

Tehran, Dushanbe ink 23 cooperation agreements

Pezeshkian, Rahmon reaffirm centuries-old history of friendship

Economy Desk

High-ranking officials from Iran and Tajikistan signed 22 cooperation agreements and one memorandum of understanding on Thursday in the presence of the two countries' presidents as a joint statement was issued following the signing ceremony in the Tajik capital of Dushanbe. The agreements cover a wide range of areas, including diplomatic cooperation, transportation development, joint efforts to combat administrative corruption, customs education, standardization, food security, women and family affairs, statistics, archival management, digital technology, religious studies, social services, genetic engineering, agriculture, industrial innovation, exhibitions, and communications, according to president.ir.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian emphasized that the ground is paved to surpass the \$500 million trade threshold between Iran and Tajikistan and noted that both countries have significant potential to meet each other's needs for essential goods.

Speaking at a joint press conference with his Tajik counterpart Emomali Rahmon, Pezeshkian expressed gratitude for the

warm hospitality and highlighted the recent momentum in bilateral relations.

He expressed hope that the implementation of the signed agreements would lead to considerable progress in cooperation between the two nations. Pezeshkian underscored the shared economic interests of Iran and Tajikistan, stating that new initiatives would positively impact employment and public welfare in both countries.

He called for the removal of customs barriers, improved entry and exit facilities, and a secure environment for private sector activities.

The Iranian president also announced that a joint economic commission meeting would soon be held to address key bilateral issues in political, economic, trade, cultural, and environmental fields.

Pezeshkian addressed regional developments, including the situation in Afghanistan, emphasizing the importance of stability and security in the neighboring country and stressed the need to protect border security, aligning it with the interests of both Iran and Tajikistan.

Strengthening parliamentary ties

Later in the day, Pezeshkian met

with Muhammadtoir Zokirzoda, the speaker of Tajikistan's National Assembly. He highlighted the historical, cultural, and linguistic ties between the two nations, stating that he felt at home during his visit to Tajikistan.

Pezeshkian expressed hope that the signed agreements would be implemented promptly and that cooperation between the two countries would continue to grow.

He called for closer parliamentary collaboration to facilitate trade and investment laws and remove obstacles to economic and commercial interactions.

Zokirzoda reaffirmed Tajikistan's readiness to expand relations with Iran across all sectors, particularly in parliamentary cooperation.

He noted the shared historical and cultural roots of the two nations, which he said provide a strong foundation for deeper ties.

Boosting trade, tourism

At a joint business, investment, and tourism forum, Pezeshkian reiterated Iran's commitment to removing barriers to trade and investment with Tajikistan.

He emphasized that Iran has no restrictions on expanding cooperation in scientific, commercial,



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (L) and his Tajik counterpart Emomali Rahmon sign a memorandum of understanding in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on January 16, 2025. president.ir

industrial, technological and agricultural fields.

The president highlighted the centuries-old history of friendship between Iran and Tajikistan, stating that the two nations share a deep cultural and historical bond.

He called for the simplification of travel regulations to boost tourism, economic activities, and cultural exchanges.

He expressed hope that the joint

economic commission would facilitate closer cooperation and mutual benefits for both nations.

Shared vision for future

Pezeshkian urged citizens of both countries to view each other's homelands as their own, fostering a sense of belonging and mutual growth.

He expressed confidence that such an approach would lead to shared prosperity and progress

in security, health, and development.

The Iranian president also praised Tajikistan's constructive role in international forums and reaffirmed Iran's commitment to mutual support on the global stage.

He expressed hope that the agreements signed during his visit would pave the way for stronger bilateral relations and increased trade and cooperation.

Iran, Ethiopia aim to remove cooperation barriers for private sector



Economy Desk

The speakers of Iran's Parliament and Ethiopia's House of People's Representatives emphasized enhancing economic, political, and parliamentary cooperation during a bilateral meeting on Friday as they agreed to address obstacles facing private sector activities and revive a joint economic commission after a decade-long hiatus.

Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf, Iran's Parliament speaker, met with Tadesse Chafu, his Ethiopian counterpart, during an official visit to Ethiopia aimed at strengthening bilateral relations, IRNA reported.

Qalibaf highlighted the importance of establishing an Ethiopian embassy in Tehran, calling it a crucial step toward deepening economic and political relations.

He noted that global and regional developments have significant and rapid impacts on international relations, making closer ties essential. The Iranian official also men-

tioned the recent release of four Ethiopian sailors from Iranian prisons, attributing it to internal efforts within Iran. He suggested that the presence of an Ethiopian embassy in Tehran could expedite such resolutions in the future.

