

NEWS IN BRIEF

EV production
on agenda

IRNA – Iranian Oil Minister Javad Owji on Wednesday said his ministry and the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade are jointly following a plan to reduce air pollution.

Production of electric vehicles (EVs) for public transport fleet is among the projects the two ministries are pursuing, explained the top official, adding that the Oil Ministry will grant credit equal to saved fuel on the basis of the Persian Gulf free on board (FOB) price to those who make investments in this sector.

The plan gives first priority to taxis and pickup trucks, said the minister, adding the project will help reduce air pollution.

New envoy to
OPEC
appointed

SHANA – Iranian Oil Minister Javad Owji appointed Afshin Javan as Iran's representative to the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Javan will serve as the director general of the department for OPEC affairs and relations with energy communities at the Iranian Oil Ministry.

Javan is also a member of the scientific board of the institute for International Energy Studies (IIES).

Iran signals
oil ...

Included in this increase is the beginning of production from Phase 11 of Iran's South Pars Gas Field after decades of delays. The current output of Phase 11 stands at 11 million cubic mcm/d, although Iran plans to increase output to 56 mcm/d.

Iran's increase in the production and export of energy comes as its relations with its Persian Gulf neighbors strengthen, with Iran and Saudi Arabia reopening embassies following a Chinese brokered deal between the two last March. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said that recent warming of relations between the two would lead to a "wave of reconciliation" in the region.

Annual profit of state-run Iranian banks hits \$1.4b: Minister



Economy Desk

Iranian Minister of Economy Ehsan Khandouzi announced on Wednesday that during the last Iranian year, which ended on March 20, except Bank Sepah, all state banks came out of the loss-making mode and posted a net profit of 70 trillion tomans (\$1.4 billion).

Speaking on state TV, the minister said that one of the long-standing problems of the country's financing system was that state banks were suffering from a lack of discipline and legality, IRNA reported.

He added that one of the important decisions of Iranian Pres-

ident Ebrahim Raeisi was on transformational measures in the financial field and state banks.

A total of 13 out of 30 banks in the country are under government management, the minister said, noting that except for Bank Sepah, which was affected by the effects of the merger, all other state banks were out of loss-making.

"Seven years ago, out of 13 state-owned banks, six lenders posted a total loss of 12 trillion tomans, a year later, nine banks had totally 28 trillion tomans of loss, while five years ago, 11 banks state-run lenders had a loss of 9 trillion tomans, as in the Iranian year of 1398 (ended March

2020), six banks had generated a loss of about 15 trillion tomans," he added.

The minister went to say that in the Iranian year of 1399, five banks were quite successful with 14 trillion tomans of profit, but again in 1400, the profitability of banks decreased and we had four loss-making banks, namely, Bank Keshavarzi Iran, Tose'e Ta'avon Bank, Bank Mellī Iran, and Bank Sepah.

The government's efforts are on the issue of banking discipline and legality, avoiding non-returnable payments, paying according to the country's standards, and reminding the bank managers to comply with the law.

Number of NTBFs active in Iranian oil industry tripled

Economy Desk

There has been an increase of new technology based firms (NTBFs) in oil industry by more than three times as 751 contracts have been signed worth \$340 million with Iranian start-ups.

The 80-percent imports of equipment for Iranian oil industries has dropped to around 20 to 30%, has said Vahidreza Zeidifard, the deputy minister of oil for engineering, research and technology affairs. Industrial control systems and compressor systems used in Aradan Gas Compressor Station Project are designed by Iranian engineers as 90% of equipment used in the station are indigenized high-tech equipment, according to IRNA.

The number of start-ups in the oil industry has increased from 150 to about 550 since two years ago. Also some contracts with knowl-

edge-based companies were signed on various facilities, as some funds were provided for the companies, the official stated.

"Favorable relation and cooperation have been established between the Ministry of Science and the Ministry of Oil. Currently 81 contracts have been inked with universities and research institutes across the country that approximately \$77 million have been allocated for the contracts.

"Also we have signed contracts with four major academic centers in Iran and defined them as institutes to approve the licenses required by the Ministry of Oil," the official stated.

Iran has reached a very eye-catching development and growth in the defense industry. So the technologies used in the defense sector can be utilized in the oil industry since there are many capacities in the defense industry to help the oil industry.

A techno-engineering service export contract was signed with Venezuela El Palito refinery, and 2.7 million pieces of Iranian-made equipment were exported to Venezuela, which is very impressive.

Also catalyst was exported to Russia for the first time, which is an honor for the oil industry of Iran, as recently a private Iranian company active in the oil industry has signed a \$58-million worth contract with the Venezuelan oil company. The government and the Parliament of Iran have given a notable budget to provide facilities and financial support for NTBFs. In this regard, negotiations were done with several banks and some contracts were signed with some lenders. The Oil Industry Research and Technology Fund has played a very important role in helping knowledge-based companies. So far \$44.7 million have been paid to guarantee the



companies. Since many years ago, some standards called Iranian Petroleum Standard (IPS) were used in oil industry. But, currently a sum of 122 IPS standards have been modified to national ones, which every applicant can refer to. "In various visits to science and technology

parks and academic centers, I have seen young people who started their careers from nothing but had great ideas. With great effort, they succeeded to be among the most important companies that cooperate with the oil industry and exchange technology and equipment," Zeidifard noted.

Iranian company inks contract to export batteries to Russia

An Iranian company signed a contract worth \$50 million with a Russian counterpart for exports of automotive batteries to the country.

The contract was signed on Wednesday on the sidelines of MIMS Automobility Moscow 2023.

Mahmoudreza Mousavi, the deputy for exports of the Iranian company, told IRNA that the company has been active in the Eurasian market and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). He added that the company began exports to Russia eight months ago.

Referring to factors such as quality, after-sales service, timely delivery, and offering competitive prices, which are on the agenda for his company, Mousavi predicted that the company will find its way in the Russian market. This is the second consecutive year that Iran is attending MIMS Automobility Moscow.

Some 32 Iranian companies, including two leading automakers, Iran Khodro (IKCO) and Saipa Group, two commercial companies, as well as 28 auto spare parts companies are showcasing their products in the four-day expo which opened on Monday.



Iran-China seven-month trade surpasses \$8.5b

Trade between Iran and China in the first seven months of the current year reached \$8.54 billion, with China's export of products to Iran accounting for \$6 billion of it, China's Customs Office reported.

Iran and China exchanged over \$9.6 billion worth of products from January to July 2022, the report added, according to Tasnim news agency.

In the first seven months of 2023, China imported \$2.54 billion worth of products from Iran, registering a 43 percent drop compared to last year's corresponding period.

But China's export of products to Iran in the first seven months of the current year reached \$6 billion, showing a 17 percent growth compared to the same period last year.

China had exported \$5.13 billion worth of products to Iran from January to July 2022. According to the report, the trade balance of the two countries in the period reached \$3.46 billion in favor of China.