

Iran's exports to Iraq up 27% in three months

Iran exported \$3 billion worth of commodities to Iraq during the first three months of the current Iranian year (March 20-June 20), 27% percent more than the corresponding period in the previous year which stood at \$2.346 billion.

Announcing the news, Farzad Piltan, an advisor to the head of Iran Trade Promotion Organization, said the main exported goods included natural gas, fresh apples, iron and steel ingots.

Tile and ceramics, watermelons, evaporative coolers, tomatoes, home appliances, gas turbines, PE compounds, hot-rolled bars, clinker, infant formula and ice cream were among other exported commodities to Iraq, the official stated.

Iran imported \$107 million worth of goods during the three months to June 20, Piltan said adding that it indicates 25% of rise compared to the related figure of last year (\$85 million). Precious metals, aluminum alloys, tire, automobiles and home appliances were among the main imported goods from Iraq during the period, the official noted.

Iran sells caviar to 38 countries: *IFO* official

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According to official statistics, Iran exported 4,784 tons of caviar to 38 countries during the Iranian year to March 19, which indicated a 37% rise compared to the previous year that stood at 3.5 tons.

Talking to Iran Daily, Nasser Karami-Rad, the director general of stock enhancement and conservation of aquatic genetic resources of the Iran Fisheries Organization (IFO) added that the country produced 4,760 tons of sturgeon meat as well as 21,612 tons of caviar during past Iranian year.

A sum of 4,650 tons of sturgeon meat and 18.46 tons of caviar were produced in Iran during the year to March 20, 2024, according to the official.

The trade of sturgeon in the world is carried out under the supervision of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), Karami-Rad said stating that the permitted caviar export for Iran during the last Iranian year was put at 7.8-8 tons by the multilateral global agreement.

"In addition, due to the restrictions that exporters are facing regarding



the obligation to return foreign currency to the country, as well as other issues, every year some caviar is exported from the country through unofficial corridors," he explained. According to official data, the coun-

try's revenues in year 1401 via the export of caviar underwent a 37% increase.

"Sanctions have created problems for exporters, including in the field of monetary and bank transfers,

and if these problems are resolved, we will see a significant leap in the export of caviar, as Iranian caviar is globally-known and many buyers are interested in buying from Iran," Karami-Rad said.

Considering the potential that Iran enjoys in the field of sturgeon breeding and its high profitability, we can earn very good revenues by developing sturgeon breeding, he concluded.

Biden should see ...

He has also pledged to heed the concerns of those who chose not to partake in the election and try to accommodate their aspirations.

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Echoing this sentiment, Mohammad Javad Azari Jahromi, former communications minister and a prominent figure in Pezeshkian's campaign, said that the inauguration of the new president would catalyze a challenging new phase in which he would try to bring onboard all those who refused to show up at the polls.

Based on his stances, Pezeshkian who is a cardiac surgeon, it is evident that he perceives interaction not only as a remedy for navigating the broader international context but also as a potent prescription for fostering cohesion and cooperation among disparate factions within Iran itself. Amidst global responses to Iran's presidential election, the European Union's foreign policy spokesperson congratulated Dr Pezeshkian's victory, expressing optimism for strengthened relations with Iran. However, in a striking departure from this stance, the US State Department spokesperson characterized the election as neither "free" nor "fair," and would not yield substantial changes in Iran's approach or the protection of citizens' rights.

Contrary to the claims made by this US official, the presidential election in Iran saw the participation of candidates representing the entire political spectrum, and no group boycotted the process. The spirited campaign, impassioned televised debates, and extensive voter turnout - prompting a six-hour polling extension - collectively suggest that the election met acceptable standards. The victorious candidate, Pezeshkian, has been a vocal critic of prevailing policies, casting further doubt on allegations of a constrained electoral process. Furthermore, an election of this nature has not been seen in any US-allied countries in the region, and no such occurrences are anticipated.

Given the disconnect between these claims and the observable facts surrounding Iran's recent presidential election, it would be prudent for US President Joe Biden to redress the missteps made by his State Department spokesperson and adopt a more realistic approach to this significant political development. Former US president Donald Trump's antagonistic policies toward Iran, born from inaccurate assessments, resulted in heightened tensions and costs for both nations - developments that were vociferously condemned by the Democrats under Biden's leadership. The Biden administration's current stance on Iran's election, targeting a newly-elected president yet to begin its term, appears neither grounded in reality nor diplomatically advisable. In light of the warm reception to the election results from America's closest regional allies, it would be appropriate for senior US officials - particularly President Biden - to recalibrate their perspective and demonstrate respect for the outcome of Iran's democratic process. This shift in approach is crucial should the Biden administration genuinely believe that diplomacy constitutes the best option on the table.

Exploring Iran's swap of Turkmen gas to Iraq



A gas swap agreement was signed between Iran and Turkmenistan on Wednesday to supply 10 billion cubic meters a year of Turkmen gas to Iraq through Iran. The strategic agreement is a win for all three countries, diversifying Turkmenistan's export destinations, supplying gas to the north of Iran, and preventing electricity shortages in Iraq.

