

# Minister urges BRICS action to safeguard global food security

## Economy Desk

Iran's agriculture minister said on Saturday that global food security must not be undermined by unilateral measures and disruptions to supply chains, calling on BRICS members to play a more effective role against emerging food security challenges.

"Any action that limits countries' access to food, agricultural inputs, transportation, financial services and international trade will challenge global efforts to combat hunger and achieve sustainable development," Gholamreza Nouri Qezeljah told the closing session of a BRICS agriculture ministers' meeting in the central Indian city of Indore.

The two-day conference began on Friday in Indore as part of a five-day gathering held under India's presidency of BRICS, which comprises 11 major emerging economies – Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Indonesia –

representing over 40% of the global population.

Nouri said BRICS, as one of the most important players in the global economy, has the capacity to play a more effective role in the face of emerging food security challenges.

The minister noted that merchandise trade among BRICS members had surged to about \$1.17 trillion in 2024, up from \$84 billion in 2003. "The expansion of BRICS membership has created new and rare capacities for developing economic cooperation, investment and trade among member countries," he said. "BRICS member countries now hold a significant share of the global economy, trade and agricultural production, and this capacity can become the driving engine of international cooperation in the fields of agriculture and food security."

## Iran backs BRICS grain exchange

Nouri Qezeljah voiced Iran's support for the ini-

tiative to establish a "BRICS Grain Exchange" and to expand agricultural trade using member countries' national currencies.

"A BRICS grain exchange can increase transparency in agricultural markets," he said, adding that the mechanism would improve price discovery, reduce transaction costs and lower supply chain risks. Using national exchanges as operators and settling transactions in national currencies could reduce dependence on intermediary currencies and strengthen members' economic resilience, he said.

## Iran's 2025 farm output tops 135m tons

The minister said Iran produced more than 135 million tons of agricultural products in 2025. Despite persistent drought, the effects of climate change and natural constraints, he said, more than 4.3 million agricultural operators are active in Iran. "About 76% of agricultural operators in the country have less than five hectares of land, which



Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri Qezeljah addresses the closing session of a BRICS agriculture ministers' meeting in the central Indian city of Indore, on June 13, 2026.

IRNA

doubles the importance of supporting smallholder farmers and facilitating their access to quality and affordable inputs."

Iran's agricultural trade with BRICS members exceeded \$8 billion in 2025, he said. "About 30% of Iran's agricultural exports

went to BRICS member countries in 2025, and these countries also accounted for about 50% of Iran's agricultural imports," he added.

Nouri Qezeljah also outlined Iran's capacities in agricultural production, genetic resources, modern

technologies and regional cooperation, and said Tehran supports the "BRICS Agricultural Inputs, Genetic Resources and Information Network (BRICS AGRIN)" initiative, calling it an important step toward improving food security among member states.

## First multimodal LPG shipment departs for Afghanistan, Pakistan



## Economy Desk

Iran has successfully carried out its first liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) export operation using multimodal transport to destinations in Afghanistan and Pakistan, a senior port official said on Saturday.

The operation through the southern port of Khorramshahr in Khuzestan Province marks a step in expanding export routes, according to Ali Asgari, director general of the Khorramshahr Port and Maritime Organization.

"This is an important step in developing export routes and strengthening the position of Khorramshahr Port in the country's logistics network," Asgari was quoted as saying by the Mehr news agency.

"The implementation of this operation has further demonstrated Khorramshahr Port's capabilities in supporting supply chains and developing regional trade, and has paved the way for more effective use of multimodal transport capabilities."

"Using the multimodal transport model, while increasing efficiency and facilitating cargo movement, helps develop export markets and strengthen trade ties with neighboring countries."

Asgari also pointed to the southern port's role in the country's trade corridors, adding, "The development of multimodal transport and increasing the share of rail cargo movement are among the key goals of the country's development plans, and Khorramshahr port has taken effective steps in this direction."

"Relying on its existing capacities and developing cooperation with economic actors, Khorramshahr Port seeks to increase its share of the regional export and transit market," he said. "This success can pave the way for similar projects in the future." No further details on shipment volumes or timelines were provided.

Iran does not currently export LNG, despite holding some of the world's largest natural gas reserves. Its flagship Iran LNG project in the southern port of Asaluyeh has been delayed for years after international sanctions prompted the withdrawal of foreign partners and technology. Iranian officials said in 2024 that the project was about 53% complete and that they aimed to first commission a smaller LNG facility with a capacity of about 1.5 million metric tons per year, targeting 2026, while acknowledging that the timetable depends on multiple technical and financial factors.

