

# Iranian Consulate General - Hong Kong - eNewsletter

No. 47

23 Khordad 1387- June 12, 2008

*Economic – Business News*

## **New Oil Field Discovered in Southern Iran**

Indian ONGC has discovered a new oil field in southern Iran, the volume of which is being estimated at the moment, Oil Ministry Officials announced. He further added negotiations are under way to exploit the newly discovered oil field.

## **Iran Foreign Currency Reserves to Reach US\$ 96.3 billion**

Save for gold, Iranian foreign currency reserves are to reach US\$ 96.3 billion according to the Economist's estimates.

## **Economist: Iran Exports Up US\$ 13.5 billion**

In its latest report, the Economist has put Iranian exports for the year 2007 as at US\$ 84 billion and is predicting US\$ 13.5 billion worth of exports for the year 2008.

## **Iran Transfers Fund from Europe to Asia**

Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Affairs says Iran has changes some of its currency assets in European banks to gold and shares and has transferred the rest to Asia. He further added the oil trade with Japan is being conducted in Yen. Currently Japan is a host to Iran's US\$ 12 billion of foreign currency surplus.

## **LNG Producing Unit to Construct Despite US Opposition**

MIS Economic periodical reported on the construction of the first LNG producing unit in Iran painting the US Opposition to Iran's investment and advanced technology as toothless.

## **Iran Telecommunications to Privatize by June 11, 2008**

Privatization Organization of Iran Director said introductory measures have been taken to prepare the ground for public listing of Telecommunications Company by June 11, 2008.

## **Iran-Iraq Negotiate Common Oilfield Exploration**

Iraqi Oil Minister emphasized that his country is currently negotiating with Iran and Kuwait to tap into their common oil fields.

## **International Labor Organization Welcomes Iran as Managerial Board Member**

Having just extended its membership to International Labor Organization, Iran become a member of ILO Board of Managers during the 97th session of International Labor Organization (ILO) Conference.

## **Iran Free Trade Zones Welcome Foreign Investments**

The advisor to Iranian President for Free Trade Zones in a meeting with the Chief Executive of an Austrian Company, Unger, highlighted Iran's preparedness to receive Foreign Investors.

## **Russia Funds US\$200 billion to Transfer Iranian Gas to Armenia**

Armenian Minister of Energy says the pipeline project transferring Iranian gas to the country will be completed by the end of 2009, thanks to the allocation of US\$ 200 million by Russia. The pipeline is 140 meters long.

## **Asia Development Bank Ready to Fund Peace Gas Pipeline**

Pakistani Minister of Oil says Asia Development Bank has expressed its readiness to fund Iranian gas pipeline to Pakistan and India. The Bank's representative in Pakistan has informed the country of its preparedness.

## **Gas Exporting Countries Forum Charter Finalized**

A top Iranian energy official has announced that members of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum have finalized the group's official charter. "Experts and representatives of GECF member states finalized the charter after studying various views on how it should be drawn up during a meeting in Moscow," said Seyyed Mohammad-Ali Khatibi, Iran's governor to the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

## **Iran Foreign Investment Trend Up**

The foreign investment trend over the past 4 years has been on the rise in Iran, said the Director General for Foreign Investment at Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs.

## **Iran-Finland Trade Conference in Helsinki**

ITPO, IRAN Trade Promotion Organization and Finish Chamber of Commerce held a conference in Helsinki with business people from Iran and Finland attending. In his speech to the Conference, the Chairman of Finish Chamber of Commerce called the economies of both countries as "diverse" and called for the expansion of trade between the two countries.

## **Russia's Oldest Oil Firm to Invest in Iran**

Russian Zarobej, the oldest oil firm of the country, has expressed its preparedness and interest to invest in oil and gas projects in Iran.

## **US to Purchase Iran's Saffron**

A California-based US company is negotiating to import World's finest saffron from Iran. They are to import directly from suburban cooperatives involved in the saffron harvest.

## **China to Produce Benni in Iran**

Changan Automobile Co, a China partner of Ford Motor, said on Friday it plans to assemble compact cars in Iran starting next year as it speeds up expansion

overseas. Changan's compact Benni, which it developed in-house, will be assembled at a facility near Tehran beginning in the first half of 2009, targeting the local market, the Chinese company said in a statement. The facility, to be built by its partner Pars Industrial Development Foundation, will have initial annual capacity of 50,000 units, rising to 250,000 eventually, it said.

## **Iran's First Mobile Operator Among World's Top 30**

Iran was accepted as a member to the European Capital Markets Institute (ECMI) in May 2008. An independent financial institution, ECMI is involved in publication of surveys and policymaking in the capital markets.

## **Lord Andrew Philips: Sanctions Nothing But Damage to UK**

The Chairman of Iran-UK Chamber of Commerce expresses regret over his country's compliance of Sanctions against Iran and over losing trade opportunities between the two countries and termed it as "inappropriate".

