

CBI Official:

# Two Iranian Banks Plan to Set Up Offices in Russia



TEHRAN - CBI's deputy governor for international affairs Mohsen Karimi has said that two Iranian banks are planning to launch offices and branches in Russia, amid growing trade and business ties between the two countries.

"Fortunately some good developments are taking place. We hope to announce news of the inauguration of the representative office and branch in Russia for at least two Iranian commercial banks in future," said Karimi, who serves as CBI's deputy governor for international affairs.

The announcement came a day after Russia's second-largest bank VTB opened a representative office in Iran.

Iranian officials said the VTB is the first Russian bank to be directly represented in Iran as they expressed hope that the bank's office in Tehran would help boost transparency in Iran's international banking relations while improving trade and transaction capabilities for Iranian and Russian businesses.

Karimi said VTB's decision to set up an office in Tehran is in line with its policy to identify opportunities for investment and commercial activities in Iran.

He said Iran's CBI has been

pushing Iranian banks in recent months to do the same and try to seize economic opportunities existing in the Russian market.

The chairman of the Iran Chamber of Commerce (ICC) has expressed hope for the opening of ICC's trade office in Russia this year.

Chairman of the Iran Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Gholamhossein Shafei who has traveled to the Republic of Tatarstan at the head of an Iranian trade delegation to attend the "Kazan Forum 2023" said, his country attaches great importance to expanding economic and trade ties with Russian Federation, especially Tatarstan Republic.

He further referred to his consultations over the last few months with Sergei Katyrin, the chairman of Russia's Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RIAC), who was also present at the Kazan meeting, and said, "The Iranian Chamber has approved the establishment of 5 commercial (trade) offices in countries prone to business growth, and setting up a business office in Russia is our top priority, which we hope will open this year to meet the needs of increased trade exchanges."

Welcoming the Iranian trade

delegation, Sergei Katyrin, said in the meeting, for his part, that "I have already had a discussion with Mr. Shafei about the development of trade exchanges and I agree with his opinion that exchanges of trade delegations in recent months and today's meeting will help strengthen cooperation."

"The increase in visits between Iranian and Russian businessmen all bear testimony to the fact that there has been good cooperation in the trade between Iran and Russia and the work done by the two countries has been unprecedented in the business field," the RIAC chairman further noted.

Referring to the visit of the Russian delegation to Iran last year, he said, "In the previous meeting, we sent a delegation comprising more than 100 people to Iran, and today, the meetings that started with that trip, are responded to by the presence of the Iranian delegation in Kazan."

"We appreciate the efforts of all Iranian businessmen who pay attention to their market in Russia and are determined to continue doing business between the two countries, and we provide good facilities to them," the Russian business official further added.

Speaking in the meeting, Shamil Ageev, the head of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Tatarstan expressed hope that "this meeting will be helpful for the development of trade relations between the two countries."

"Iran and the Republic of Tatarstan have diverse capacities (potentials) and needs, and by focusing on these issues, the favorable space for the development of bilateral trade is laid," Ageev added.

## Iran, Russia to Expand Tourism Cooperation

MOSCOW – Deputy Iranian Minister of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Ali-Asghar Shalbafian and Deputy Minister of Economic Development of the Russian Federation Dmitry Vakhrukov have on Friday signed an agreement for enhancement of bilateral tourism cooperation.

The agreement was signed between Two sides met and signed the agreement on the sidelines of a Russia-Islamic World Forum in Kazan.

The new agreement calls on both Iran and Russia to accelerate the implementation of a former agreement between the two nations for



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the cancellation of visa requirements for group travels to Iran and Russia by the nationals of the two countries.

The two sides stressed the need for expansion of different types of tourism and exploring ways for boosting maritime tourism.

## Oil Rebounds on Fading Risk of U.S. Debt Default



NEW YORK (Reuters) - Oil prices rebounded on Friday from losses of more than 1% the previous day as investors turned cautiously optimistic over the fading risk of a U.S. debt default.

Brent futures rose 61 cents, or 0.8%, to \$76.47 a barrel by 1345 GMT, while West Texas Intermediate U.S. crude for July expiry climbed 50 cents, or 0.7%, to \$72.44

The less active U.S. crude contract for May, which is due to expire on Monday was

up 72 cents to \$72.58.

