

Tehran hosts conference on investments in Armenia

Tehran Times Economic Desk
TEHRAN — Iran started an international conference on trade and investment opportunities in Armenia on Tuesday.

In this two-day event the Armenian chief economic advisor to the president and the Armenian minister of transportation are present, the Islamic Republic of Iran News Network reported.

In addition, Iranian acting deputy for economic affairs of the Foreign Ministry, as well as the director of the Trade Development Organization has taken part.

The Iranian official said that the current \$200 million trade balance between the two countries should improve significantly.

Amir-Mansour Borqei stated that Tehran and Yerevan have common historical relations which can lead to all-out and stable cooperation in economic, social and political fields between the two countries.

He added that the two sides are committed to further boost the currently growing ties between the two countries in activities such as peaceful use of nuclear energy and human rights.

The Iranian official said that a mutual bank should be established between Iran and Armenia, adding the road and rail connections of the two must be developed.

Meanwhile, the Armenian chief economic advisor to the president said that the main objective of the conference is to enhance the activities of the private sector.

Vahram Nercissiantz pointed out that his country is keen on expanding relations with Iran, and stated that the two sides must make efforts to remove any obstacles hindering trade and investments.

He stated that his government is currently working on developing ties in the fields of road and rail transportation, transmission of electricity and a gas pipeline.

Nercissiantz noted that 4.6 percent of the imported goods in Armenia come from Iran.

Iran steel production up 3%

Tehran Times Economic Desk
TEHRAN — Iran produced 8.8 million tons of crude steel in the first ten-month of current Iranian calendar year (started March 20, 2009).

The amount shows a 3 percent increase in comparison to the previous year's figure, the Islamic Republic of Iran News Network reported.

Some 8,321,000 tons of steel products were also produced in the mentioned period.

Some 907,218 tons of steel worth \$400 million have also been exported in the mentioned period, which is 83 percent more than the previous year's figure.

The International Iron and Steel Institute named Iran as the 16th largest steel producer in the world in 2009.

The institute noted that Iran had advanced three places compared to 2008.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has outpaced Canada and the UK by producing 10.9 million tons of steel annually.

Beijing extends commercial ties with Tehran

China has overtaken the European Union to become Iran's largest trading partner, according to a new analysis of the commercial ties between the two countries.

The growing business links between Beijing and Tehran underline China's reluctance to agree to any further economic sanctions on Iran as western countries escalate their campaign to contain the country's nuclear ambitions.

The announcement by Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the Iranian president, that Iran will start enriching uranium to 20 percent purity has given renewed impetus to western calls for the United Nations Security Council to impose more sanctions.

While Russia has softened its opposition to placing more pressure on the Iranian economy, China has not.

Official figures say the EU remains Tehran's largest commercial partner, with trade totaling \$35b in 2008, compared with \$29b with China.

But this number disguises the fact that much of Iran's trade with the United Arab Emirates consists of goods channeled to or from China. Majid-Reza Hari, deputy head of the Iran-China Chamber of Commerce, said that transshipments to China accounted for more than half of Tehran's \$15b (€10.9b, £9.6b) trade with the UAE.

When this is taken into account, China's trade with Iran totals at least \$36.5b, which could be more than with the entire EU. No definite conclusion is possible because it is unclear how much of Iran's trade with Europe is channeled via the UAE.

Iran imports consumer goods and machinery from China and exports oil, gas and petrochemicals.

Today, China depends on Iran for 11 percent of its energy



needs, according to the chamber.

In the past, China has allowed the passage of three UN resolutions imposing sanctions on Iran. But the country's ambassador emphasized the need for talks.

"Our approach is that dialogue and negotiations always produce better results," said Xie Xiaoyan, the Chinese ambassador to Tehran. "Sanctions will not produce the results set up (by the west), no matter how crippling."

These words were echoed by Yang Jiechi, the Chinese foreign minister, who said last Thursday: "To talk about sanctions at the moment will complicate the situation and might stand in the way of finding a diplomatic solution."

