

# Iran, Russia open economic meeting; final deals due Wednesday

## Economy Desk

Iran and Russia opened their 19th Joint Economic Commission on Monday for three days of talks aimed at expanding cooperation in energy, trade, transport and technology, with final documents due to be signed on Wednesday.

Ali-Mohammad Mousavi, Iran's deputy oil minister for international affairs and commerce, said at the opening ceremony the two countries' cooperation was expanding in multiple sectors and that the three-day meeting would help turn agreements into projects and tangible results.

"Relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation are based on mutual respect, common interests, and aligned perspectives on regional and international developments, and have followed a growing and constructive trend in recent years," Mousavi said, according to Shana. He added that the Oil Ministry, which is hosting the meeting, supported broader bilateral cooperation, balanced economic ties, private sector participation, removal of trade barriers and expansion of joint projects.

## Trade hits \$4.7b

Addressing the opening ceremony, Khalimat Bodunova, Russian secretary of the joint commission, said trade and economic relations were rising, with bilateral trade reaching \$4.7 billion as per the latest data.

"The Russian delegation this year comprises government organizations and various companies," Bodunova said. "In this meeting, 17 expert committees are active, and in the first two



The 19th Joint Economic Commission of Iran and Russia opens in Tehran on February 16, 2026.

● ALI KHALI/SHANA

days, extensive actions and coordination must be carried out by experts from both countries." She also said a free trade agreement between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union would play an important role in expanding trade by enabling exchanges of more than 2,000 categories of goods and services. According to ISNA, the session will cover issues including completion of the International North-South Transport Corridor, Russian gas transfers to Iran, and cooperation in space industries, nuclear energy, finance, banking, customs, agriculture, health, tourism, culture and technology.

Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad, who chairs the Iranian delegation, has said priority projects and agreements in trade, energy, transport, finance, peaceful nuclear energy, health and other sectors would be reviewed during expert meetings on Monday and Tuesday, with final documents to be signed Wednesday. On the sidelines of the opening ceremony, Mousavi told Shana that alongside the main commission document — a report and detailed text of about 190 articles — six additional agreements would also be signed by various agencies covering standards, health, agriculture and other sectors.

## Focus on energy, agriculture, transit infrastructure

Mostafa Barzegar, director-gen-



eral for Europe, America and CIS countries at the Oil Ministry, said on the sidelines of the session that agriculture was one of the most important areas of cooperation and accounted for a significant share of trade. Barzegar said that agricultural and essential-goods trade between Iran and Russia had risen sharply this year from last year. He said major Russian companies had invested in seven Iranian oil fields and currently account for about 6% of Iran's oil production, a figure that could surge to 12% if investment increased. In nuclear energy, the first

phase of the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant built with Russian investment is operational, while phases two and three are under construction. A new memorandum between the two countries also envisages \$25 billion in investment to build small-scale nuclear power plants in the Sirik region of Iran, with progress to be reviewed during the commission.

## Gas imports, INSC corridor, trade targets

Gas imports from Russia are another key topic. In the first phase, annual imports of 55 billion cubic meters are planned,

with the same volume to be added in a second phase. Talks are also underway on importing electricity from Russia via Azerbaijan.

According to ISNA, completion of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSC) remains a priority. In the 162-km Rasht-Astara railway, considered the missing link, about 125 km of land has been acquired, with 40 km to be handed to Russia for construction. Once connected to Azerbaijan, the route will have capacity to move about 15 million tons of cargo a year, boosting trade, particularly in agricultural

goods.

Annual trade between Iran and Russia is below the desired level given their strategic ties, with short- and medium-term targets aiming to raise it to \$20 billion.

A 20-year strategic partnership agreement and a Eurasian free trade deal are expected to help reduce tariffs and expand cooperation.

The 18th commission meeting, held in Moscow in May, approved 193 articles, more than 75% of which have been implemented or are underway, while some require legislative approval.

## First floating solar farm to be set up in Khuzestan



● MEHR

## Economy Desk

Iran plans to develop its first floating solar power plant at the Karkheh Dam in Khuzestan Province, a senior energy official said, as part of a broader scheme to add 171 megawatts (MW) of solar capacity in the southwestern region.

"Building a floating solar power plant in Karkheh Dam can, in addition to electricity production, play an effective role in reducing water evaporation from this dam," Alireza Parandeh Motlaq, deputy of technical and engineering

at the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA) said, as reported by IRIB News on Monday. Motlaq also said the construction of 171 MW of solar power energy, as well as the 2 MW floating farm, would be launched during a two-day visit by Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi to the province on Tuesday.

The projects are expected to cost about \$35 million. They are part of the government's initiative to install 7,000 MW solar power plants nationwide.

Motlaq said that additional

facilities are also underway to support local grid stability.

"A 3 MW farm and two plants of 9 MW each have also started in the province and will help enhance the daytime stability of the Khuzestan power grid," he said.

The expansion comes as President Masoud Pezeshkian's government aims to install 30,000 MW of renewable energy capacity over the next three years amid an expected power shortfall next year.

According to the Energy Ministry, Iran is projected to face a power deficit of 17,000 MW next year. The government has also urged industries to step up investment in solar power.

Mohsen Tarzatabad, head of SATBA and deputy energy minister, said on Friday that nearly 3,000 MW of renewables have been constructed under the Pezeshkian administration, with more than half developed through direct private sector investment and the remainder through participation of the National Development Fund.

## Iran, Qatar agree to bolster veterinary cooperation for food security

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Iran and Qatar have agreed to establish reciprocal trade desks in Tehran and Doha to facilitate veterinary and agricultural cooperation, as Tehran seeks to expand its livestock exports to the Arab Persian Gulf state.

The understanding was reached during the 13th Qatar International Agricultural Exhibition (AgriteQ 2026), following a meeting between Iran's top veterinary official and senior Qatari counterparts, IRNA reported.

Heading an Iranian delegation, Alireza Rafieipour, head of the Iran Veterinary Organization (IVO) and deputy minister of agriculture, met with Qatari veterinary authorities at the Katara Cultural Village on the sidelines of the five-day expo, which run from Feb. 12 to Feb. 16.

The discussions focused on expanding technical, health, and commercial cooperation regarding livestock and related products.

The Iranian side presented its production capabilities, highlighting exports including hatching and table eggs, honey, raw milk and dairy products,



poultry, red meat, and aquatic animals.

The delegation also detailed Iranian capacity to supply veterinary medicine, vaccines, biological materials, supplements, and micronutrients.

The head of Qatar's veterinary authority acknowledged Iran's technical expertise and production potential, calling for broader cooperation to meet a portion of Qatar's poultry and livestock needs.

He also expressed Doha's readiness to work with Tehran regarding the supply of veterinary inputs.

AgriteQ 2026, which focuses on food safety and sustainable agriculture, plays a strategic role in Qatar's National Food Security Strategy (2024-2030).



The photo shows the second day of the 13th Qatar International Agricultural Exhibition (AgriteQ), held at Katara Cultural Village.

● qna.org.qa

The event serves as a platform for addressing regional challenges such as water scarcity and climate change.

To follow up on the initial agreements, the two sides agreed to appoint special representatives in Tehran and Doha to monitor the implementation of the cooperation. The proposed "Qatar Desk" in Iran and the "Iran Desk" are intended to streamline technical and commercial interactions between the two countries.