## NIPC touts postwar restoration of 38% of petchem capacity

## Economy Desk

About 38% of petrochemical production capacity that was knocked out or disrupted during a 40-day US-Israeli war of aggression is currently restored, a deputy oil minister said, adding that polymer and plastics markets have now stabilized.

In an interview with SHANA, Hassan Abbaszadeh, managing director of the National Iranian Petrochemical Company, said six workers were killed during the hostilities.

"Part of the damage during the war was related to gas refineries, which affected part of the petrochemical industry's feedstock, including natural gas and gas condensates," Abbaszadeh said.

"Some petrochemical ancillary facilities were directly hit, and power plants responsible for supplying electricity and steam to petrochemical complexes were targeted. Unfortunately, part of the power and steam generation capacity was affected," he added.

"Also, some petrochemical production units were directly struck and taken out of production," Abbaszadeh said. Air strikes over several days hit facil-



ities in Mahshahr, in the southwestern province of Khuzestan, and in Asaluyeh, in the southern province of Bushehr, damaging installations at multiple companies in April. The Tabriz and Marvdasht (Shiraz) petrochemical plants were also hit, Iranian state media and company statements confirmed at the time

The NIPC has not yet issued an estimate of the damage, but the export ban points to a sector hit hard by the attacks.

Domestic needs, industries come first Following the attacks, recovery committees were activated immediately to bring petrochemical plants back online

using all available power and steam sources, Abbaszadeh said. "Priority was given to meeting the needs of the people and downstream industries," he added.

"Fortunately, thanks to these efforts, about 38% of the capacity that was lost or affected has so far returned to production."

Abbaszadeh said a two-month short-term recovery plan has been defined, with its first phase running through June 20. "We hope that in subsequent phases, more companies will gradually return to production."

Iran imposed temporary export restrictions on some petrochemical products after an April 8 ceasefire to secure domestic supply, Abbaszadeh said. Export permits have since been restored for products with surplus and full warehouses, he added, though bans remain for items still facing supply constraints.

Abbaszadeh said two major petrochemical complexes returned to production this week alone. "This trend will continue, and other companies will gradually resume operations, which will result in greater market stability."

## Service exports triple to \$3b as TPO calls for e-commerce reform

## Economy Desk

A senior Iranian trade official said on Saturday that the country's service exports had tripled to around \$3 billion from \$1.2 billion following the removal of foreign currency repatriation requirements, adding that cross-border e-commerce and market intelligence are essential for creative and knowledge-based industries.

Amir Roshan, deputy for international business promotion at the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPO), said the surge underscores how cutting red tape unlocks export capacity, IRNA reported.

"This leap shows that whenever government restrictions on trade are reduced and processes are facilitated,

the market responds positively and export capacities become activated," Roshan told a gathering on cultural and creative industries' international market entry.

He noted that TPO places special emphasis on non-oil service exports, including creative industries, knowledge-based goods, artistic products, computer services, tourism, engineering, and technical services, "where the share of goods is smaller and the role of services is more prominent."

A persistent challenge, Roshan said, is weak knowledge of target markets. "Our trade in many cases remains traditional and relies mostly on individual experience, while professional trade worldwide is based on market studies."

"Producers in fields such as computer games, fashion and clothing, handicrafts, artistic goods, and other creative sectors must properly study the target market before entering foreign markets," he added. "Many export failures happen because the product is not aligned with the taste, culture, and needs of the destination market."

Roshan also played down the complexity of services exports compared to goods. "In goods exports, there are issues like standards, quarantine, customs formalities, quotas, and numerous regulations, but in services exports many of these barriers do not exist, making the path easier."

## Cross-border e-commerce

Roshan described cross-border e-com-

merce as a key priority for TPO, capable of solving traditional export problems for small businesses and individual producers.

"If an Iranian producer offers a product such as saffron, handicrafts, toys, or other goods on a digital platform in the target country, and a foreign consumer buys it on a small scale, this process can be considered personal online sales and small-scale trade, not bulk goods exports," he said.

He added that a draft regulation on cross-border e-commerce has been revised and submitted to the government for approval. "If approved, we can hope that the path for small-scale exports and the sale of Iranian products in target markets through digital platforms will be facilitated."