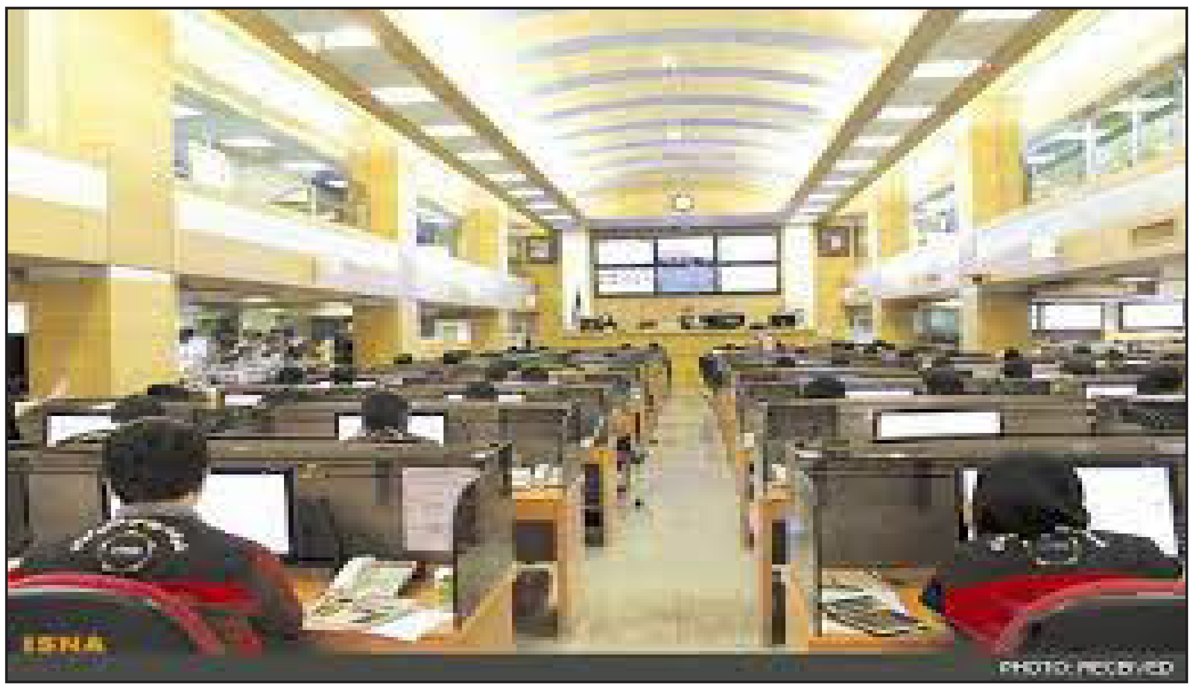
IME Weekly Trade Exceeds $808 Million



TEHRAN - **The Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) on Saturday reported that over 2,082,446 tonnes of commodities and 2,623 vehicles with a total value of nearly $808 million were traded on its physical market in the last week.**

The IME's report said that, on its metals and minerals trading floor, over 895,287 tonnes of cement, 325,000 tonnes of iron ore, 322,180 tonnes of steel, 47,000 tonnes of sponge iron, 21,950 tonnes of zinc, 10,825 tonnes of aluminum, 9,330 tonnes of copper, 200 tonnes of molybdenum concentrate, 2 kg of gold bars and 2,623 vehicles with total value of $540 million were traded in the last week.

The IME also added that over 448,507 tonnes of oil and petrochemical commodities, including 146,890 tonnes of bitumen, 99,000 tonnes of vacuum bottom, 111,231 tonnes of polymeric products, 45,500 tonnes of lube cut, 41,083 tonnes of chemicals, 900 tonnes of sulfur, 3,892 tonnes of base oil and 500 tonnes of petroleum productswith total value of $264 million were traded on its trading halls.

The IME also traded within the same week 2,616 tonnes of commodities on its side market.

Official: Iran to Rank 14th in Auto Manufacturing by Spring

TEHRAN – **Director general of Iran's Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry's Automotive Industry Abdollah Tavakoli Lahijani has said that the country ranked 19th in terms of car production in the world last year, which due to production growth could be promoted to 14th by the end of the current Iranian year (March 21, 2023).**

Automobile manufacturing in Iran reached 1,050,000 in the first 10 months of the current Iranian calendar year (ending on March 21), Tavakoli Lahijani, said

Tavakoli Lahijani added the figure showed a 30 percent increase, as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

UK Car Production Hits Six Decade Low

LONDON (Reuters) - UK car production fell to its lowest level since 1956 last year as output was hit by global shortages of semiconductor chips, figures show.

A total of 775,014 cars were built in 2022, down 9.8 percent from the 859,575 made during the previous year, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) said.

December rounded off a volatile 12 months, with output down 17.9 percent year on year, following growth in October and November.

The annual total for 2022 was 40.5 percent down on pre-coronavirus levels in 2019.

Volumes for the UK last year were up 9.4 percent compared with 2021, but this failed to offset a 14.0 percent decline in exports, with four out of five UK-built cars shipped overseas.

The SMMT said the global shortage of semiconductor chips limited the ability of car makers to build vehicles in line with demand.