However, some analysts believe this stance may change. Yin Gang, a Middle East expert at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said that the extent of China's relations with Iran was often over-stated: "China is extremely cautious in dealing with Iran, even over trade and energy."

"China would not keep a very close relationship with Iran because this could damage its relationships with lots of other countries."

If China were to prevent the Security Council from passing UN sanctions, the U.S. and the EU would retain the option of imposing their own unilateral measures. The question is whether Iran's links with China would cushion the blow.

Already, American and EU energy companies have withheld investment in Iran's vital oil and gas industries. China has sought to fill the gap by signing multi-billion-dollar agreements to develop oil and gas fields.

(Source: Financial Times)

Bushehr non-oil exports hit 8m tons

Tehran Times Economic Desk

TEHRAN — Some 8 million tons of non-oil goods (including petrochemicals) worth around \$4.175 billion have been exported from Bushehr Province in the first ten months of current Iranian calendar year (started March 20, 2009).

The amount shows 11 percent increase in terms of value and 30 percent rise in terms of volume compared to the previ-

ous year's figure, the Mehr News Agency reported.

Some 580,000 tons of industrial goods such as petrochemicals, iron, and steel, as well as 8,387 tons of mineral goods have been exported in the mentioned period.

Meanwhile, some 1.652 million tons of goods worth nearly \$1.847 billion have been imported via the province in the mentioned period.

Iran seeks stable crop production: official

Tehran Times Economic Desk

TEHRAN — Iran seeks a stable crop production despite the fact that agriculture in Iran is largely dependent on rain, an official with Agriculture Jihad Ministry said on Tuesday.

"We want to stay on the peak for production of strategic crops," Deputy Agriculture Jihad Minister Mohammad Reza Jahansouz told a press conference in Tehran. "We want stability in production (of crops) with regard to (Iran's volatile) climatic condition."

He also said over the last 31 years that Iran's population has increased from 36 million to 72 million the annual agricultural output has increased from 20 million tons to more than 100 million tons.

Jahansouz said one can hardly find a country like Iran in the world that has been able to increase crops up to five times in such a time period.

Efficient use of water

The Agriculture Jihad Ministry is taking steps toward an efficient use of water in agriculture, the official noted.

Jahansouz said although precipitation in Iran is around one third of the world average but vaporization is three times more than international levels, so the country has no choice but to increase efficiency in water use.

He also said energy saving and production of healthy foods by observing standards in using fertilizers and chemicals is another priority of

the ministry.

"Iran has great potentials to reach self-sufficiency in production - and even export - of citrus fruits," he said, adding that the ministry has started cultivating bananas on 10,000 hectares area of land.

Currently, as much as 2.7 million hectares area of land is under cultivation of fruits, producing about 16 million ton of crops, including 2.4 million tons of orange.

Iran ranks the first in production of fruits in the Middle East and the eighth in the world.

Iran has also taken steps to reach self-sufficiency in production of rice and cooking oil as anticipated in the fifth socio-economic development plan (2010-2015).

Medicinal Herb

According to the ministry officials now about 30,000 hectares of land is also under cultivation of medicinal herb which will expand in the future.

Tissue culture

Iran has also started production of crops through tissue culture technology.

Akbar Loui, a ministry official, told reporters that Iran is the only country in the world that has started the production of ten kinds of date through tissue culture with the cooperation of the private sector. The country also started production of potato seeds through mini-tuber method and sugar beet seeds through mono-germ method.

China leading world economy out of global recession

With the help of massive government stimulus action, China is now leading the world economy out of recession, according to a new OECD report.

The OECD's latest Economic Survey of China says it will be important to ensure that government saving, now falling in the wake of the crisis, does not revert to its previous, excessively high levels. Public spending should be stepped up to support much needed social reforms in areas such as education, welfare assistance, pensions and health.

China can afford the extra spending as its public finances remain strong.

Gross government debt amounted to only 21% of GDP in 2008. The stimulus measures, which nevertheless dwarfed those of other countries, are expected to increase this debt ratio by only 3% of GDP in 2010. By contrast, gross public debt in OECD countries is projected to almost reach their total GDP this year and even exceed it in 2011.

