

Iran-China Trade at \$24bn in 8 Months



The latest market figures show the level of trade between Iran and China increased by almost a quarter over the past eight months.

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - The latest market figures show the level of trade between Iran and China rose to more than \$24 billion over the past eight months.

Reports quoted China's customs department as announcing that the level of trade between the two countries from January to August 2016 stood at \$19.5 billion.

This is while, reports said, their trade reached above \$24 billion from January to the end of August this year, showing an increase of 24 percent compared to last

year.

Figures released by China's customs department show that China's exports to Iran over the same period last year stood at \$10.2 billion against imports of \$9.3 billion.

The country's exports to Iran this year reached \$12.04 billion against imports at \$12.13 billion thus indicating an increase of 18.1 percent and 30 percent, respectively.

Previous figures had shown that trade between the two countries had increased

by 31 percent during the first half of 2017 by reaching as high as \$31 billion. The figure for the same period last year was \$13.7 billion, the media reported quoting China's customs department.

Crude oil comprises the bulk of Iran's exports to China. Based on the latest market figures, the Islamic Republic is exporting as much as 600,000 barrels per day of crude oil to China.

China is Iran's biggest trade partner and exports a wide range of consumer products to the country.

New Ships to Join Iran's Fleet of Freighters

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - CEO of the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL) Mohammad Saeedi has said the ten container ships Iran has purchased from South Korea will pull down the average age of the country's fleet of cargo ships by four years.

Iran will take delivery of the first South Korean container ship in the first month of the next Iranian year (March-April 2018).

He also noted that the new freighters will bring down the average age of Iran's fleet of merchant ships from 16 to 12.

The IRISL signed a deal with South Korea's Hyundai Heavy Industries Co. (HHI) to buy 10 ships from the world's largest shipbuilding company in December 2016. The contract has been financed by South Korean banks.

Under the contract, valued at \$650 million, Hyundai will build 14,500 TEU container ships and 50,000 DWT product



tankers.

It was signed as part of the IRISL's plans to renovate its fleet through a total investment of \$2.5 billion.

The company operates about 115 ongoing vessels, but some of the ships are old, have been deemed unsafe to travel and cannot be insured.

Iraq Seeks Rosneft Clarification on Kurdistan Oil Deal



BAGHDAD (Reuters) - Iraqi oil minister Jabar al-Luaibi said he had sought clarifications from Russia's biggest oil company Rosneft about contracts it signed with the semi-autonomous Kurdistan region.

Rosneft "assured that the contracts are preliminary and not ready for implementation," the minister told reporters in Baghdad, giving no further details.

Rosneft agreed on Thursday to take

control of Iraqi Kurdistan's main oil pipeline, boosting its investment in the autonomous region to \$3.5 billion.

The Iraqi government has warned companies against signing deals with the Kurdistan region and Baghdad's forces this week wrested control of the oil-rich Kirkuk from Kurdish forces.

Rosneft will be investing in expanding the pipeline hoping to boost its capacity by a third to 950,000 barrels per day. That is the equivalent of about 1 percent of global supply.

The pipeline usually carries 600,000 bpd but volumes dropped to just over 200,000 bpd this week after Iraqi forces took over the region of Kirkuk.

The pipeline carries crude from Kirkuk and other fields in northern Iraq to the Turkish Mediterranean port of Ceyhan.

Over €1.5bn Worth of Deals Signed for Localizing Iran's Oil Industry

TEHRAN (Shana) - A senior Iranian oil official said on Sunday the country has so far signed 55 contracts with domestic developers for manufacturing industrial parts and items with a total value of €1.5 billion.

Speaking to reporters, Habibollah Bitaraf said the deals were signed in line with implementation of an initiative to indigenize manufacturing of 10 groups of widely-used oil industry parts and items.

He said tenders have so far been mounted for purchasing the items produced by domestic suppliers in this regard.

The qualities of the bidders in the tenders are assessed by Sharif University of Technology and Tehran University.



