

Official: Petrochemical Exports Top \$3.39bn



TEHRAN – Secretary of Iran's Association of Petrochemical Industry Corporation Ahmad Mahdavi has said that Iran earned some

\$3.39 billion from exports of petrochemical products in the first three months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21 to June 22,

2024).

Mahdavi said exports had accounted for 7.74 million mt of Iran's petrochemical output in the three months to late June, adding that petrochemical companies had also sold nearly 3 million mt of products to domestic customers over the same period while consuming the rest of the output as feedstock.

The official said this calendar year's exports of petrochemicals from Iran would definitely exceed figures reported in the year to March 2023.

Petrochemicals are responsible for a major part of Iranian non-oil exports revenues. The country has introduced incentives to increase exports from the sector in recent years as it seeks to increase its out-

put to above 100 million mt per year.

However, meeting the target needs increased investment for launching new plants as well as higher supply of natural gas feedstock.

Mahdavi said the Iranian central bank had committed to provide funding to a total of 11 new petrochemical projects whose investment value is below \$50 million.

He said that the Iranian petrochemical companies seek to invest some \$8 billion in development projects in the country's oil and gas sector, adding that the investment could lead to an increase of 200 million cubic meters per day in Iran's natural gas production, allowing petrochemical plants to increase their output.

WSA: Steel Output Grows 5.9%

TEHRAN – The latest monthly report by the World Steel Association (WSA) indicates that Iran has produced as much as 16.6 million metric tons (mts) of unprocessed steel in the first half of 2024, an increase of 5.9% year-on-year.

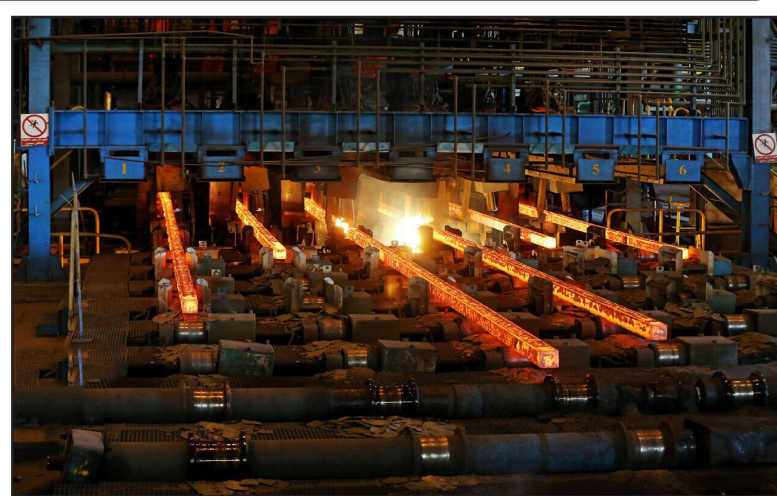
According to the report, Iran remained on the ninth place of the world steel producers in the six-month period.

Last month, in May, the WSA published its report which put Iran on the seventh ranking of world steel producers in May while the country's five-month

ranking was ninth which was largely due to restrictions on gas supply during the first months of 2024.

The global steel output hit 161.4 million mts in June which is 0.5% more than figures reported in last year's corresponding month, according to the latest report by the association.

It also said that Türkiye, India, and Iran saw 16.9, 7.4 and 5.9 percent increases, respectively to register the biggest rises among the top producing countries in June.



TPO to Launch Trade Centers in Shanghai, Minsk

TEHRAN - Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) has approved the establishment of new trade centers in Shanghai, China, and Minsk, Belarus.

The TPO has granted a license for the establishment and operation of the Islamic Republic of Iran's trade center in Shanghai, China, valid for one year.

Furthermore, the TPO has consented to issue a license for setting up and managing the Is-

lamic Republic of Iran's trade center in Minsk, Belarus, which will be supervised by the Trade Development Organization of Iran until May 21, 2025.

The companies responsible for execution must adhere to the specified terms and conditions and failure to comply with these requirements may result in the suspension or revocation of the license by the commercial center's working group's decision.