"I think markets have been pricing out the risks of a U.S. debt default, which translates to a more risk-on environment and some dip-buying in Brent crude from previous oversold conditions," said Yeap Jun Rong, a market strategist at IG.

Earlier this week, U.S. President Joe Biden and Speaker of the House of Representatives Kevin McCarthy reiterated their aim to strike a deal to raise the \$31.4 trillion federal

debt ceiling, agreeing to talk as soon as Sunday.

"Traders were reluctant to go into the weekend short, on the off chance that an agreement to raise the U.S. government's debt ceiling is struck over the weekend," said Vandana Hari, founder of oil market analysis provider Vanda Insights.

Sentiment remains mixed as investors juggle optimism over avoidance of a U.S. debt default with inflation data that could portend more interest rate hikes from global central banks.

U.S. inflation does not seem to be cooling fast enough to allow the Federal Reserve to pause its interest-rate hike campaign, according to two Fed policymakers.

The potential for additional rate hikes increases concerns about demand weakness in the United States, said analysts from National Australia Bank.

## Gold Edges Higher After Sliding to 7-Week Low

NEW YORK (CNBC) – Gold futures edged higher on Friday after a three-session decline attributed in part to strength in the U.S. dollar, pulled prices for the precious metal to their lowest in more than seven weeks.

For the week, gold prices were on track to notch a loss of nearly 3%, which would be the largest weekly loss since October.

"Sellers wasted no time at all jumping into action and pricing in fast declines into gold after it unexpectedly dropped below \$2,000 this week," Jameel Ahmad, chief analyst at CompareBroker.io, in market commentary.

The U.S. dollar has strengthened for the week, along with higher Treasury yields, has taken the shine off gold in recent days, but a pullback in the greenback on Friday has given gold a chance to recoup some losses.

The ICE U.S. Dollar Index, a gauge of the greenback's



strength against major currencies, was off 0.2% at 103.35 in Friday dealings, though still poised for a weekly gain of 0.6%.

Short sellers came back once gold traded below \$2,000, said Chintan Karnani, director of research at Insignia Consultants, told MarketWatch. A selloff in gold "accelerated this week once the U.S. dollar Index broke past [its] 50-day moving average and 100-day mov-

ing average, he said, with the technical breakout in the dollar leading to a "technical breakdown in gold."

Whether gold continues to decline in the short term depends on the trend of the U.S. dollar index, the metal's inability or ability to trade over its 100-day moving average around \$1,927, U.S. nonfarm payrolls numbers on June 2, and physical and investment demand for gold, said Karnani.

## U.S., Taiwan Draw Closer With New Trade Pact Opposed by China

TAIPEI (CNN) — The United States and Taiwan agreed the first stage of a bilateral trade initiative on Thursday, less than a year after negotiations began, in a move that demonstrated the increasingly close relationship between Washington and Taipei.

The new initiative, titled the U.S.-Taiwan Initiative of 21st Century Trade and unveiled in June last year, will be the first official trade agreement between Taiwan and the United States since U.S. President Joe Biden assumed office in 2021.

It covers areas including trade facilitation, regulatory practices, services domestic regulation, anti-corruption and supporting small and medium sized enterprises, a statement from the US

Trade Representative (USTR) Office said.

"This accomplishment represents an important step forward in strengthening the U.S.-Taiwan economic relationship," U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai said in the statement.

"It demonstrates how we can work together and advance mutual trade priorities on behalf of our people. We look forward to continuing these negotiations and finalizing a robust and high-standard trade agreement that tackles pressing 21st century economic challenges," she added.

The IPEF, made up of 14 member states including Japan, Singapore and the Philippines, is not a trade agreement in the traditional sense. It includes one "pillar" re-

lated to trade, but has other aims too, including making supply chains more resilient, promoting clean energy and combating corruption.

Kristy Hsu, a director of the Taiwan ASEAN Studies Center at the Chung-Hua Institution of Economic Research, said the U.S.-Taiwan agreement would "create a more efficient and transparent business environment for companies from the two sides."

Taiwan, population around 24 million, is currently the world's 21st largest economy. It plays a crucial role in global supply chains due to its leading role in producing semiconductor chips, vital components in everything from smartphones to computers.