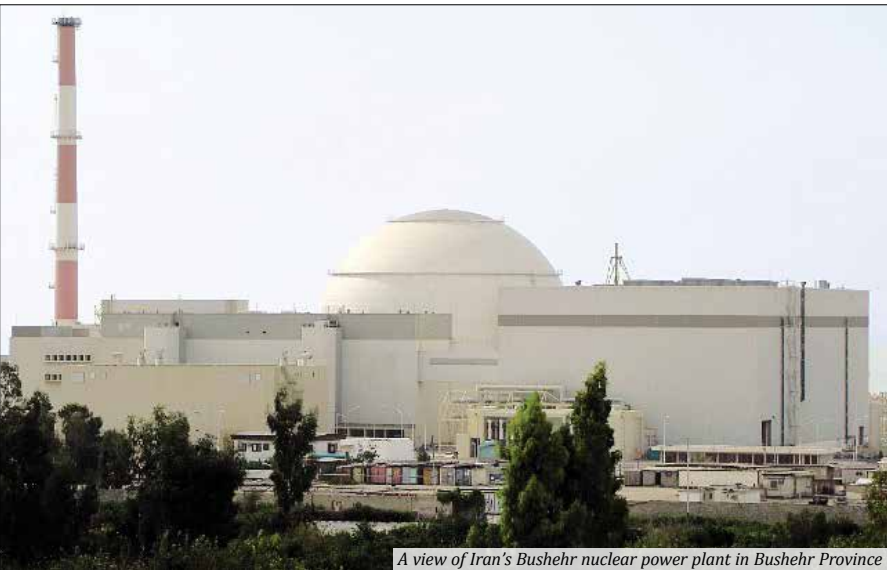


# Rosatom in talks with Tehran on building small nuclear power plants

Economy Desk

Russia's state nuclear corporation Rosatom has submitted a draft agreement to Iran for the construction of small nuclear power plants, CEO Alexey Likhachev told reporters on Wednesday. Speaking on the sidelines of the Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok, Likhachev told reporters that Rosatom had handed over a corresponding draft intergovernmental accord following Iranian requests for smaller-capacity generation. "Yesterday, we also discussed the further development of relations. We previously signed agreements on another construction site for large power units," Likhachev was quoted as

saying by TASS. "The Iranians raised the issue of small-capacity generation during the negotiations, and we, for our part, handed over a corresponding draft intergovernmental agreement on the construction of small stations," he added. Likhachev noted that as Iran returns to peaceful life, the country will develop its nuclear program, and Rosatom intends to participate in it. The announcement came after Russian President Vladimir Putin and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian held extensive talks on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, focusing in detail on the status and



A view of Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant in Bushehr Province

future of Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant, as Russian specialists prepare for scheduled maintenance

work on the facility's first unit this month. The two leaders devoted significant time to review-

ing operations at Bushehr, Iran's sole operational nuclear station, which generates 915 megawatts

(MW) — less than 1% of the country's total electricity output capacity. Separately, Likhachev said last week that Russian experts were gearing up to take part in planned maintenance on Bushehr's Unit 1, which are set to begin this month. He added that 42 Russian personnel are currently present at the site, according to Russia's state news agency RIA Novosti. The vast majority of Russian staff had left Bushehr following the outbreak of US and Israeli strikes, which began in late February and lasted for 40 days. During that period, the plant's premises and surrounding areas were struck multiple times, prompting the International Atomic

Energy Agency (IAEA) to express concern and call for restraint and vigilance around nuclear installations. Bushehr's first unit, built with Russian cooperation and designed for 1,000 MW, remains in operation, while its second and third units are under construction. In June, Mohammad Es-lami, head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, said the plant had ranked among the world's top 10 nuclear facilities for the third year running, earning a perfect safety and efficiency score of 100 out of 100 from inspectors of the World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO) following global site reviews.

## TPO weighs rial-based mechanism to ease trade with neighbors

Economy Desk

Iran is exploring a mechanism to settle trade in its national currency rial with neighboring countries, a senior trade official said on Wednesday, as Tehran seeks to ease banking and payment hurdles that have hampered regional commerce. Mohammad Sadeq Qannadzadeh, deputy head of trade services at Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), told IRNA that proposals had been submitted to establish a rial-based framework for transactions with neighboring trading partners, such as Iraq and Afghanistan. Qannadzadeh noted that a significant portion of Iran's exports go to those two countries, and that traders from Iraq and Afghanistan sometimes obtain rials to purchase Iranian goods. "We have therefore proposed creating a specific procedure for this type of trade with neighbors," he added. While acknowledging that exports ultimately need to generate foreign currency, he said the TPO, in cooperation with the banking system and currency exchange offices, is designing mechanisms to address current obstacles.



