

Iran developing age-old oilfield for 'sustainable' production



Economic Desk

Iran is working on developing a century-old oil field to extract crude oil "sustainably" after several failed attempts to tap into the reserve, a senior manager at the National Iranian South Oil Co. (NISOC) said on Monday.

The age-old Solabdar oilfield is located in the southwestern Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province.

Drilling began in Solabdar in 1925 with wells 1 and 2, but the oil wells turned out to be "uneconomical" and were quickly abandoned, Shana News Agency reported.

It was not until 1972 that the field's oil potential was proven with the drilling of well 3. Well 4 came along in 1979 as part of the field's development plan, and between 1994 and 2002, two workovers were carried out, but production never took off due to the "complexities" of the well's underlying reservoir. "Developing this oilfield was risky due to its complex geology," said Karim Hamid, the head of the NISOC's Reservoir Operation Engineering Department.

"Drilling for well 5 in 1995 was also inconclusive due to structural uncertainties and the well had to be put on hold," Hamid added.

Despite difficulties, Solabdar's well 4 went under another workover which led to the production of 1,000 barrels per day (bpd) on a test run in 2020.

Hamid hailed crude oil extraction from the well as a "turning point" for the Solabdar field's development.

The results from well 4's repair reduced the reservoir risks, giving the go-ahead for further development, including digging new wells. Well 6 was drilled in 2022, and now it is churning out 1,000 bpd, raising the field's total daily output to 2,000 barrels. "Well 6's productivity is a testament to the successful planning for the Solabdar field's development," Hamid pointed out.

The drilling of Solabdar well 7, which started last year in the field's western section, is now in its final stages.

The NISOC official said "sustainable production" from the Solabdar field would be achieved after the remaining two wells are drilled and processing facilities are installed.

Iran sets new record in foreign direct investment

Iran saw a new record in foreign direct investment (FDI) in the calendar year to late March despite sanctions imposed by the US.

Head of Iran's Organization for Investment & Economic and Technical Assistance (OIETA) said that the net FDI attracted to Iran in the past calendar year had reached a total of \$5.5 billion, Press TV reported.

Ali Fekri said the figure was a record in the 16-year history of the OIETA, adding that the organization had issued permits for other FDI projects but they were removed from the tally because investors had failed to bring funds into the country.

Fekri said that another \$2.5 billion worth of foreign investment had been attracted to Iranian projects over the past calendar year which were not authorized or registered by the OIETA.

China was responsible for \$2 billion worth of investment in Iranian projects last year, he said, adding that Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Iranians living abroad had the largest share in foreign investment in the country after China over the same period.

He dismissed reports suggesting that the increase in Iran's



FDI was because of new inflows from Afghanistan, saying that the entire investment by the Afghans in Iran had not exceeded \$35 million in the year

to March.

A bulk of FDI attracted to the Iranian economy over the past calendar year went to manufacturing or mining and metals

projects, he said.

Fekri said the total FDI authorized by the OIETA during the three years of the outgoing administration had reached

\$11 billion, adding that oil and gas sector in the country had attracted the largest share of foreign investments over the period.

Iranian NGOs outperform contractors in various fields



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The role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as a consultative and supervisory body was discussed at a meeting in Tehran to mark the National NGOs Day on Monday.

During the meeting, it was emphasized that NGOs could replace contractors in Iran in many areas.

Speaking in the event, Mohammad Abouei, the secretary of Tehran-based NGOs Headquarters stated that, "We do our utmost to make the words of NGOs reach the officials and public."

The empowerment of NGOs along with boosting logistical infrastructure is one of the demands of the members of Iranian NGOs, he noted.

Stating that NGOs should play a key role in planning and monitoring in the country,

Abouei said the government should work to take advantage of the capacity of NGOs. The regulations regarding the activities of NGOs are facing many challenges as no decision has been made for the ratification of a draft on NGOs by the Parliament, he criticized, noting that the organizations are working under the framework of a bill which was approved by the cabinet.

Speaking at the event, Alireza Atashak, the managing director of Iran NGO Network urged the Iranian government to stop receiving tax from bank deposits of NGOs. According to the tax laws of NGOs, which stipulates their tax exemption, and considering the restrictions that these organizations are facing, Atashak said it is necessary to remove collecting tax from their bank deposits.

Iran's home-made plane undergoing type certification

Head of Iran's Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) announced that the domestically designed Simorgh aircraft is undergoing various tests to receive a type certificate.

Mohammad Mohammadi Bakhsh said that a prototype version of Simorgh had successfully undergone flight tests, adding that various other tests have been carried out on the aircraft in recent months to prove its airworthiness, according to Press TV. Mohammadi Bakhsh said the CAA has been closely monitoring the tests and has received graphs and documents containing precise information about Simorgh's performance. Simorgh was unveiled in May 2022 as the first Iranian light transport aircraft. The plane is a modified version of IrAn-140, an Iranian-Ukrainian joint project which is based on Antonov An-140.

The new plane carried out a first successful flight in May



2023, nearly a year after it did a fast-taxi test.

Iranian defense ministry, which is in charge of manufacturing Simorgh, said just after the test flight that it had started the process to receive a test certificate for the plane. Mohammadi Bakhsh said Simorgh is quite different from IrAn-140 because its engine and fuselage have been modified.

He said that a second Simorgh aircraft is being built and technicians are attaching wings, landing gears and engines to the plane.

The official said Iran is now in control of a home-grown

plane-manufacturing industry which can join partnerships with international plane-makers.

He said that Simorgh is essentially a cargo plane but can join Iran's fleet of short-haul regional jets in the future. Reports in recent years have pointed to a major progress in Iran's aircraft production and maintenance sector.

That comes against the backdrop of sanctions imposed on the country by the United States as Iranian airlines have been barred from purchasing new planes.

Iran's legumes exports stood at 91,000 tons last year

The chairman of the Board of Directors of the Iranian Legumes Association said that 91,000 tons of cereals were exported from the country in the past Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2023, to March 20, 2024).

Davoud Lapehchi put the annual consumption of cereals and legumes in Iran at between 950,000 tons and one million tons, reported Tasnim News Agency.

Speaking in a news conference, he added that according to the statistics, the per capita consumption of legumes in Iran is between 8 and 10 kilograms, while the rate stands at 13 kg in the global average.

Lapehchi noted that between 650,000 and 700,000 tons of different types of cereals were produced in the country last year (ended March 20, 2024), and it is expected to increase

in the current Iranian calendar year (started March 21, 2024). According to the statistics, about 199,000 tons and 243,000 tons of cereals were imported into the country in 2021 and 2022 respectively, he said.

He further pointed out that about 50,000 tons of cereals were imported into the country in the first four months of the current Iranian year (March 21 to July 22, 2024).