

Iran removes tariffs on saffron exports



Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber has issued a decree ordering the removal of tariffs on saffron exports.

The decree was addressed on Tuesday to the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Industry, Mine, and Trade, and the Finance Ministry, ordering them to remove saffron from a list of export items subject to payment of a 0.5% virtual water tax, IRNA reported.

Saffron is one of the most important export products of Iran. The country aims to increase overseas shipments of the spice by easing restrictions on exporters.

Iran's saffron export has experienced remarkable growth of \$73 million, accounting for an overwhelming 55%, in the preceding Iranian calendar year which ended on March 20, 2023.

The cultivation of saffron, colloquially known as "the red gold" in Iran, dates back to several millennia ago, with a staggering 120,000 hectares out of the 18 million hectares of arable land being utilized for the cultivation of this coveted commodity.

The largest contributor to the production of saffron is Khorasan Razavi Province in the northeast, boasting an impressive 82,000 hectares. Other notable provinces with significant production include North Khorasan, South Khorasan, Isfahan, Kerman, and Yazd.

Iran is the world's leading producer and exporter of saffron, thanks to favorable weather conditions and an abundance of foreign clientele. The latest customs statistics reveal that 207.4 tons of saffron, valued at \$206 million, were exported from the country in the last Iranian calendar year.

This is while about 241.1 tons of saffron worth \$132 million had been imported to the country a year earlier. The data highlights a remarkable \$73 million growth in the value of saffron export, equivalent to an astounding 55%.

Iranian saffron export statistics demonstrate that the saffron industry has generated approximately \$2.9 billion over the last 17 years. A total of 57 countries worldwide currently buy their saffron from Iran, which accounts for 95% of the world's saffron.

Although primarily utilized for culinary purposes within Iran, European countries predominantly employ saffron in a variety of industries including pharmaceuticals. Iran's reputation for producing the finest quality saffron on the planet attracts numerous global customers for this strategically significant commodity.

Daily delivery of gas to national trunkline tops 840mcm: *Official*



840 million cubic meters of gas are delivered to the national trunkline on a daily base.

Referring to the full readiness of the country's gas refineries in the cold days of the year, the official said all of the gas refining plans of the NIGC for the current year have been completed, ILNA reported.

The maintenance and repair operations are carried out periodically during the spring and summer to have a stable

flow of gas during the winter days, he noted.

Thanks to the overhaul operations, we now enjoy a favorable condition in delivering gas to industries and the household sector. Meanwhile, the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) managing director said on Tuesday that oil and gas production in Iran, thanks to its current reserves, will continue for the next 90-100 years.

Addressing the Session to Introduce Opportunities and Framework for

Investment in Drilling Rig Service Provision with Guaranteed Purchase Contracts, Mohsen Khojastehmehr added that Iran's crude oil and natural gas on aggregate is equal to 340 billion barrels of oil, Shana reported.

The country's unconventional resources have yet to be added to the figure, noted the CEO of NIOC, adding, "We are conducting initial studies to add shale oil and gas reserves and clathrate (gas) hydrates to Iran's oil and gas

reservoirs." Iran is a rich country in terms of underground resources and it is necessary to have long-term goals for utilizing them, he underlined.

Drilling is the central core of NIOC's activity, said Khojastehmehr, adding that nothing will be left of the upstream sector if drilling is detached. Development and overhaul operations in the upstream sector are in need of drilling, he pointed out. The drilling sector is the most resilient part of the oil industry, stated the NIOC chief; oil and gas production would face challenges if the industry lacked drilling.

More than 50 percent of the capital required for the development of an oil or gas field is related to the drilling sector, the deputy oil minister added.

Both light and heavy drilling rigs are needed, emphasized the NIOC head, saying 10-year contracts will be signed with private companies to meet the industry's needs.

The contracts will be signed in foreign currencies and advance payments will be made for purchasing or renting drilling rigs, said Khojastehmehr, adding the measures are aimed at facilitating the contracts' terms and conditions.

Big contracts on oil and gas production will be signed in the near future, pledged the official, adding drilling rigs are required to achieve the goal.

Over 120 domestic, foreign firms to partake at WATEXT exhibition

The 19th edition of the Iran International Water & Wastewater Exhibition (WATEXT) will kick off in Tehran with the participation of more than 120 firms on January 22.

A sum of 125 domestic and foreign companies will take part in the event to showcase their latest products and achievements, Tasnim news agency reported.

The exhibition will be inaugurated with the participation of Iran's Minister of Energy Ali Akbar Mehrabian, senior managers in the water and wastewater industry of the country and also

foreign representatives in the relevant industry. Products showcased in the WATEXT exhibition will be metal pipes, industrial valves, pumps and rotary machines, industrial wastewater treatment, polymer pipes and fittings, chemicals, paint and coatings and services including consulting engineering, dam and hydroelectric power plants, irrigation and drainage, water transmission lines, domestic wastewater treatment and leak detection systems.

The 19th Iran International Exhibition of Wa-

ter and Wastewater is one of the most professional exhibitions in the field of water and wastewater management in Iran. In this international event, many domestic and foreign companies will display their latest achievements to the public view.

Such international events are not only great chances to get familiar with the latest technologies and developments of a specific industry in Iran, but also great platforms to find and develop cooperation with potential Iranian and non-Iranian partners.



NISOC says ready to participate in Iraq's oil projects

The National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC) expressed its readiness to participate in various projects in Iraq.

The NISOC managing director made the announcement in his meeting with a visiting Iraqi delegation of Nasiriyah Chamber of Commerce on the sidelines of the 14th Khuzestan Specialized Exhibition of Petroleum Industry Equipment Manufacturing in Ahvaz, the capital city of the southwestern province of Khuzestan, Shana reported on Tuesday.

Alireza Daneshi briefed

the Iraqi delegation on NISOC's capabilities, saying the company is keen to help Iraq promote its technical know-how and solve its problems in different sectors of the oil industry.

The CEO of NISOC also discussed cooperation with Iraqi officials in the fields of collecting associated gases, constructing oil and gas networks, and injecting gas into reservoirs.

The Iraqi side put great emphasis on developing bilateral cooperation, and inviting Daneshi to pay a visit to oil fields, installations, and companies in

Nasiriyah.

Iran exported commodities valued at \$6.9 billion to Iraq during the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 21, 2023), the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration announced.

According to Mohammad Rezvanifar, Iraq was the second top export destination of Iranian products in that nine-month period. The value of Iran's export to Iraq increased by 15 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20, 2023).