

## Iran presents transportation-related proposals to BRICS



Iranian Minister of Roads and Urban Development Mehrdad Bazrpash presented Tehran's proposals in the first meeting of the transport ministers of members of the BRICS group of emerging economies to enhance multilateral cooperation in the field of transportation and logistics. In the meeting which was held on the sidelines of the 27th St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF) in Russia, the Iranian minister delivered a speech via video conference and Ambassador of Iran to Russia Kazem Jalali also represented the Islamic Republic in the international forum. Bazrpash referred to Iran's potential and actual capacities in the fields of transportation and transit, including the International North-South-East-West Corridor, and declared the Islamic country's readiness for the digitalization of transportation and logistics supply chains, human resources training, and innovations in line with the objectives of BRICS.

The bloc consists of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, accounting for 42 percent of the global population and about 27 percent of both the world's land area and the world's economy.

The Iranian minister also proposed suggestions for achieving the BRICS objectives, including cooperation in the innovation of supply chains, urban mobility consistent with the significance of developing urban public transport systems, training of competent human resources to create a reliable transport system, and financing transport projects. Bazrpash emphasized that the International North-South Corridor can improve synergy among the BRICS member states in the field of transportation and transit.

As many as 700 million tons of cargo are transported through this corridor per annum, and the volume of transit via the Iranian territory grew by more than 60% to around 17 million tons in 2023, he added. Bazrpash said the Islamic Republic of Iran, boasting a superb geographic location and extensive transit advantages, being placed at the intersection of the aforementioned transit corridor with 11 ports on the Caspian Sea, the Persian Gulf and the Oman Sea, as well as possessing a 15,000-kilometer railway network with more than 250,000 kilometers of various types of roads and 26 land border terminals, enjoys the potential to connect regional and international trade networks via land with the minimum time and cost.

The SPIEF brings together representatives from 136 countries, and in total, over 17,000 people attend the forum, which is held under the slogan "The Basis of a Multipolar World - Formation of New Growth Points." Ministers and representatives from Iran, Russia, Brazil, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the United Arab Emirates spoke in person or via video-link.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist



# Agrofood 2024 expo opened in Tehran

The 31st International Exhibition of Food, Food Technology & Agriculture and Related Industries dubbed "Iran Agrofood 2024" was inaugurated in Tehran on Saturday.

Iran's Deputy Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade Mehdi Zeyghami attended the opening ceremony of the expo, as reported by Tasnim News Agency.

More than 800 domestic companies and 136 foreign companies from 11 countries, namely Spain, Austria, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Italy, Germany, Thailand, Turkey, China, Denmark, Russia and India, have participated in this edition of the exhibition to showcase their latest achievements and technologies.

The event provides unique opportunities for both Iranian and foreign industrialists to



share their experiences and know-how with one another.

Like in previous years, trade delegations from various

countries are also expected to partake in this edition of

the exhibition, which will run through June 11.

## Annual exports of aquatics hit \$650m



The director general of the Iranian Ministry of Agriculture's Department of Quality Improvement, Processing and Aquatic Market said \$650 million worth of aquatics was exported from the country in the previous Iranian year starting from March 21, 2023, to March 19, 2024. Abbas Mokhtari said 139,000 tons of fishery products, valued at \$528 million, were exported from the country between March 21, 2020 and March 20, 2021, Tasnim

News Agency reported. Mokhtari further pointed out that steps were taken during the tenure of the late president Ebrahim Raisi to spur the production and export of aquatics. Aquaculture is playing an increasingly important role in meeting the world's food needs, surpassing wild fisheries in aquatic animal production for the first time, according to a report published by the United Nations on Friday. With global demand for

aquatic foods expected to keep growing, an increase in sustainable production is vital to ensure healthy diets, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization said. In 2022, aquaculture yielded 94.4 million tons of aquatic animal production -- 51 percent of the total, and 57 percent of the production destined for human consumption, it said. "Aquatic systems are increasingly recognized as vital for food and nutrition securi-

ty," according to the report, which was released as experts gathered in Costa Rica for talks on ocean conservation.

"Because of their great diversity and capacity to supply ecosystem services and sustain healthy diets, aquatic food systems represent a viable and effective solution that offers greater opportunities to improve global food security and nutrition," it added. While wild fisheries production has stayed largely unchanged for decades, aquaculture has increased by 6.6 percent since 2020, the report said, adding that the sustainability of wild fishery resources remained a cause for concern.

The proportion of marine stocks fished within biologically sustainable levels decreased to 62.3 percent in 2021, 2.3 percent lower than in 2019, according to the UN report.

"Urgent action is needed to accelerate fishery stock conservation and rebuilding," it said.

With the world's population projected to reach 8.5 billion by 2030, "providing sufficient food, nutrition and liveli-

hoods for this growing population demands significant investments," it added.

"Aquaculture has a major role to play, particularly in Africa where its great potential is not yet realized," the report said, noting that more than 40 percent of the world's population cannot afford a healthy diet.

Aquatic products remain one of the most traded food commodities, generating a record \$195 billion in 2022 -- a 19 percent increase from pre-pandemic levels, it said. "Despite these significant achievements, the sector still faces major challenges from climate change and disasters, water scarcity, pollution, biodiversity loss" and other man-made impacts, it added.

The report was released to coincide with a meeting in San Jose of country representatives, scientists and international experts to prepare for the third UN Ocean Conference to be held in France in 2025.

United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Social Affairs Li Junhua said at the start of the talks that protecting the ocean was "not an option but an imperative."

## Iran produces diesel, black carbon from wastewater for first time

The chief executive of the Tehran Sewage Company announced the production of diesel and black carbon from dewatered sludge in the process of wastewater treatment plants in the Iranian capital.

It is hoped that production of diesel and black carbon will be operationalized in the current year (started March 20, 2024), Abbasali Mesrzadeh stated, as reported by IRNA.

As black carbon is used as the raw material in industries, especially in the tire manufacturing industry, he

noted that its production in the process of wastewater treatment can both create added value and prevent environmental pollution. Converting 120 tons of sludge daily to diesel and black carbon is the company's main plan in the current year, he said, stressing that it can be used in the heating system of the wastewater treatment plants and facilities related to it.

At first glance, sewage and wastewater are considered a source of pollution and threat to human communi-

ties, the official said, noting that what comes to pass in hygienic sewage collection projects is turning threats into opportunities. Iran is one of the leading countries in the Middle East in the generation of

electricity from sewage. In addition to generating electricity at the wastewater power plants, the heat caused by the gas engines is used to replace fossil fuels for providing warmwater, he added.

