

Iran ready to transfer agricultural technology to Uzbekistan

Economy Desk

Iran's Minister of Agriculture Gholamreza Nouri-Qezeljah expressed readiness to strengthen cooperation with Uzbekistan in areas such as potato production and processing, seed exports, and the transfer of agricultural technology. Nouri-Qezeljah made the remarks during a meeting with a delegation from Uzbekistan's ministries of agriculture, trade and investment, IRNA reported. He noted that the strategic vision of Iran's current government is focused on expanding relations with other countries, adding that Uzbekistan's president's initiative to foster international ties has created significant opportunities for constructive collaboration between the two nations.

Nouri-Qezeljah also expressed Iran's willingness to supply the agricultural machinery needed by Uzbekistan, and emphasized that cooperation could include both direct exports of products and barter deals involving items like potatoes and legumes.

Highlighting Iran's century-long tradition of agricultural research, he said Iran is ready to share its experience in agricultural research with Uzbekistan and offer joint educational and study opportunities for Uzbek experts.

Speaking at the meeting, Ibrohim Ergashev, the head of plant protection and quarantine agency of Uzbekistan's Ministry of Agriculture, emphasized the importance of strengthening economic ties between the two nations.

He stated that Uzbekistan is determined to enhance trade relations with Iran and has already made the necessary preparations.

During the meeting, Argashev noted that Uzbekistan imports between 600,000 to 700,000 tons of potatoes annually. He expressed interest in purchasing the product directly from Iran. He also pointed out that in recent years, indirect potato imports from Iran to Uzbekistan have increased, underscoring the high quality and competitiveness of Iranian potatoes.

Due to their quality, competitive pricing, and large volume, Iranian potatoes are suitable to meet Uzbekistan's demand.

Referring to the growth of trade in agricultural products, he announced that the volume of imports from Iran has doubled compared to last year and reached 68 million dollars.

Considering Iran's capabilities in the field of agriculture, new technologies, machinery export and Uzbekistan's extensive needs in these fields, more cooperations are expected to lead to economic development and improvement of food security in both countries.

Oil, gas to meet half of global energy needs by 2050: *Paknejad*

Oil and gas will still meet at least half of the world's energy needs by 2050, said the country's Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad, addressing the 26th Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF) Ministerial Meeting which was held in Tehran on Sunday.

He called the GECF Ministerial Meeting one of the most significant events in the global gas industry, providing an opportunity for members and experts to exchange ideas and strengthen cooperation, Shana reported.

Paknejad also welcomed newly appointed ministers from Bolivia, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Libya, Russia, Venezuela, Mauritania, Peru, and Senegal.

The minister highlighted the need for balanced energy policies and warned against a rushed transition from fossil fuels to non-fossil alternatives.

"Attempts to eliminate or replace fossil fuels are unrealistic and pose a threat to global energy security," he stated.

The minister also underscored the growing role of natural gas in meeting global energy demands, with the GECF forecasting that it will account for 26% of the global energy mix by 2050. However, he cautioned that achieving this goal requires substantial investment in the natural gas sector, particularly in the face of current energy policies and ongoing global challenges. Paknejad highlighted the importance of increasing



investments in natural gas infrastructure to ensure long-term global energy stability.

Iran, one of the world's leading natural gas producers, has made significant progress in expanding its gas production capacity despite sanctions, he said, noting that Iran's natural gas production has reached 275 billion cubic meters per year, with gas now constituting over 70% of the country's energy mix.

He reaffirmed Iran's commitment to developing sustainable, environmentally friendly methods for natural gas extraction and utilization. "We are determined to lead in advancing technologies that enhance the efficiency of gas extraction while minimizing environmental impact," Paknejad said.

Paknejad concluded by highlighting the importance of continued dialogue and cooperation among GECF

member states to address the challenges facing the global energy market.

"The GECF has the will and readiness to play a more effective role in the global gas and energy markets," he said.

Also, Mohamed Hamel, the secretary general of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF), speaking at the event highlighted the organization's growth and future goals.

The secretary general re-

flected on the GECF's origins in Tehran in 2001, where the organization was founded as a global platform for natural gas cooperation.

Hamel noted the remarkable growth in global natural gas demand, which has surged by 70% since the GECF's creation.

He added that natural gas consumption reached record levels in 2023 and is expected to increase by 34% by 2050.



Iranian Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad speaks at the 26th Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF) Ministerial Meeting in Tehran on December 8, 2024.

SHANA

"The importance of natural gas as a clean, reliable, and flexible energy source has never been more evident," Hamel said, reiterating the GECF's mission to promote natural gas as a key element in sustainable development, energy, and food security.

Tehran, Kuwait could raise trade to \$1b per annum: *Senior businessman*



By Sadeq Dehqan & Reza Abesh Ahmadlou
Staff writers

The vice president of the Iran-Kuwait Joint Chamber of Commerce highlighted the positive prospect of economic relations between the two countries, noting that bilateral trade could annually reach \$1 billion. In an interview with Iran Daily, Arash Nikpey stated that Iran and Kuwait boast significant potential to expand economic

and trade cooperation.

"By leveraging these opportunities and addressing existing trade challenges, bilateral exchanges can rise and achieve substantial growth," he said. Nikpey noted that Iran's highest export volume to Kuwait occurred in 2018, when exports reached \$350 million. However, since then, trade volumes have declined, stabilizing at around \$200 million annually for the past two to three years. Historically, Iran and Kuwait

have maintained strong trade and cultural ties, he added, noting that given Kuwait's significant Shia population, the two nations share cultural proximity, which has also fostered robust religious tourism links. Nikpey pointed out that relations improved during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, as Iran sided with Kuwait in the conflict. Nevertheless, Kuwait's cautious diplomatic stance among Persian Gulf Arab states

has sometimes hindered closer ties.

The trader also acknowledged that recent political and economic challenges, including sanctions on Iran, negatively impacted regional relations. "However, under the administration of the late Iranian president Ebrahim Raisi, ties began to recover. For instance, Kuwait appointed an ambassador to Tehran after a seven-year hiatus, signaling a shift toward better relations."

Nikpey called for the resumption of the Iran-Kuwait Joint Economic Commission, which has not convened in years. "Reviving this commission could pave the way for a shared economic vision and provide a roadmap for strategic cooperation," he said.

Addressing visa issuance challenges for Iranian citizens, Nikpey emphasized that resolving these issues would significantly enhance trade and economic exchanges, making the \$1 billion trade target achievable.

Kuwait's reliance on imports for most of its food and industrial needs makes it an attractive market for Iranian exporters. "Nearly all goods have export potential to Kuwait," Nikpey ex-

plained. However, he noted that Kuwait's high purchasing power and stringent product standards require exporters to meet quality expectations.

Iranian food products have historically been popular in Kuwait due to shared tastes, and demand for Iranian construction materials has also grown in recent years, the trader explained. Nikpey urged Iranian exporters to focus on effective marketing strategies to have greater presence in Kuwait's industrial product market. However, high transportation costs remain a barrier. "Iran's transport fleet primarily serves routes to the UAE and Oman, with less heading toward Kuwait, driving up shipping expenses," he said.

Despite logistical hurdles, Iran has access to Kuwait via Iraq's Basra, Abdeli, and Safwan borders, the trader said, noting that the lack of operational connections, partly due to Iraq's incomplete implementation of the TIR Convention—a global customs transit system—has limited progress.

Nikpey concluded by suggesting that a joint meeting among transportation officials from Iran, Iraq, and Kuwait could help open trade routes, reducing costs and boosting economic ties.