Qalibaf praised Ethiopia's strategic role in East Africa, particularly in ensuring regional security and stability and reiterated Iran's commitment to expanding relations with African nations, especially Ethiopia, given their shared cultural and historical ties.

Reviving joint economic commission

Qalibaf pointed out that Ethiopia's recent economic growth and progress toward sustainable development make it a promising partner for Iran. However, he criticized that the joint economic commission between the two countries has not convened in over a decade, hindering economic collaboration.

One of the key goals of his

visit, Qalibaf said, is to revive this commission. He noted that Iran's Vice Presidency for Science and Technology will oversee the commission's activities.

The Iranian Parliament speaker also highlighted potential areas of cooperation, including technology-based industries, healthcare, artificial intelligence, and medical equipment. He proposed establishing direct flights between Tehran and Addis Ababa to facilitate trade and tourism.

Addressing economic challenges

Qalibaf acknowledged challenges faced by Iranian businesses in East Africa, including tax issues, currency exchange, banking communications, and transportation. He called for resolving these barriers to create a more favorable environment for economic cooperation.

The official also suggested leveraging the BRICS alliance to address banking challenges and strengthen financial ties between the two countries.

Ethiopia's perspective

Tadesse Chafu welcomed Qalibaf and his delegation, emphasizing the potential for parliamentary relations to boost trade and economic ties.

He described Ethiopia as a growing economy with ample opportunities for Iranian

investors and businesses. Chafu expressed Ethiopia's interest in reviving the joint economic commission and pledged to pursue the matter seriously.

He noted that Qalibaf's visit marks the first high-level Iranian delegation to Ethiopia in four decades, calling it a significant milestone in bilateral relations.

The Ethiopian official also thanked Iran for releasing the four sailors and expressed hope for the swift resolution of similar cases.

He praised Iran's foreign policy, which emphasizes mutual respect and non-interference in internal affairs, and expressed readiness to collaborate with Iran in international organizations such as BRICS and the Human Rights Commission.

Symbolic gestures of friendship

Following their meeting, Qalibaf and Chafu signed a guestbook at the Ethiopian Parliament, reaffirming their commitment to strengthening friendly relations.

The two officials also planted two pine trees in the parliament courtyard, symbolizing the enduring friendship and cooperation between Iran and Ethiopia.

The visit underscores both nations' efforts to deepen ties and explore new avenues for collaboration in economic, political, and international arenas.

Iran, IRENA discuss expanding renewable energy cooperation

Economy Desk

Officials from Iran's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA) and the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) met on the sidelines of the IRENA Assembly to review past collaborations and plan future joint initiatives.

The meeting, attended by Mohsen Tarzatab, head of SATBA; Binu Partahan, IRENA's director of country partnerships and cooperation; and Tarek Ahmed, IRENA's regional director for the Middle East and North Africa, focused on advancing renewable energy development in Iran, IRNA reported.

The officials reviewed the progress of Iran's Renewables Readiness Assessment (RRA), a comprehensive report on the country's renewable energy transition.

The assessment, set to begin in mid-2025, will involve consultations with stakeholders and is expected to be completed within a year.

The meeting also highlighted the successful implementation of a joint workshop on developing a national green hydrogen strategy.

Other collaborative programs discussed included raising awareness about the benefits of renewable energy, preparing the power grid for large-scale renewable integration, and long-term energy planning.

IRENA representatives expressed hope for enhanced cooperation with Iranian non-governmental organizations and associations, in coordination with SATBA as Iran's focal point for IRENA.

The 15th IRENA Assembly kicked off in Abu Dhabi on Monday, with 500 representatives from 170 member countries in attendance.

Iran's delegation, led by SATBA officials and accompanied by the

Iranian ambassador to the UAE, participated in the event.

Mega solar farm in the making

The construction of a large solar power plant, with a capacity of 135 megawatts, began Thursday in a ceremony attended by Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni and local officials.

The project, located near the Shahid Mofteh Power Plant in Kabudarahang of Hamedan Province, represents an investment of 50 trillion rials (approximately \$62.5 million). It will be built on a 240-hectare site and is expected to generate 318 gigawatt-hours of electricity annually once operational.

Environmental, economic benefits

The solar plant is projected to save 100 million cubic meters of fossil fuels annually, significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 190,000 tons per year.

The project will also support regional industries by providing clean energy and contribute to environmental preservation.

During the ceremony, officials, including the governor of Hamedan and local parliamentary representatives, emphasized the importance of renewable energy in Iran's sustainable development strategy.

Visit to existing solar facility

Following the groundbreaking ceremony, Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni visited the 8-megawatt Shohadaye Kabudarahang Solar Power Plant, highlighting the government's commitment to expanding renewable energy infrastructure.

The new solar plant marks a significant step in Iran's efforts to diversify its energy sources and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.