

Iran's sustainable olive production warrants knowledge-based growth

Economy Desk

Sustainable olive production in Iran depends on knowledge-based development, said Deputy Minister of Horticulture Affairs at the Ministry of Agriculture Mohammad Mehdi Boroumandi, noting that the ministry has prioritized the improvement of olive orchards.

Speaking at an event to mark the National and World Olive Day in northwestern city of Zanjan on Saturday, Boroumandi stated that the Ministry of Agriculture is committed to effective policy-making in this sector.

He highlighted that Iran has approximately 70,000 hectares of olive orchards, with over 20,000 hectares located in Tarom County, Zanjan Province.

As a member of the International Olive Council (IOC), Boroumandi announced that Iran has assumed the presidency of the council in 2024.

He also discussed efforts to enhance mechanization in olive production, noting that, for the first time, a specialized olive harvesting combine was imported this year.

Boroumandi stressed the need to increase per-hectare yields and complete the olive value chain while promoting a shift in consumption culture toward olive oil.

Despite its high nutritional value, olive oil consumption in Iran remains low, with a per capita usage of just 200 grams, the official said.

The northwestern province of Zanjan leads the country in olive production, accounting for 43% of national output.

Araghchi to Iran Daily: No regional country safe from Syria crisis spillover

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INTERVIEW

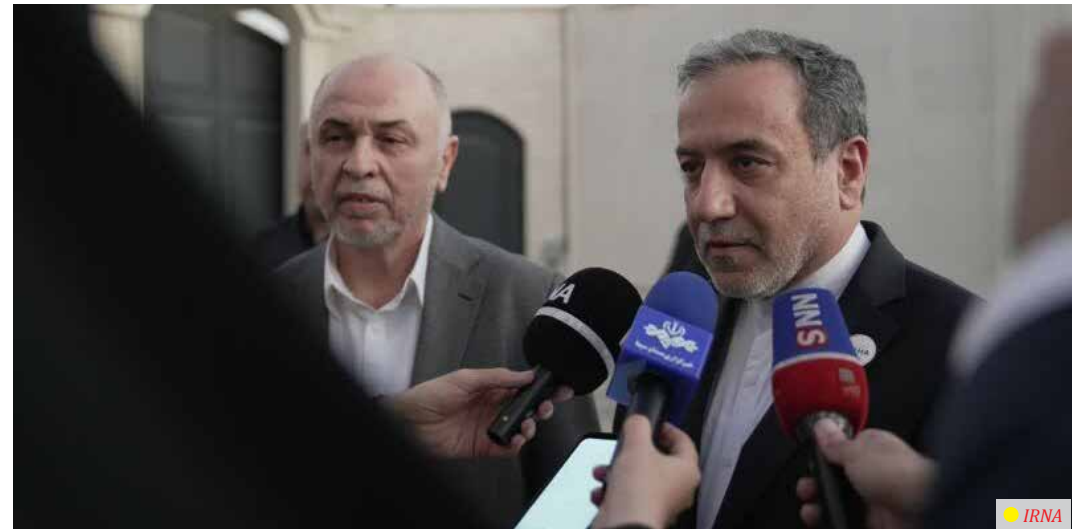
Iran has started intensive talks with key players, including Russia and Turkey, aimed at helping find a solution to address the Syrian crisis. These talks took Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi to a regional tour to Damascus, Ankara and Baghdad and on the last leg to Doha in Qatar. In this vein, Araghchi attended the Doha Forum and a trilateral meeting in the Astana format, alongside his Russian and Turkish counterparts Sergey Lavrov and Hakan Fidan. He also wrapped up several bilateral talks with other officials. In a brief interview with Iran Daily on the sidelines of these meetings, Araghchi shed light on the agreements reached after the talks.

Iran Daily: How do you view the ongoing Astana format talks, which coincided with the advances of armed opposition groups in Syria? Was there any common ground for cooperation?

Araghchi: Yes; today, a trilateral meeting in the Astana format was held with the foreign ministers of Iran, Turkey, and Russia in attendance. At the end of the session, Mr. [Geir] Pedersen, the UN secretary-general's special representative for Syria, also joined the meeting, and very productive discussions took place. The current situation in Syria is indeed serious, and naturally, there are differing viewpoints. However, there were a few areas of common ground that I believe are very important. First, supporting the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Syria and its government organizations. Second, the necessity of an immediate end to hostilities and conflicts. Third, respecting the UN Security Council resolutions concerning Syria. And most importantly, initiating political dialogue between the Syrian government and legitimate opposition groups, with the involvement of the Astana group and possibly other countries.

To what extent is the Syrian government aware of these agreements?

Naturally, following today's Astana meeting, both Iran and



Russia will consult and engage separately with the Syrian government to lay the groundwork for implementing these agreements. We continue to emphasize our ongoing support for the Syrian government and people, and we believe that in this unfolding political process, we should play an effective role.

You also had a separate meeting with the Turkish foreign minister. What was the main topic of discussion in this

meeting?