(Source: thegovmonitor.com)

Domestic output meets half of China's oil demand

Although China replaced Iran to rank as the No. 4 biggest oil producer in 2009, domestic output can only meet half of the country's demand, reported the China Business News, citing official statistics.

A report posted on the website of the Ministry of Land and Resources said China's oil output in 2009 accounted for 5.4 percent of the world's total, following Russia, Saudi Arabia and the U.S.

China's 2009 domestic oil output reached 189 million tons, while the amount of imports was 204 million tons, according to official statistics.

An expert from Sinopec said that China's oil demand can be roughly calculated by adding the output and import numbers, which means China's output only accounted for 48 percent of its oil demand in 2009. The expert also said the annual output increased by about 1 to 2 percent in recent years, which is lower than the increasing rate of the demand.

The newly increased demand is mainly met by imports, a management member of Sinopec said, adding that the company's takeover of Addax Petroleum Corp in 2009 has boosted its overseas oil production.

(Source: China Daily)

Oil may hit \$75 then revisit lows: technical analysis

SINGAPORE (Bloomberg) — Crude oil is poised to rise to \$75 a barrel, recouping a week's losses, before the market revisits chart support around \$70, said National Australia Bank Ltd.

Oil, which has slumped 14 percent in the past four weeks, will gain strength from "a bit of psychology" because the market has fallen too far and too fast for traders who make short-term bets, according to Gordon Manning, a Sydney-based technical analyst at Australia's third-largest bank. While a rally is possible in the coming week, prices are probably set to decline further, he said.

"In the short term, I can see oil popping back up to about \$75, then it could go back to \$70," Manning said on Tuesday in a telephone interview. "These markets have resistance levels where they can run to, but still keep within a downward bias."

SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT

National Iranian Oil Company

IRANIAN OFFSHORE OIL COMPANY

ENGINEERING, PROCUREMENT, CONSTRUCTION OF THE TOPSIDE OF HENGAM FIELD (EPCI)

INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION No. MS/87/317

Iranian Offshore Oil Company (IOOC) intends to perform all engineering, design, construction, installation, hook up and commissioning of the topside (EPCI) of Hengam Field located in Persian Gulf (Strait of Hormoz) with qualified contractor.

The companies who have ability and required offshore equipment and machineries to provide such services and are willing to participate in the Bid are requested to refer to IOOC website for further information at: WWW.IOOC.CO.IR

PUBLIC RELATIONS
IRANIAN OFFSHORE OIL COMPANY

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Second Announcement

N.I.O.C.

Tender Announcement

Ind. No: 08-22-8645045
Tender No: FP/08-88/126
Description: MARTIN DECKER GAUGES

National Iranian drilling co. registered economical code: **411331678943**.
Intends to purchase above mentioned material (equipments) through signing contract (purchase order)
Interested manufacturing & suppliers intend to take part in this tender, are requested to attain documents from either of following address:
A. Jomhori Islami Ave. Yaghma alley, NIOC building No. 8 room No 431 Tehran-Iran
B. Karoon industrial area, commercial directorate of FPD. Dep. NIDC Ahwaz - Iran
100,000 RIs have to be paid to account No. **0105054040006** BMI in favor of NIDC (documents FEE)

- Closing date would be **Mar 17, 2010** on **Wednesday**.
- On **Sunday April 11, 2010 9:00 a.m** technical offers would be opened.
- In the event that technical offer accepted the opening date of priced offer would be announce to bidders.
- Bidders should afford to render both bid bond & PBG as stipulated in tenders Documents.
- The Attached Tender Guarantee Form Should Be Filled Equal to **Euro 1,250** for Foreign Tenderers and **Rials 15,400,000** for Local Tenderers with At Least 90 Days Validity from Expiry Date of Proposal.

more on this & other tenders is accessible by click on. WWW.NIDC.IR

Foreign procurement dept
National Iranian Drilling CO