

NEWS IN BRIEF

Russia, Iran
to sign deal
on free trade
zone soon:

Deputy PM



An interstate agreement between Russia and Iran will be signed in the near future, an agreement on a free trade zone with the EAEU will be signed in December, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak said on the Rossiya-1 TV channel.

"Several important documents will be signed in the near future. In December, an agreement on a free trade zone between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union, and we will soon embark on the key document, which is an interstate agreement," he said.

Novak noted that Russian leader Vladimir Putin and Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi reviewed in detail the entire list of trade and economic relations, discussed financial and banking relationships and settlements. The negotiations between the presidents of Russia and Iran took place in the Kremlin on December 7, and lasted more than five hours.

No 'single
solution'
for energy
transition:
OPEC chief

The head of the OPEC oil cartel said Saturday there was no "single solution" to the energy transition as pressure grows to agree a phase-out of fossil fuels at the COP28 climate talks.

"There is no single solution or path to achieve a sustainable energy future," OPEC secretary general Haitham Al Ghais said during the UN meeting in Dubai, AFP wrote.

"We need realistic approaches to tackle emission, ones that enable economic growth, help eradicate poverty and increase resilience at the same time."

OPEC attracted criticism Saturday after it emerged that the Kuwaiti secretary general wrote to the group's 13 members and 10 allies this week urging them to "proactively reject" any language that "targets" fossil fuels instead of emissions.

Negotiators have held marathon sessions aimed at finding a compromise on the fate of oil, gas and coal as they aim to achieve the global goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Tehran, Damascus to
expand all-out trade ties

Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber underscored the "strategic and amicable" relations between the Islamic Republic and Syria.

The Iranian official said Tehran is determined to expand economic cooperation with Damascus, Press TV reported.

"The Iranian government and nation attach profound significance to Syria, and consider the nation's stability, independence, welfare and prosperity among their priorities," Mokhber said in a meeting with visiting Syrian Prime Minister Hussein Arnous in Tehran on Saturday.

The senior Iranian official also mentioned the ongoing Israeli military onslaught on the Gaza Strip. Mokhber said the international community is witnessing circumstances that have no precedent in history.

Mokhber said Washington and the Tel Aviv regime failed miserably to attain any of their set objectives in Gaza, emphasizing that the Axis of Resistance has grown to be strong and powerful, and rendered enemies unable to confront it.

"Just like Daesh terrorist group, which could not achieve its goals in Syria due to the heroic resis-

tance of the country's government and nation, the Zionist regime will not be able to dominate the region because of the strong steadfastness of the people of Gaza."

He expressed hope that enemies as well as their military forces and proxies would pull out of West Asia completely.

For his part, Arnous said the Syrian government and nation will never forget Iran's unconditional support and honorable positions vis-à-vis Syria.

"Iran and Syria have always come under pressure from global arrogance, the United States and certain Western states because they have been safeguarding their independence. Western countries have been putting pressure on Syria as it is one of the main pillars of the Axis of Resistance."

"Nonetheless I give you assurances that Syria will not alter its stance and will continue to tread the path of resistance," the Syrian prime minister said.

Turning to the relentless Israeli air and ground strikes on Gaza, Arnous described the scale of the regime's aggression as "bizarre and out of the ordinary."

"It is eccentric that such atrocities are taking place just before



Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber (R) meets with visiting Syrian Prime Minister Hussein Arnous in Tehran on December 9, 2023.
fypresident.ir

the world public opinion. It seems as if some parties are willing to wipe Gaza off the world map. We hope the Axis of Resistance would foil all these conspiracies."

Inking several MoUs

Later on Saturday, Iran and Syria signed six cooperation agreements, including a deal on free trade and memoranda of understanding pertaining to tourism,

media, sports, museums and libraries.

The two sides also agreed to launch shipping routes and promote transportation between Tehran and Damascus.

Zimbabwe Iran's gateway to
East African market: MP

By Sadeq Dehqan
& Reza Abesh Ahmadi
Staff writers

The head of the Iran-Zimbabwe Parliamentary Friendship Group said the African Continent has many unknown and attractive capacities for investment and cooperation with Iran, noting that Zimbabwe can be considered Iran's gateway to the East

African market.

Eqbal Shakeri told Iran Daily that stable collaboration have been established between the two countries in the fields of mining, agriculture and medical services, and extraterritorial cultivation. A delegation comprised of Zimbabwean traders and some members of the parliamentary friendship group will visit Iran in the near future, the MP said,

adding that during a recent visit of another delegation from the African country to Tehran, ways were studied to broaden the bilateral cooperation.

Referring to the recent visit of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, which took place in July, the lawmaker noted that 12 memoranda of understanding (MOUs) were signed between the two countries in the fields of agricul-

ture, pharmaceuticals, transfer of technology and medical services. The previous government of Iran put all its efforts to communicate with Europe and completely neglected the African Continent, the MP criticized.

Referring to the activities of the incumbent government in the African market, he continued, "The African market, especially countries such as Zimbabwe, Kenya and South Africa, has surprised our investors and the private sector."

"The Africa has many untouched capacities that can be used for Iranian companies active in the field of technology-based services."

During Raisi's visit to Africa, the Civil Committee of the Parliament was tasked to study the ways of exporting techno-engineering services to the continent, the MP added.

The Islamic Republic of Iran's joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, BRICS and having stronger presence in ECO

and the African market show the incumbent government's active diplomacy in the economic field, Shakeri said.

He also pointed to the strategic position of Iran in the region and noted that Iran is located at the crossroads of world traffic with a large amount of cargo and passengers pass through this region.

"Considering the importance of Iran's transit routes, our enemies tried hard to reduce the importance of our transit routes by activating alternative routes around Iran, but all these plans failed after a short time," the lawmaker noted, saying that the fastest and shortest transit routes to many parts of the world pass through Iran.

The government and Parliament have many plans for development of land, sea and air transportation, which will lead to good results in the promotion of commercial cooperation with other countries, the MP concluded.

Iran, Qatar can boost bilateral trade to \$1b: Official



The annual trade between Iran and Qatar can reach \$1 billion, announced the director of the International Affairs Department of the Ministry of Energy. Mojtaba Akbari made the remark in the 9th meeting of the Iran-Qatar Joint Economic Cooperation Commission in Tehran on Saturday, adding that the amount of export of goods and equipment to Qatar from Iran is about \$200 million a year, while Iran is doing its

best to increase this amount to \$1 billion, IRNA reported. According to the official, the annual joint commission meeting is being held to upgrade economic cooperation and constructive interaction between the two nations, which is attended by high-level representatives of executive authorities as well as the trade council of Iran and Qatar to deepen an amicable relationship.

The Joint Economic Cooperation Commission comprises four specialized committees, including the trade committee (commerce, industry, banking, customs, and insurance), the infrastructure committee (roads, urban planning, agriculture, information technology, communications, and labor sectors), social and cultural committee (tourism, handicrafts, health, science, research, and judicial system), and energy committee (water, wastewater, electricity, gas, and environment).