

Tehran, Islamabad ink deals on agriculture, plant protection

Economy Desk

Iran and Pakistan signed two memorandums of understanding on the establishment of the first joint agricultural committee of the two countries, as well as on cooperation in the field of plant protection and quarantine. The agreements capped a three-day visit by a Pakistani delegation to Tehran, during which the two sides held a series of joint meetings. Speaking at the ceremony, Iran's Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri Qazeljeh said that the talks culminated in the signing of two key agreements, one on establishing the first Iran-Pakistan Joint Agricultural Committee, and another detailing collaborative efforts in plant protection and quarantine measures. He noted that Iran and Pakistan have the potential to complement each other in agricultural development, adding that in recent days both countries had actively followed up on discussions and agreements made during President Masoud Pezeshkian's recent visit to Pakistan, particularly in areas related to farming, crop protection, and agricultural trade, Mehr reported.

\$3b-trade forecast
The minister projected



that bilateral trade in food and essential commodities between Iran and Pakistan could more than double, from the current \$1.3 billion to \$3 billion, within the next two years. During the three-day visit, the Pakistani delegation expressed its intention to source key agricultural and food products from Iran, leveraging Tehran's export capacity in these sectors. In turn, Iran pledged to import essential goods that align with Pakistan's export offerings, according to Qazeljeh. He further stressed that barter trade could accelerate the pace of these exchanges.

Agreement on technical cooperation
Addressing the ceremony, Pakistan's Minister of National Food Security and Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain, said the Iranian president's recent visit to Pakistan had opened a new

chapter in bilateral relations rooted in shared cultural and historical ties. He confirmed that discussions between the two agriculture ministries, complemented by technical-level meetings, resulted in two key agreements: one on establishing a framework for broad agricultural cooperation, and another focusing on technical collaboration within the sector. The Pakistani minister said his country was ready to cooperate in agriculture sector, including the trade and development of farm products, stressing that the two sides could meet their food and commodity needs by drawing on each other's capacities and production.

Belarus to launch agricultural, mining machinery production line in Iran

Economy Desk

Belarus has expressed readiness to establish a production line for agricultural and mining machinery in Iran. Speaking on the sidelines of talks between Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko in Minsk on Wednesday, Belarusian Industry Minister Andrei Kuznetsov said, "Belarus attaches great importance to developing mutually beneficial cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran," adding, "In this regard, we are prepared to launch production and assembly lines for agricultural, cargo and mining machinery in Iran," IRNA reported. Kuznetsov, who also heads the Belarusian side of the Iran-Belarus Joint Economic Commission, welcomed the current level of engagement between the two countries and underscored the promising outlook for expanding bilateral relations, BelTA reported.

Company to assemble agricultural machinery in Iran
The minister stressed that the Belarusian Ministry of Industry was ready to offer a wide range of opportunities to deepen its industrial partnership with Iranian counterparts. He added that plans to assemble Belarusian combine harvesters in Iran would help integrate advanced Belarusian agricultural machinery technologies into the country's economy. For this purpose, he said, a company will be established in Iran to produce high-quality agricultural machinery. Kuznetsov noted that work in this field had already begun, which would



lower logistics costs and provide the local market with access to advanced technologies from Belarus's agricultural and industrial sectors. He added that cooperation in supplying various types of specialized machinery — agricultural, cargo, and mining — would open new prospects in bilateral ties and meet Iranian partners' demand for reliable multipurpose vehicles. The minister underlined that expanding industrial supply chains and bilateral cooperation would yield significant benefits for both countries and serve as a key catalyst for boosting trade and economic exchanges between Belarus and Iran. Kuznetsov said Belarus was currently focused on developing mutually beneficial industrial cooperation with Iran, which would not only strengthen both economies but also create jobs and improve citizens' welfare. **Annual trade stands at \$140m**
According to Iran's ambassador to Belarus, annual trade between the two countries currently stands at around \$140 million. Alireza Saneie told IRNA, "the figure

does not reflect the full potential of bilateral commerce, since part of Iran's exports to Belarus passes through third countries such as Russia and is not recorded in official statistics." The envoy highlighted the strong and complementary strengths of Iran and Belarus across multiple sectors. "For instance, Iran is a major producer of agricultural goods, while Belarus specializes in manufacturing agricultural machinery," Saneie said. He further noted that Iran supplies petrochemical products to Belarus, while Belarus ranks among the world's top exporters of potash fertilizer, a vital input for Iran's farming industry. He said Iran and Belarus could also complement each other in the pharmaceutical sector, with Iran supplying products and Belarus acting as a buyer. He also noted Iran's large mineral reserves and its demand for heavy mining equipment, including dump trucks—an area where Belarus has global expertise.

