

Pakistan to buy more electricity from Iran

REUTERS - Pakistan will buy more electricity from neighboring Iran, a Finance Ministry statement said on Tuesday.

The decision was taken at an Economic Coordination Committee chaired by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar. Energy-starved Pakistan already has contracts to purchase electricity from Iran for its border regions, especially for China-backed development projects on Gwadar port. The new proposal came a week after the Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian visited Islamabad.

Amir-Abdollahian paid a four-day visit to Pakistan at the invitation of his Pakistani counterpart. The visit to Pakistan had two main objectives.

His first objective was to enhance border security between the two countries, and his second objective was to discuss bilateral trade and pending energy projects.

The top Iranian and Pakistani diplomats exchanged views in line with the two objectives and even signed a five-year strategic plan for commercial cooperation.

Iran in dire need of smartening methods of combating smuggle of goods, forex



IRNA



By Reza
Abesh Ahmadlou
Staff writer

One of the most important factors that have directly affected the production boom in Iran today is the phenomenon of goods and forex smuggling, which has had a negative impact on various social, economic

and cultural areas. By reviewing the news related to the amount of smuggling discoveries in recent years, it can be said that, currently, the smuggling of goods and foreign currency has become a serious and threatening problem in the country's economy, so that the fight against it has become one of the priorities of the country. Estimates by the Central Headquarters to Combat

the Smuggling of Goods and Currency suggest that the total value of smuggled goods in Iran amounts to approximately \$20 billion. Economic experts and Members of Parliament (MPs) have recently put forth differing figures regarding the extent of smuggling in the country.

With the approval of the Law on Combating Goods and Forex Smuggling in the Iranian year of 1392 (start-

ed March 21, 2013), new horizons were opened in terms of preventing and dealing with the harmful phenomenon of goods and forex smuggling. However, the performance of related bodies in this field is faced with many ambiguities.

According to experts, the unsuitable performance of some organizations in charge of dealing with the smuggling of goods has made it a challenge to prevent and deal with this sinister phenomenon. For example, many experts believe that instability in legislation, disproportionality of crimes and punishments, and the inconsistent approach in dealing with smuggling are the most important problems in this area.

The capital flight and damage to production and employment is one of the consequences of smuggling, toward which the government must have a cross-sectoral approach in fighting against it, while changes in the tools and methods of fighting against smuggling of goods and forex is a necessity.

In a study conducted by Hossein Gholami and Rahim Namarvari on criminological analysis of the Law on

Combating Goods and Forex Smuggling, which was ratified in the Iranian year 1392 (2013), it was found that Iran's criminal policy did not work effectively and, as a result, the executive and judicial criminal policy did not bring tangible and acceptable results in combating goods and forex smuggling. According to the study, in most countries the smuggling of goods and currency is one of the crimes that cause extensive damage to various cultural, social and economic areas of the society. It is clear that controlling this kind of crime and preventing the spread of its harmful results is one of the most important goals of legislators.

As shown in the study, it can be said that Iranian legislators have addressed combating the smuggling of goods and forex, but they have not used scientific findings and achievements of criminology in a purposeful method.

The development of an un-free economy, damage to laws pertaining to criminals, as well as the government's revenues derived from fines on such crimes will be among the results of the implementation of the above-mentioned law.

Suspending Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project disappointing



By Syed Ali
Hassan
Iran Daily's
correspondent
in Pakistan

OPINION

The government that came to power in Pakistan with American support has decided to suspend the Iran-Pakistan Gas Pipeline project by justifying the US sanctions on Iran, announcing the state policy related to the Iran-Pakistan gas project in parliament. Pakistan is incapable of com-

pleting this project, Federal Minister of State for Oil and Gas Mossadegh Malik said in a written reply to a question raised by Maulana Jamaluddin, a member of Fazlur Rehman's party in the National Assembly.

Pakistan has shown its inability to go ahead with the project as long as the US sanctions on Iran are in place, or Islamabad receives a positive signal from the US to go ahead with the project. It should be noted that Pakistan is currently facing an energy crisis and despite US

sanctions on Russia, it is also buying cheap oil due to public pressure, but despite public pressure and dire need, it is reluctant to implement the plan to purchase cheap gas from Iran.

Gas load-shedding has been happening in Pakistan for the past several years in cold weather, while the people of Pakistan are facing serious problems due to the lack of gas pressure in the cities of Karachi and Sindh and Upper Punjab. Last year, many Pakistanis died due to lack of gas in a severe winter. Despite

the severe shortage of energy in the South Asian country of 240 million people, the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project has been in cold storage for almost a decade due to the pledge of allegiance to the United States.