## **Iran to Invest US\$ 120 billion in LNG by 2020**

Press TV cited Mr Ali Kheirandish MD of Iran LNG Company as saying that Iran has no problems securing investments to the tune of USD 120 billion to become the world's top exporter of liquefied natural gas within the next 12 years. He added that "It has already secured USD 5 billion in financing for investment from its own resources, partners and banks. Many financiers have come to us with very attractive offers and we expect a lot more banks to make offers."

## **Gas Pipeline to Europe to Be Constructed**

Iran says the construction of a 7-billion-dollar pipeline to transfer the country's natural gas to Europe will begin this year. The feasibility studies on the part of Iran in the pipeline project are almost complete, announced Iranian Deputy Oil Minister Seyyed Reza Kasaeizadeh. The pipeline will join the European Union's flagship gas pipeline Nabucco and will carry gas from Iran's giant South Pars

gas field to Europe, explained Kasaeizadeh, who is also head of the National Iranian Gas Company.

## **Consumer Confidence Up 50 Percent**

In its latest report, International Monetary Fund announced the consumer confidence index in Iran has, compared to the year 2000, increased 56 percent to over US\$ 10 thousand.

## **Iran Building 7 Refineries to End Petrol Imports**

A senior Iranian official said the refineries would increase capacity by more than 1.5 million barrels per day and end gasoline imports. The official said all seven refineries would begin operations by 2012. "The construction of seven refineries has started with the investment of 15 billion euro," National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company director Aminollah Eskandari said.

## **US Fails to Influence Iran-Persian Gulf Arabs Ties**

Financial Times reported that given the fact that Iranian economy is intertwined with those of Arab states of the Persian Gulf region has made it impossible for the US to rally them behind itself in trying to isolate Tehran.

## **Persian Gulf's Dubai Re-Export to Iran Reaches US\$ 1.41 billion**

Persian Gulf's Dubai re-export to Iran in the first quarter of the current year has risen 75 percent compared to the similar period the previous year at US\$ 1.41 billion.

## **Caspian Sea Home to 90% of World's Caviar**

The Head of International Caviar Research Institute in Rasht, Iran says the Caspian Sea is the biggest source of caviar in the world comprising 90 percent of the world's export. Every kilogram of caviar fish can replace the revenues coming from 30 to 40 barrels of oil. Germany, France, Spain and Japan are among the top importers of caviar from Iran.

## **German Industries Resist Iran Sanctions**

German Daily reported that German industries are resisting pressure from the Government to comply with sanctions against Iran. In a piece penned by Hans Hesse in *Hendelblatt*, he argues while other countries are expanding their trade with Iran, German industries are required to decrease the volume of trade with the country. This requirement has drawn the ire of industrial institutions such as Automakers Union and Constructors of Industrial Installations and they have refrained so far from doing so.

## **Growth in Technical & Engineering Exports**

Recent years have seen a considerable growth in the export of technical and engineering services from Iran, the most major of which comprise constructional projects.

## **Deputy Oil Minister: Private Sector to Enter Iran's Refinery Sector**

According to "Tehran Times", the Oil Ministry has agreed to allow the private sector to construct two refineries in Qeshm, the managing director of the National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC) said. A gas condensate and a crude oil refinery, with capacities of 120,000 and 160,000 barrels per day (bpd) respectively, will be built in Qeshm.

## **US\$ 24 billion Petrochemical Company to Privatize**

Director General of National Petrochemical Industries Company of Iran puts the total value of the shares to be offered in line with the Article 44 from 81 petrochemical companies as at US\$ 24 billion.

## **Iran, of World Producers of LNG by 2010**

A senior Iranian energy official says the country will begin exporting its first liquefied natural gas to Europe and China in 2010. Iran, which holds the world's second largest gas reserves after Russia, began the construction of its first liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant on Tombak Island over a year ago. He said that Iran is currently negotiating with several international companies adding that the negotiations would determine where the country's LNG would be exported.

## **Iran, 14<sup>th</sup> Desirable Investment Destination**

In its latest ranking Greff Tronton, a European Consulting firm, has placed Iran in a 14<sup>th</sup> place among 192 developing nations in terms of investment environment desirability.

## **Iran Gas to Bahrain Negotiations Underway**

Bahrain may buy one billion cubic feet of gas from Iran to fuel the country's massive development, Bahrain Petroleum Company CEO says. A Bahraini delegation is in Tehran to hold negotiations on the purchase one billion cubic feet of gas every day from Iran, Bahrain Petroleum Company (Bapco) chief executive, Abdulkarim Al Sayed added. "We are exploring the possibility of importing gas from Iran. We also want to enhance gas production from our own reserves," Persian Gulf Daily News quoted Al Sayed as saying. Tehran-Manama talks on purchase of gas are expected to last for two days.

## **3 Overseas Companies Compete in Iran Mobile Market**

Malaysian TM INTERNATIONAL has expressed its interest in investing in Iran's booming mobile phone market, Bloomberg reported. Emirate's Etesalat and Russia's Megaphone are also vying for the Iranian market.

## **Chinese, Indian Investors Bid for Iranian Shares**

Director General for Foreign Investment at Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs says foreign investors from China, India and the tiny country of Emirate

south of the Persian Gulf are bidding for the shares offered in Stock Exchange. They can purchase 10 percent of the offered shares. Should they bid for ownership, no limitation, percentage wise, is imposed.