Kerman, Dubai to Launch Direct Flight

TEHRAN – Kerman Province will have direct flights to Dubai, allowing for connection of this Province to 150 destinations.

The Kerman-Dubai direct flight will be launched from 9th September for the first time.

There will be a twice-weekly service on Mondays and Thursdays from Dubai to Iran's Southern Kerman Province.

With the launch of this flight, Kerman will be connected to 150 destinations across the world.

Also, Kerman finds the opportunity to participate in international exhibitions and economic activities and tourism will be promoted in this Province.

With Kerman destination appearing on Flydubai's flight board with chartered and scheduled flights, all travel agencies in Iran and the world can issue Kerman-Dubai tickets.

Flydubai carries out Kerman-Dubai flights by 185-seat Airbus with international safety standards.

German Economy Contracts Unexpectedly in Second Quarter



BERLIN (DW) - Germany's economy unexpectedly shrank in the second quarter, according to data released on

Tuesday.

The country's gross domestic product (GDP) fell by 0.1% com-

pared to the first quarter, the federal statistics office Destatis said.

Analysts surveyed by FactSet had previously forecast 0.1% growth for the same period.

"Germany's economic growth in the second quarter was as underwhelming as the country's modest medal tally at the Paris Olympics so far," said ING analyst Carsten Brzeski.

The news comes after modest growth in the first quarter had raised prospects of a recovery in Europe's largest economy.

Statisticians pointed to weak investment as the reason for the second quarter contraction

Germany's economic slump also stands in contrast to modest growth of 0.3% across the eurozone, according to figures released by the EU statistics agency Eurostat on Tuesday.

"Germany is performing very poorly at the moment, especially in comparison with neighboring European countries where we have seen quite robust growth figures," said LBBW economist Jens-Oliver Niklasch.

"Of course, Germany's export-oriented industry is more exposed to the weakness of the Chinese economy, for example, but many of the problems are homemade," he added.

Markazi Province Exports Rise 47%

TEHRAN - According to a provincial official, the value of exports from Markazi province increased by 47 percent during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20 - July 21) compared to the same period last year.

Ruhollah Gholami said that 686,000 tons of commodities worth \$465 million were exported from the province in the

four months, also indicating 30 percent growth in terms of weight, year on year.

According to the official, the commodities were exported from Markazi province to 74 countries around the world during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year

As previously announced by the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs

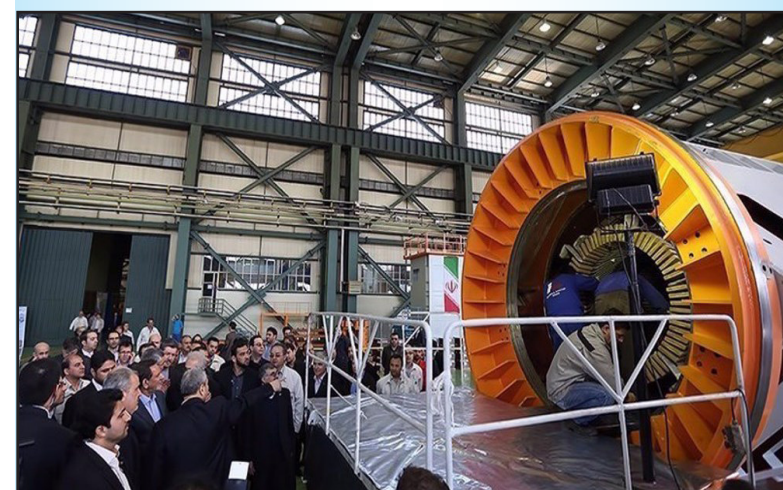
Administration (IRICA), in the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year, the country exported \$17.5 billion non-oil goods, registering an 8.0 percent growth, year on year.

Muhammad Rezvanifar put the total value of the country's non-oil trade in the mentioned four months at \$36 billion, IRIB reported.

