal agreements. How can Tehran and Beijing strengthen their partnership, particularly in economic and security affairs, under current regional and international conditions?

Indeed, I have consistently argued that the two nations should establish a more pragmatic form of cooperation, centered on concrete and actionable projects. Without tangible, pragmatic outcomes, even the most high-profile political declarations are meaningless. In my view, Beijing actively assisting Iran in bringing the war to an end—while ensuring that Iran's core interests remain uncompromised—would constitute a form of pragmatic cooperation. Following this, both sides must roll out a series of verifiable, substantive projects, including those in the economic sphere.