Private sector to build 1,200 MW of solar capacity in seven provinces



Economy Desk
Iran's deputy energy minister announced the signing of a contract for the construction of 1,200 megawatts

of solar power plants between the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA) and the private sector. Mohsen Tarzatab said at the signing

ceremony that efforts were underway to connect the plants to the grid before the start of next year's peak consumption season. He added that the projects would be implemented in seven provinces: Tehran, Qom, Semnan, Isfahan, Alborz, Markazi, and Qazvin, ISNA reported. The SATBA chief also announced the participation of the National Development Fund in financing solar projects, stressing that investors must provide part of the required capital in order to access the fund's facilities. He said easing access to financial resources was key to accelerating construction, noting that Loans from the National Development Fund will be allocated to the project and repaid by the project-executing entity through mechanisms established by the Fund. According to the deputy minister,

the project-executing company will be able to sell electricity generated by the solar plants through the Iran Energy Exchange or other designated markets. Calling on private investors to join the initiative, Tarzatab underlined that, in cooperation with the National Development Fund, 50 percent of the financing for major projects would be provided by SATBA and the remaining 50 percent by the private sector. The head of SATBA highlighted the continuous support of President Masoud Pezeshkian and the Energy Ministry for renewable energy expansion, expressing hope that with the signing of this contract and the completion of ongoing projects, the country's renewable power capacity would reach 7,000 megawatts by the end of the year.

According to official figures published on June 1, Iran's nominal electricity generation capacity reached 94,649 megawatts by the end of the first months of the current Iranian calendar year (began on March 20, 2025), nearing the 95,000-megawatt threshold. An imbalance has emerged over the past decade in the county, with power production and consumption growing at unequal rates. According to Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi, "In the last 10 years, electricity production has increased 13-fold while consumption has risen 23-fold, leading to a grid imbalance." The government had granted all administrative departments a deadline - effective June 21 - to supply part of their required electricity from solar energy.

Pezeshkian's Minsk visit ...

As Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko has said, one must go "where he is expected, where the doors are open to him." Perhaps this very idea is reflected in Pezeshkian's approach, convincing him to undertake the journey to Belarus despite the cancellation of his earlier visit. This trip, therefore, has the potential to open a new chapter in relations between the two nations. Belarusian-Iranian relations, over their slightly more than 30-year his-

tory, have experienced periods of both activity and decline (under the influence of internal and external factors). A new impetus to bilateral relations was given in 2023 with the signing of a roadmap for comprehensive cooperation for 2023-2026. At that time, President A. Lukashenko emphasised that there had been "a certain pause" in relations between Belarus and Iran, which have been successfully overcome. The roadmap mapped out their coop-

eration in the political, economic, consular, scientific, and technical spheres, as well as in the fields of education, culture, art, media, and tourism. As a result, the bilateral relations became truly multifaceted, extending far beyond mere traditional trade and economic cooperation. Given their ideological proximity and similar views on international events (in particular, in the Middle East), the two countries support each other at major international forums and organisa-

tions such as BRICS, the SCO, and the UN. Belarus and Iran share and consistently defend the view that pressure from other states seeking to limit their sovereignty and interfere in the internal affairs of independent countries is unacceptable. Particular importance is attached to military-technical cooperation. In July 2023, Belarusian Defence Minister Viktor Khrenin and his Iranian counterpart, Mohammad Reza Ashtiani, signed a memorandum on military co-

operation. In 2024, Belarusian military personnel took part in anti-terrorism exercises in Iran. And this year, an Iranian military attaché's office opened in Minsk for the first time. The parties are actively cooperating in the humanitarian sphere as well. On the agenda are student exchanges, joint research projects, and the organisation of direct air links between Belarus and Iran. Furthermore, the development of Iranian studies in Belarus is gaining momentum.