According to a written reply submitted by the Minister of State for Petroleum Mossadegh Malik in the National Assembly, Pakistan has issued a force majeure and excusing notice to Iran under the Gas Sales and Purchase Agreement (GSPA). As a result of which Pakistan's obligations

under GSPA are suspended, in the policy statement submitted to the National Assembly, the Minister of State also put on record that Iran objected to the notice of force majeure and excusing event.

The Minister of State for Petroleum also admitted that Pakistan's Force Majeure and Excusing Event Notice has been considered a controversial issue by Iran, and Iran wishes to settle the matter through international arbitration.

If Iran goes to arbitration, Pakistan may be fined, but the

exact amount of the fine is subject to the decision of the arbitrators.

Pakistan's attempt is that instead of taking the issue to international arbitration, Iran should ignore the financial loss caused to Tehran due to the delay in completing the project by Pakistan.

It should be remembered that president Asif Zardari and Iranian president Ahmadinejad made an agreement to impose a fine on the party that did not complete the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project by the specified time.

Iran-Vietnam trade could hit \$1b: *Entrepreneur*



By Sadeq
Dehqan
Staff writer

Iran and Vietnam have the potential to boost their ties to achieve a bilateral trade volume of up to \$1 billion in the near term, an Iranian businessman said Tuesday as Vuong Dinh Hue, chairman of the Vietnamese National Assembly, commenced a three-day official visit to Tehran.

"If cooperation is effectively pursued and the prevailing challenges are successfully addressed, the bilateral trade between the two nations could swiftly ascend to the milestone of \$1 billion," Mostafa Mousavi, the head of the Iran-Vietnam Joint Cham-

ber of Commerce, told Iran Daily.

Mousavi noted that enhancing collaborative efforts between the two nations, particularly in the realms of economy and trade, stands as a key objective for the Vietnamese delegation's diplomatic mission to Tehran. "A group of 22 business magnates and industrialists is accompanying the Vietnamese top lawmaker during his trip to Iran," he added.

The delegation also includes the heads of various National Assembly committees and several deputy ministers from various sectors such as commerce, industry, agriculture, culture, sports, tourism, and economy. Mousavi further hailed the "progressing" politi-

cal rapport between Iran and Vietnam and noted that the Vietnamese government has a "genuine desire" to foster bilateral relations with Iran.

He added that visit by the Vietnamese delegation holds particular significance to relaunch the joint economic commission

"This commission has not convened since before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Its resumption is eagerly sought, as it is intended to address pressing economic and commercial issues - matters that will be extensively deliberated upon in the meeting between the Iranian Chamber of Commerce and the Vietnamese delegation," the businessman said.

Prior to this visit, a joint commercial memorandum

has already been inked between the two countries.

The existing trade dynamics, however, are challenged by sanctions and complications in monetary and banking transactions. A substantial portion of trade transpires through intermediaries in third-party countries, which are not accounted for in the official trade volume between Iran and Vietnam. To overcome these hindrances, both nations are actively seeking resolutions that would facilitate direct trade, reducing costs and fostering greater interaction between their business communities.

"Presently, the recorded bilateral trade stands at approximately \$250 million annually. With the successful resolution of

existing obstacles, this figure could surge beyond the \$1 billion mark within a mere six-month timeframe," Mousavi pointed out.

Economically, Iran's strengths lie in the export of raw and processed raw materials, while Vietnam possesses the capacity to provide finished goods to the Iranian market. This intrinsic synergy positions the two countries as natural trade partners.

Mousavi underlined Iran's robust potential in exporting products from the petrochemical and pharmaceutical sectors, in addition to medical supplies and technical/engineering expertise. The construction industry, in particular, presents notable prospects.

"Vietnam, on the other



IRNA

hand, excels in knowledge-based companies, a model that Iran could effectively emulate. Beyond this, the two nations can collaborate in sectors such as aquaculture, stone, construction materials, leather, and fruits." Vietnam employs a special approach in trade which operates on a principle: as Vietnamese exports to a given country rise, there is an anticipation of reciprocity through increased

imports from that country. Simultaneously, with a view to expanding exports to alternate markets, Vietnam strategically adjusts its import tariffs. In light of this, Mousavi proposed that Iranian business entities seeking favorable tariff conditions for exports to Vietnam should reduce exports from third-parties to Vietnam and rather opt for direct exports to the South Asian nation.