### **MoU to Expand Iranian Oil Fields Signed with Malaysia**

IRINN reported that Iranian Offshore Oil Company and a Malaysian oil & gas company have signed a MoU in Kuala Lumpur on investment in Persian Gulf oil field's development project. Based on this MoU, the contract will be finalized in 1 or 2 months and immediately after that the development project of the Persian Gulf oil field will get started.

### **Iran – China Co-Explore Mines**

A Chinese delegation of geologists from Jiang See Province in Iran signed a memorandum of understanding in the area of exploration of mineral reserves with Iran's Geological Organization.

### **Passenger Shipping Line to Connect Persian Gulf Kish Island to Europe**

Deputy for Tourism of Iran's Free Trade Zone Organization says preliminary agreements have been made to establish a passenger shipping line service in the Persian Gulf's Kish Island between Iran and Europe. This comes on the heels of an initial agreement on the sidelines of ITB in Berlin Germany.

### **First foreign bank opened in Iran**

The governor of the Central Bank of Iran says the Islamic Republic has allowed several foreign banks to open branches in the country. "We have overcome some obstacles which were in the way of foreign bank activities in Iran," Tahmasb Mazaheri said on Wednesday. He was speaking during the inauguration ceremony of the Tehran branch of the Iran-Europe Commercial Bank. Mazaheri added the Central Bank was ready to offer special incentives to open private banks in the Islamic Republic. The Iran-Europe Commercial Bank is the first of six foreign banks which will open in Iran, said the Central Bank Secretary General Mahmoud Bahmani on the sidelines of the inauguration ceremony.

## **Chairman of National Oil and Gas Company of Austria Defends Trade with Iran**

Defending its company's signing of a gas MoU with Iran in its annual general gathering, the Chief Executive of the Austrian O. M. F. A said supply of gas is of high importance to Iran and should not depend only on Russian gas.

## **International Petrochemical Conference Opens in Tehran**

The eighth session of Iran's Petrochemical Forum was inaugurated in the presence of Oil Minister Gholam-Hossein Nozari. The two-day gathering is a host to senior experts of oil industry from domestic and foreign companies. Representatives from 118 Iranian companies as well as over 76 foreign companies from 27 countries are present at the forum.

## **Chinese Firm Explores Investment Opportunities in Chabahar Free Trade Zone**

China's Comco Engineering Company is currently conducting feasibility studies for investment in Chabahar Free Trade Zone in Iran.

## **Cooperation Minister Calls for Expansion of Iran-India Ties**

In his meeting with the Chairman of Indian Industries Association, Iranian Minister for Cooperation called for expansion of ties between Iran and India. Non-oil trade between the two sides is currently at US\$ 2.57 billion which the Minister hopes to double with two to 3 years.

## **Iranian Oil Output Up 1000000 daily**

Deputy Oil Minister for Production Expansion Planning says the Ministry has set its eyes on one million barrels of oil per day by the end of its fourth plan.

## **Non-Oil Export Up 24%**

Some US\$ 3.6 billion worth of non-oil commodities plus the condensate gas were exported in the second Iranian month of Ordibehesht (April 20-May 20), Head of IRI's Customs Administration announced on Tuesday. He stated that the figure shows an increase of 23.7 % compared to figure for the same month last year.

## *Other News (Cultural, Tourism, ...)*

### **US University Chancellors Invited**

Reflecting the positive perspective Iranian President holds with regards to inviting the chancellors of US Universities to Iran, the Chancellor of Sharif University of Technology said the American Chancellor of famous universities are to visit Iranian universities in come November to encourage more academic contacts between the two countries.

### **Iran Tourism International Expansion**

French ambassador to Tehran, Bernard Politi called for expansion of cooperation between tourist agencies of Iran and those of the world saying Iran can have many areas of cooperation with international tourist agencies particularly in hotel chains venture.

### **Tarbiat Moallem Clinches First Place in German Robotic Competitions**

Tarbiat Moallem University Robot Team, the smallest member team participating in Germany's Robot Competitions clinched the first place among 456 participant teams from 80 countries. The Technology University of Hileberg hosted the event.

### **Iranian Researcher Wins International Physics Award**

The 34<sup>th</sup> International Conference on High Energy Physics will award young Iranian researcher Dr. Yasaman Farzan in its upcoming event in Philadelphia.

## **Iranian Achaemenid Empire in France**

Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization of Iran is to hold Achaemenid Empire Show Exhibition in France in cooperation with Louvre Museum.

## **Iran Ranking Up in Research Papers**

In its latest ranking, Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) has put Iran as at 43<sup>rd</sup> in the world in terms of scientific indexes which is 4 ranks up for the country since its last report. The number of highly cited papers by Iranian scientists have also increase by 11 topics to 104.

## **Chinese Red Cross: Iran Provides Most Tents**

International Federation of Red Cross says the world is amazed by the construction trend in quake hit areas in China. Chinese Red Cross meanwhile says most of the tents for the quake victims are provided by Iran.

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