The contract was signed in a ceremony attended by Iran's Ambassador to Turkmenistan Ali Mojtaba Rozbahani, and head of state concern Turkmen-gaz Maksat Babayev, Press TV wrote. In the joint press statement published on the occasion, it was declared that "Turkmenistan and Iran have been developing mutually beneficial relations in the gas industry for years based on the principles of friendship, good neighborliness, mutual respect and equal participation".

The gas swap between Turkmenistan and Iran has already been carried out, starting in 2022 and 2023, to Azerbaijan. The Turkmen government has yet to provide any details on prices, timing or logistical arrangements, but has announced that it will seek to expand the new gas pipeline to Iran.

According to the Associated Press, Iranian companies will build a new 125-kilometer pipeline to Iran to increase Turkmenistan's gas transmission capacity. Turkmenistan's foreign ministry announced that Ashgabat plans to increase its gas exports to Iran to 40 billion cubic meters annually. Turkmenistan relies heavily on the ex-

port of its huge natural gas reserves, and China is the main customer of gas in Turkmenistan. Therefore, Ashgabat is working on building a pipeline to supply gas to Afghanistan, Pakistan and India in order to diversify its markets. Also, the entry into force of the new contract will provide a solution to the electricity crisis in Iraq. Iraq's power plants rely heavily on gas imported from Iran, which covers a third of Iraq's needs, but the supply is prone to frequent cutoffs, which worsen the crisis. In previous statements, Iraq's Electricity Minister Ziad Ali Fazil confirmed that his country had finalized the agreement to import 20 million cubic meters of Turkmen gas per day, but the only challenge was the lack of communication lines to transfer it. Therefore, Iraq negotiated with the Iranian side to use its networks to transfer gas from Turkmenistan whenever a disruption in gas supplied by Iran occurred. The gas swap deal signed on Wednesday covers part of Iraq's needs and underlines Iran's commitment to guarantee sustainable supplies to the country.

The agreement is also an important development in Iran's foray into the infrastructure building business, where the construction of 125 km pipeline and three compressor stations in Turkmenistan is carried out by Iranian companies with the aim of expanding Turkmenistan's gas supply to the Islamic Republic. This has been officially confirmed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of

Turkmenistan. The recent talks held in Ashgabat from July 1 to 3 also provided the basis for discussions on several aspects of further cooperation in the gas industry between Iran and Turkmenistan.

The European Union and Turkey closely monitored the negotiations and underlined their international importance. The pipeline project is of vital importance for the energy security of both countries and shows their willingness to develop long-term strategic relations in the energy sector. The initiative aims to strengthen the gas transportation infrastructure and ensure export of more natural gas to Iran. It allows Turkmenistan to increase its natural gas exports and embolden its position in the global energy market.

As for Iran, it will optimize domestic gas consumption and consolidate the country's exports, which is very important considering the increasing domestic demand for energy sources. Turkmenistan plans to increase the volume of gas supplied to Iran from two main routes to 40 billion cubic meters per year.

The first route is the main Daulatabad-Sarakhs-Khangiran gas pipeline with a current capacity of 12.5 billion cubic meters per year. The pipeline stretches from the Daulatabad gas field in Turkmenistan to Khangiran in Iran, where it is connected with the Iran Gas Trunkline system.

It is significant as it allows the diversification of Turkmenistan's gas export routes, doubling the nation's export of gas to Iran. For Iran, the pipeline allows the country to deal with gas shortages in its northern regions, and to improve its reputation as a trade partner in the Caspian region.

The second route is the Korpeje-Kordkuy pipeline with a current capacity of 8 billion cubic meters per year. In addition, transmission continues through the Artiq-Lotfabad cross-border pipeline launched in the 1990s to supply gas to border towns in north-

ern Iran. The pipeline has a capacity of one billion cubic meters of gas per year and plays an important role in ensuring the energy security of border regions.

Iran has already swap agreements in place with Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan. In November 2021, Iran and Azerbaijan signed a swap deal for 1.5-2 billion cubic meters of gas per year from Turkmenistan. In July 2022, they agreed to raise the volume to 3-4 billion cubic meters per year. Iran also has the ability to import 40 to 50 million cubic meters of gas a day from Turkmenistan to guarantee energy security in the country and strengthen economic relations with its neighbors. Negotiations on the transit of gas from Turkmenistan to Turkey through Iran are also ongoing. Iran and Turkey are connected by a main gas pipeline with a capacity of 14 billion cubic meters per year, but Turkey imports only 9.6 billion cubic meters per year and there is room for additional 4.4 billion cubic meters per year to transmit through the network. Negotiations on the potential transit of Turkmen gas through Iran to Turkey indicate a growing interest in creating new energy routes that can meet Turkey's growing demand for energy resources.

Overall, the development of gas transportation infrastructure between Turkmenistan and Iran along with having new swap deals signed shows the strategic importance of these projects for the region.

In the midst of international sanctions and geopolitical instability, these measures are carried out with the aim of ensuring energy security and sustainable development of both countries. Considering the geopolitical importance of the region, these projects can play an important role in strengthening economic and political relations between countries. They also diversify natural gas supplies and reduce dependence on traditional routes and suppliers, which is essential to ensure long-term stability in the region.