According to the official, Iran imported \$18.5 billion worth of non-oil products, about 6.0 percent less than the figure for the previous year's corresponding period.

The country's trade balance was \$1.0 billion negative in the mentioned four months, indicating a significant decline compared to the previous year's same period.

Iran's Prowess in Building Power Turbines



TEHRAN - Iran is one of the few countries with the ability to build critical power plant parts including turbine blades thanks to technological advancements ushered in by a groundswell of revolutionary zeal among its young experts.

The country of 80 million people has been shifting towards a knowledge-based economy that thrives on research and knowledge spillover plays a big role in entrepreneurship.

Over the past few years, Iran has emerged as an arguably regional powerhouse in knowledge-based production ecosystem where a sprawling expanse of science and technology parks has helped it break the fangs of oppressive sanctions.

The number of knowledge-based enterprises has grown in recent years - from only 50 firms and startups in 2023 to more than 6,000 at present, according to the vice presidency office for science and technology.

Based on the National Innovation Fund statistics, tech firms and knowledge-based companies raked in more than \$5 billion in revenues in 2021. Some 40 knowledge-based companies are listed in the stock market as well.

One such firm, the Shahriar Turbine Components Co., bills itself as the largest and the first independent full repair service provider for gas turbine components in West Asia. According to the firm's website, the company offers comprehensive engineered services with highest quality standards and unprecedented reliability and dependability to clients of turbo machinery industry in the power and oil and gas sector.

Asghar Hakimi, its CEO, says the company specializes in renovating and manufacturing all kinds of power plant parts, including cold, hot and intermediate power plant baskets and bearings based on the latest technological innovations in the world.

"The activities of this company in the field of reconstruction and completion of gas turbine parts play an important role in maintaining the country's power generation and reducing summer blackouts," he said.

In the absence of such a company, parts would have to be sent abroad for maintenance or new parts would have to be bought from abroad.

Given the embargo on Iran, this was either not possible or required a very long wait and the expenditure of millions of dollars, which would multiply the costs of electricity production and involve stressful interruptions and delays.

Since its establishment, the company has saved more than one billion dollars in servicing costs of 11,000 sets of power plant equipment. Its services to neighboring countries, including in Iraq and Syria, have also brought in four million dollars in revenue, according to Hakimi.

Tension over giant turbines that Russia blamed for the reduction of flows via the Nord Stream 1 gas pipeline to Europe put the focus on the equipment in 2022.

At the time, sanctions imposed by the West prevented the proper maintenance of Russian gas infrastructure and, in particular, blocked the return of a Siemens turbine that had been undergoing repairs in Canada. Last August, a Russian-U.S. joint venture abandoned plans to build gas turbines in Russia under license from General Electric over the Ukraine war.

That came after Russia signed a contract with Iran to supply to supply it with 40 gas turbines. In February 2023, Russia's RT television channel said the country had begun producing Iranian-designed parts to replace Siemens turbines in its hydropower plants.

MAPNA, a power and infrastructure group billed as the Iranian Siemens, produces turbines. The company is the largest contractor for steam, gas and combined cycle and renewable power plants in Iran and has carried out major projects in West Asia and beyond.

In June 2022, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro visited the company, saying he was impressed by Iran's capabilities. The visit marked the two countries signing a 20-year cooperation agreement to expand their relations in the oil and petrochemical industries, military and economy.

Iran's campaign to indigenize power generation equipment started after the country came under invasion by the former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein in 1980 and a web of sanctions tied around the country by the West which refused to supply parts for the power plants they had built themselves.

Before the Islamic Revolution in 1980, power plants were built, operated and maintained by foreign experts. In addition to building turbines and generators, Iranian companies are now able to design them which are the most important parts of a power plant.

The installed power plant capacity has increased 12-fold from nearly 7,000 megawatts at the beginning of the revolution to 85,000 megawatts now.

According to Ministry of Energy, Iran is among the top five turbine manufacturing countries in the world, where more than 95% of the parts required in its power plant industry are locally sourced.