

## Iran's annual aluminum ingot output exceeds 635,000 tons: IMIDRO



Iran's production of aluminum ingot in the previous Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2023 to March 19, 2024) surpassed 635,000 tons, showing an about one percent rise compared to a year earlier.

Iran's four major aluminum production companies produced 635,597 tons of aluminum ingot during the 12 months, the Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) added, Tasnim News Agency reported. In this period, Iran's Alumina Production Company produced 222,138 tons of alumina powder, 374,106 tons of aluminum hydrates and 598,599 tons of bauxite, it added. According to the available statistics, the country had produced about 632,166 tons of aluminum ingots from March 21, 2022, to March 20, 2023.

Aluminum oxide, which is commonly called alumina, is an inert, odorless, white amorphous material often used in industrial ceramics. Alumina is an important ceramic material for industrial applications. The numerous fields of application range from construction materials to filling materials, as well as abrasives and catalysts.

# Iran posts growth in exports to Russia, Belarus



An official at the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPOI) said the country's export of products to Russia and Belarus in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended March 19, 2024) registered a considerable growth in volume and

value. Head of the Central Asia, Caucasus and Russia Office of the TPOI Akbar Godari said Iran exported 2.185 million tons of non-oil products, valued at \$946 million, to Russia from March 21, 2023, to March 19, 2024, reg-

istering a hike in value and volume compared to a year earlier, reported Tasnim News Agency. The statistics indicate that Iran's export of various types of products to Russia in this period registered a 26 and 52 percent growth in value

and volume respectively, Godari stated. He pointed to the import of products into the country from Russia and said \$1,691 million of products were imported into the country from the Russian Federation last year, showing a 9

and 27 percent growth in value and volume respectively compared to a year earlier, IRIB news reported. Elsewhere in his remarks, Godari pointed out that Iran exported \$20 million of products to Belarus from March

21, 2023, to March 19, 2024, showing a 34 percent hike in value compared to a year before. In this period, Iran imported \$59 million of products from Belarus, registering a 35 percent growth compared to a year earlier, he added.

## IRICA seizes Israeli-made chemical fertilizer cargo

The customs officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) confiscated a cargo of Israeli-made chemical fertilizer being transited through the country.

The cargo of the chemical fertilizer, containing potassium nitrate manufactured by the Zionist regime of Israel had been declared to Iran's Bazargan Customs

Office through a truck carrying the cargo for fulfilling the foreign transit formalities heading to the Republic of Uzbekistan, IRICA added, reported IRNA.

The import and transit of any kind of Israeli-made products through the customs offices of the country is strictly banned. Tough controlling and

monitoring measures are now carried out by the customs officials of the country on Israeli-made goods, the report added.

Earlier, an Iranian Foreign Ministry official said that an updated list of the banned products made by Israeli-linked companies had been forwarded to the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran.



## Iran a reliable economic partner for gas importing countries



### PERSPECTIVE

Iran has been introduced as a reliable economic partner after long years of signing contracts with and exporting gas to neighboring states.

The Oil Ministry has put great emphasis on promoting energy diplomacy since the 13th administration took office in August 2021, Shana reported.

To achieve the strategic goal by relying on domestic capacities, all affiliated companies and groups of the Oil Ministry, including the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC), have put the talks with other

countries, particularly the neighboring states, on the agenda in an effort to earn foreign currencies.

The extension of the contract on exporting Iran's gas to Iraq for the next five years on March 27 was the latest move to attain the objective.

The contract extension was signed by Majid Chegeni, the NIGC managing director, and Ziyad Ali Fazel, Iraq's minister of electricity, in Baghdad.

Based on the contract, the volume of gas exports to Baghdad and Basra will vary during the warm and cold periods of the year. Based on two contracts,

Iran exported around 52 billion cubic meters (bcm) of gas worth \$15 billion to Iraq in the past five years. Fazel has underlined that Iraq's power plants are in dire need of Iran's gas to generate electricity, calling Iran a good economic partner, which has met his country's needs in critical conditions.

### Untangling a 'mess'

Iran has taken major steps to extend its contract on exporting gas to Turkey and untangle what is once described as a "mess". Turkish Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Alparsalan Bayraktar held

talks with Iran's Oil Minister Javad Owji on April 4, expressing his country's willingness to extend the gas contract during a session on technical issues.

Speaking at the 8th meeting of Iran-Turkey High-Level Cooperation Council in Ankara in January 2024, Iranian President Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi said, "Given the existing capacities in the two states, Iran-Turkey annual trade volume could hit \$30 billion."

Raisi and his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan also met at the 16th Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Summit in

Tashkent, the capital city of Uzbekistan, in November 2023, showing their interest in extending the gas contract.

Iran exported over 156 billion cubic meters of gas to Turkey in the past 28 years, and the two sides are keen to extend the strategic deal.

### Fruitful talks with Pakistan

Tehran's negotiations with Islamabad on the revival of their contract for exporting gas to Pakistan have borne fruit, as the latest news and reports show that Islamabad has commenced the work after a 10-year hiatus to begin the construction of

the 80-kilometer section of the Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline from Gwadar to a point where it can be connected with the Iranian section of the project.

The development comes amid the United States' explicit opposition to the bilateral project.

Speaking to congressmen during a congressional hearing in Washington last month, US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Donald Lu stated that the United States opposes the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project and is exerting maximum efforts to prevent its construction.

The US official said Washington was in contact with Islamabad on the matter.

Reacting to Lu's remarks, Pakistani Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch underlined that since the pipeline is being constructed inside the country's territory, "we do not believe there is room for any objections by any third party".

Last month, Pakistan's Petroleum Minister Musadik Malik said Islamabad's position on the gas transfer project with Iran is not merely an expression of desire but "the need of the hour".

### Other achievements

Iran has been exporting gas

to Armenia according to their gas-electricity swap contract since the incumbent government took over in August 2021.

On August 15, 2023, Tehran and Yerevan extended their agreement until 2030 under which Iran exports more natural gas to Armenia in exchange for electricity and the ratio of bartering gas with electricity was amended in favor of Iran's NIGC.

In another move toward promoting energy diplomacy, Owji announced in May 2023 that Iran's gas debt to Turkmenistan has been cleared, saying the debt was fully paid in three installments over the past 20 months.

Following the debt settlement, the imports of gas from Turkmenistan resumed and volume of gas swap rose to 8 billion cubic meters per day from 4.5 bcm/d.

Iran's participation in the 7th Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF) Summit of Heads of State and Government in the Algerian capital Algiers in March 2024 was also among important developments.

Delivering speech at the summit, President Raisi made strategic proposals, which will undoubtedly play an effective role in strengthening Iran's position in the assembly.