My conversation with the Turkish foreign minister was very frank and direct. We discussed the path forward in supporting the Syrian people and collaborating on preserving the territorial integrity of the country. We also tried to make the necessary predictions about potential developments in the region and find appropriate solutions, as the perils of the internal crisis in Syria naturally spill over into other countries and no region-

al country will be safe from the consequences of these developments. Therefore, with the aim of discussing these risks and finding a political solution to the Syrian crisis, I visited Turkey and Iraq and today I am also meeting with officials from the countries present in Qatar. In the current situation, consultations and exchanges of views are more important than ever and we are continuing our diplomatic efforts despite the rapid developments in the region.

Hemmati: Iran plans to organize not curb cryptocurrencies



Iran's Economy Minister Abdolnaser Hemmati said that the government intends to organize digital currencies and

cryptocurrencies instead of putting limitations on them. Addressing a national event on digital currency on Sat-

urday in Tehran, Hemmati stated that Iran is moving towards managing and eliminating the adverse effects of digital currency on the economy and instead using its positive effects.

He cited the advantages and progress of digital currency as the reasons behind the decision.

Digital money is within the scope of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) authority, the minister said.

As to cryptocurrencies, he added, it is hoped that they would be developed with the aim of growing assets and youth employment, helping to

nullify sanctions and aligning Iran's activities with the global economy.

'Framework for cryptocurrencies'

Also on Saturday, the document titled "Central Bank of Iran Policy and Regulatory Framework for Cryptocurrencies", was officially published following its approval by the CBI's High Council.

This initiative aims to leverage the opportunities and potential in the development of modern financial technologies.

According to IRNA, the CBI announced that the frame-

work was formulated and approved in four sections and 19 articles.

The CBI has developed this framework to harness the potential of advanced financial technologies, enhance transparency in cryptocurrency-related activities, and instruct the public in this area.

Given the emerging nature of cryptocurrencies and the rapid developments in this field, particularly in digital assets, the CBI, in collaboration with other relevant bodies, will continue to monitor the sector. If necessary, it will revise the framework and provide updates accordingly.

Iran to open trade center in Belarus

Economy Desk

The Director General of the Central Asia, Caucasus, and Russia Department of the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran announced the opening of a trade center in Belarus during an upcoming visit by Minister of Industry, Mine, and Trade to the Eurasian country.

According to a report by IRNA, Akbar Godari emphasized the significance of trade relations with Belarus, noting that Belarus is a member of the Eurasian Economic Union, and Iran's free trade agreement with the bloc is expected to be ratified by the Iranian Parliament soon.

"This agreement provides significant competitive advantages for us. Moreover, Belarus has faced sanctions following the Russia-Ukraine war, creating new opportunities for Iranian companies," Godari said.

The official highlighted that Iran exported approximately \$20 million worth of goods to Belarus while importing around \$60 million last year.

Key Iranian exports include advanced polymers, powder paints, light oils, pistachios, and kiwis. In return, Iran imports potash fertilizers, lightweight fibers, optical lenses, and polyamide yarns.

While acknowledging a trade deficit with Belarus, Godari stressed that Iran's exports to Belarus have high added value, with an average price of over \$900 per ton—significantly higher than the \$250-\$300 average for Iranian exports overall. Imported goods, meanwhile, largely consist of essential raw materials or items not produced domestically.

The 17th Iran-Belarus Joint Commission meeting, chaired by Iran's Minister of Industry

Mohammad Atabak, is scheduled for December 9-11 in Belarus.

Godari confirmed that the Trade Promotion Organization is coordinating the event, which will include representatives from the Iranian Parliament and ministries, as well as officials such as Mohammad-Ali Dehqan Dehnavi, head of the Trade Promotion Organization, and Seyyed Mohammad Mousavi, Deputy Minister of Machinery and Equipment Industries.

Accompanying the delegation will be a private sector trade mission focused on strengthening business ties with Belarus. Godari underlined the administration's policy of involving private businesses in official visits to bolster economic cooperation.

He also noted that over the past two years, Iran and Belarus have worked to expand trade

cooperation, including participation in exhibitions.

Iranian companies have showcased their products at Belarusian events such as AgriFood and petrochemical exhibitions, while Belarus has sent delegations to Iranian fairs in sectors like oil, gas, and petrochemicals.

He also revealed plans to inaugurate Iran Trade Center in Belarus during the joint commission meeting, with both governmental and private sector representatives in attendance. Iran has obtained Belarusian automotive standards and is finalizing agreements for Belarus to invest in producing potash fertilizers within Iran, partially indigenizing the production.

Efforts are also underway in techno-engineering services, banking, and medical equipment, although Godari cautioned that achieving tangible



results will require time.

Logistics remain a significant challenge in trade with Belarus, as goods must transit through multiple countries. To address this, the official called for the involvement of Iran's Ministry of Roads and Urban Develop-

ment and a technical committee to negotiate a suitable logistics agreement.

He expressed hope that Belarus would ease visa issuance for Iranian traders, facilitating smoother business interactions between the two nations.