"The necessary proposals have also been forwarded to the central bank," the official said, though he cautioned that "the final procedure has not yet been implemented by the central bank, and the issue remains under review." Beyond the rial initiative, Iran has drawn up country-specific plans to expand trade with neighboring and like-minded nations, tailored to each country's conditions and capacities,

Qannadzadeh said. The programs cover trade, transportation, financial and banking arrangements, payment methods, and alternative forms of commerce. "These programs are being pursued on a country-by-country basis through working groups, joint committees, joint commissions, and exchanges of trade delegations to address the issues and obstacles facing the expansion of trade relations,"

he said. Iran has recently engaged Pakistan under this framework, he added, and will continue negotiations with Iraq, Turkey, Afghanistan, and other target countries. According to Iran's customs administration, the country recorded nearly \$15 billion in non-oil exports and \$17 billion in imports between March 21 and August 16. Exports over the period fell by an average of 24% compared with the same stretch last year. Assessing the impact of the recent conflict, Qannadzadeh said the trade decline had been expected, largely because heightened international risks, particularly in maritime transport and logistics made the downturn unavoidable. "A significant portion of the country's trade is conducted by sea, and given the tensions that emerged and the decline in the movement of transport fleets, part of the country's trade was affected," he said. Iran's southern ports remain under a US naval blockade imposed by President Donald Trump as part of a pressure campaign following a 40-day US-Israeli war that began in late February.

## NIOC makes largest global gas discoveries since 2025

Economy Desk

Iran has made the world's largest volume of gas discoveries since 2025, with two fields in the southern province of Fars, Hamid Bovard, CEO of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), said on Wednesday. Bovard added that the Takhteh and Pazan fields contained a combined 17.5 trillion cubic feet (tcf) of gas, equivalent to about 500 billion cubic meters (bcm), Shana reported. The new finds add about 1.46% to Iran's proven gas reserves. The country holds around 34 trillion cubic meters of gas, making it the world's second-largest after Russia, with around 17% of the global total. "Takhteh accounts for 7.5 tcf of gas in place (212 bcm), of which 5.5 tcf (155 bcm), is recoverable," Bovard said. The NIOC had earlier put Takhteh's value at about \$45 billion. The field contains about 27 million barrels of condensate, of which around 20 million barrels are recoverable, Mohyeddin Jafari, head of NIOC's exploration department said last month. According to Jafari, Takhteh's



gas is "sweet," meaning it does not require sweetening, potentially allowing faster development and processing. Pazan, also in Fars, was announced in October as Iran's largest independent onshore gas field. It holds about 10 tcf (283 bcm) of gas in place, with 7 tcf (198 bcm) recoverable and an estimated value of \$100 billion. Bovard said the NIOC planned to increase exploration drilling and seismic surveys in northeastern, northern and northwestern Iran to tap new hydrocarbon resources and help narrow the country's energy supply-demand gap.

## Iran eyes Dayyer port as trade gateway to Qatar

Economy Desk

Iran's commercial attaché in Doha has called for stronger infrastructure and greater official support for Dayyer port in southern Bushehr Province, describing it as a high-potential gateway for expanding trade with Qatar. Abbas Abdolkhani told IRNA on Wednesday that Dayyer port holds special significance for developing maritime trade between the two countries, citing its geographical position, short sea distance to Qatar, and adequate cargo-handling capacity. Dayyer port, Abdolkhani said, could become a major hub for Iran's maritime trade with Qatar, and harnessing this capacity would be an effective step toward boosting exports, lowering trade costs, and deepening economic and commercial ties between the two countries. Shipping traffic currently runs from Dayyer to Qatar's Al Ruwais port, with agricultural products, horticultural goods, foodstuffs, and other consumer

items making up the bulk of shipments, Abdolkhani said. The sustained daily movement, he added, underscores Dayyer's considerable potential to support bilateral trade and expand Iranian exports to the Qatari market. In recent months, Abdolkhani said, a vehicle import route from Al Ruwais to Dayyer has also been activated, which could boost trade volume and variety along the corridor and spur transport and logistics activity. The attaché emphasized that coordination and synergy among executive bodies are essential for increasing the corridor's efficiency and streamlining export-import procedures. Sustained cooperation, he said, could further strengthen Dayyer's role in Iran-Qatar trade. He cited short sea distance, fast transit times, and ease of cargo movement as Dayyer's key advantages, adding that these factors could reduce transport time and costs while making Iranian goods more competitive in the Qatari market.

Iran in July resumed exports to Qatar after a wartime halt, with the reopening of Qatar's Al Ruwais customs terminal allowing shipments from Iran to restart. The US-Israeli war launched against Iran in late February had disrupted shipping and logistics across the Persian Gulf. The push to develop Dayyer comes as Iran has been seeking to diversify its logistics routes to counter growing restrictions on trade corridors, redirecting cargo operations to northern ports as well as to ports in Pakistan, India, and Oman after activity at Jebel Ali was disrupted during wartime conditions. Iran had relied heavily on UAE trade routes during the recent conflict, and when the UAE barred even Iranian vessels from loading or unloading cargo at Jebel Ali, a significant portion of trade effectively ground to a halt. The ongoing US naval blockade on Iran's southern ports has constrained Tehran's trade options as part of broader efforts to force an agreement following the 40-day war with US and Israeli forces that began in late February.