It also stated that the figures reflect the closure of Honda's factory in Swindon in July 2021 and the decision by Stellantis to stop producing the Vauxhall Astra in Ellesmere Port in April 2022 as part of plans to repurpose the factory to make electric vans.

Record levels of electrified vehicles were produced, with almost a third of all cars made fully electric or hybrid.

They were worth £10bn in exports alone, according to the SMMT.

The industry body's chief executive, Mike Hawes, said: "These figures reflect just how tough 2022 was for UK car manufacturing, though we still made more electric vehicles than ever before – high-value, cutting-edge models, in demand around the world.

"The potential for this sector to deliver economic growth by building more of these zero-emission models is self-evident; however, we must make the right decisions now.

"This means shaping a strategy to drive rapid upscaling of UK battery production and the shift to electric vehicles based on the UK automotive sector's fundamental strengths – a highly skilled and flexible workforce, engineering excellence, technical innovation and productivity levels that are among the best in Europe."

Electric car battery start-up Britishvolt collapsed last week with the loss of nearly 300 jobs.

It had plans to build a gigafactory in Northumberland but failed to raise enough funding.

Iran Attracts $5.95bn of Foreign Investment

TEHRAN, IRNA – **The head of the Organization for Investment Economic and Technical Assistance of Iran Ali Fekri has said that $5.95 billion of foreign investment has been attracted during the 13th government, which logging a 250% growth compared with the last year of the former government.**

The main mission of the organization is to attract foreign investment, He added that the 13th government has approved 338 investment plans worth $10.2 billion.

He noted that $5.95 billion worth of investment has been implemented.

Over the last year, the largest real foreign investor was Russia with 2.7 billion dollars in two oil projects. The UAE, Turkey, China and Afghanistan were the most important investors in the country, respectively.

China's presence is more limited to small and medium-sized investments in 25 projects worth 185 million dollars, and more investments are made in mining projects and transportation terminals.

EU Leaders Fail to Agree Over Price Cap on Russian Oil Products

NEW YORK (Oil Price) - **European Union officials have failed to reach an agreement about the price cap of Russian crude oil products that go into effect on February 5, but talks will continue next week.**

The group is also set to discuss the current crude oil price caps.

The group was originally set to review the crude oil price cap level every two months, which meant it was supposed to be reviewed in January, but some nations part of the group—including the United States—wanted to wait until March to review the cap, which is currently set at $60 per barrel. While the cap was originally set at $60 per barrel, the EU agreed last month that the cap should be set at a price that was at least 5% below average market rates—and that it should be reviewed periodically.

But not everyone in the group is on board with the current cap or the delay in reviewing it. Estonia, Lithuania, and Poland want a lower cap, arguing that Russian crude oil prices are below the cap, so it effectively is doing nothing—they would like to see a much lower cap between $40 and $50 per barrel to further restrict Russia's crude oil income and pressure it into leaking Ukraine.

Next week, the EU will continue its talks about the upcoming price cap on diesel, with the EU's Russian fuel import ban going into effect just over a week from now.

The European Commission has proposed a $100 per barrel cap on diesel, but the cap is unlikely to be agreed upon without much debate. The EU ban on Russian diesel imports is set to go into effect on February 5 whether or not a price cap is settled on beforehand—a price cap that would allow, similar to crude oil, a third party to purchase Russian diesel and insure it if—and only if—it is purchased below the set cap.

Intel's 'Historic Collapse' Erases $8bn From Market Value

CALIFORNIA (Reuters) - **Intel Corp saw about $8 billion wiped off its market value after the U.S. chipmaker stumped Wall Street with dismal earnings projections, fanning fears around a slump in the personal-computer market.**

The company predicted a surprise loss for the first quarter and its revenue forecast was $3 billion below estimates as it also struggled with slowing growth in the data center business.

Intel shares closed 6.4 percent lower, while rival Advanced Micro Devices and Nvidia ended the session up 0.3 percent and 2.8 percent, respectively. Intel supplier KLA Corp settled 6.9 percent lower after its dismal forecast.

"No words can portray or explain the historic collapse of Intel," said Rosenblatt Securities' Hans Mosesmann, who was among the 21 analysts to cut their price targets on the stock.

The poor outlook underscored the challenges facing Chief Executive Pat Gelsinger as he tries to reestablish Intel's dominance of the sector by expanding contract manufacturing and building new factories in the United States and Europe.

The company has been steadily losing market share to rivals like AMD, which has used contract chipmakers such as TSMC to make chips that outpace Intel's technology.

"AMD's Genoa and Bergamo (data center) chips have a strong price-performance advantage compared to Intel's Sapphire Rapids processors, which should drive further AMD share gains," said Matt Wegner, analyst at YipitData.

Analysts said that puts Intel at a disadvantage even when the data center market bottoms out, expected in the second half of 2022, as the company would have lost even more share by then.

"It is now clear why Intel needs to cut so much cost as the company's original plans prove to be fantasy," brokerage Bernstein said.

Intel, which plans to cut $3 billion in costs this year, generated $7.7 billion in cash from operations in the fourth quarter and paid dividends of $1.5 billion.

With capital expenditure estimated to be around $20 billion in 2023, analysts said the company should consider cutting its dividend.