The items include turbines, different kinds of pipes, bits, drilling pipes, linings, casings, wellhead equipment, etc.

Annual Economic Growth Stands at 7%

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Iran's economic growth, excluding oil, has reached 7% during a one-year period from March 2016 to March 2017.

Javad Hosseinzadeh, a senior official with Statistical Center

of Iran, made the announcement adding that the country's gross domestic product (GDP), including oil, grew from 50.1 billion dollars to 53.6 billion dollars in the same period indicating a 6.5% economic

growth.

This is while the county's GDP, excluding oil, rose from 39.6 billion dollars to 43.1 billion dollars in that period to bring about a 6.5% economic growth.

Tehran-Baghdad Trade to Hit \$20bn: Official

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) - Iran has set an array of measures to increase the annual economic cooperation with Iraq to \$20 billion, Saeed Ohadi, the secretary of Iran-Iraq Economic Cooperation headquarters said on Sunday.

In a meeting with Iraqi Housing

and Construction Minister Ann Nafi Aussei, Ohadi said: "Iran's technical and engineering and knowledge-based companies are prepared to making investments in Iraq."

The Iraqi minister also welcomed the expansion of cooperation with

Iran, noting that promotion of ties with neighbors, the Islamic Republic of Iran in particular, tops the agenda of the Iraqi government.

The two sides agreed to form a joint committee to pursue the case of arrears owed by the Iraqi companies to their Iranian counterparts.

U.S. Posts Its Largest Budget Deficit Since 2013

NEW YORK (Bloomberg) - The U.S. posted its largest budget deficit since 2013 in the fiscal year that just ended, as a pickup in spending exceeded revenue gains.

The federal government's gap grew to \$665.7 billion in the 12 months through Sept. 30, compared with a \$585.6 billion shortfall in fiscal 2016, the Treasury Department has said in a report released in Washington. That was in line with the Congressional Budget Office's estimate of \$668 billion.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Budget Director Mick Mulvaney, in a statement accompanying the report, blamed weaker-than-expected tax receipts on historically "sub-par" economic growth.

"These numbers should serve as a smoke alarm for Washington, a reminder that we need to grow our economy again and get our fiscal house in order," Mulvaney said in the statement. "We can do that through smart spending restraint, tax reform, and cutting red tape."



Congress could be on track to worsen the deficit situation, according to most economic growth assumptions. The Senate on Thursday night approved a budget resolution that would fast-track up to \$1.5 trillion in tax cuts through Congress this year.

Republicans say that the reductions will pay for themselves through faster economic growth. While the budget claims to reach a balance in 10 years through \$5 trillion in spending cuts, those

reductions are not spelled out and there is no mechanism for speeding them into law.

In the 2017 fiscal year, revenue totaled \$3.31 trillion compared with \$3.27 trillion a year earlier. Government spending was \$3.98 trillion after \$3.85 trillion in fiscal 2016.

For September, which is the final month in the fiscal calendar, the government reported an \$8 billion surplus. That was lower than the \$33.4 billion surplus a year earlier.

Workers at Deutsche Bank's Postbank Mull Strike

FRANKFURT (Reuters) - Workers at Deutsche Bank's retail arm Postbank are threatening to stage a strike over a wage dispute, labor union Verdi said on Sunday, ahead of a round of negotiations due to start on Monday.

"If there is no agreement there could be open-ended strikes," Verdi's chief negotiator Jan Duschek said in a statement, adding that 97.7

percent of balloted workers had voted in favor of industrial action.

Postbank is currently being integrated into Deutsche Bank after Germany's biggest lender unsuccessfully tried to sell the business, which labor bosses worry could lead to painful cuts.

Verdi is demanding that Postbank extend job guarantees until 2022 and pay around 18,000 workers at

Postbank and related units 5 percent more.

Postbank has so far offered an extension of guarantees until 2019 and a 2.5 percent pay hike in two steps. Talks had collapsed last month, but Verdi said earlier this week that Postbank's management had signalled it would present an improved offer when talks resume on Monday.