

Esfahan Steel seeks buyers to boost production



Iran's third-largest maker of steel, EF production as the nation rebuilds after years of international sanctions that hurt its economy. Iran and the Steel Pensioners' Fund for retired Iranian steel workers want to sell a 73 percent stake. Novin Investment Bank is advising the government in the sale.

Masoud Gholampour, research and marketing manager at Novin Investment Bank, said in an interview in Tehran "Companies in South Korea and Luxembourg are interested in taking a stake."

Esfahan Steel aims to boost production to 3.2 million tonnes in the year ended March 2017 from 2.4 million tonnes a year earlier, according to Mojtaba Fereydoni, an investment manager at Esfahan Steel in Esfahan in central Iran. Output had declined 4 percent a year earlier as economic growth slowed because of low oil prices.

The Iranian Privatization Organization is overseeing the sale of the 56 percent stake in Esfahan that it took over from the Social Security Investment Co., the investment arm of the country's main social security provider. The Social Security group was unable to pay for the stake in full, according to Gholampour. The pension fund owns the other 17 percent that is being put up for sale.

As a first step, the entire 73 percent stake was offered through a block sale on the over-the-counter Fara Bourse, and didn't generate any takers, according to Gholampour and Jafar Sobhani, adviser to the head of the Iranian Privatization Organization. The shares fell 5 percent in over-the-counter trading.

A block sale will be offered again in the near future, Sobhani said.

Jalalabad Iron Ore beneficiation plant starts by September

Iran's first iron ore beneficiation plant will become operational by the end of September, says managing director of Jalalabad Iron Ore Complex. The plant, with an annual production capacity of 600,000 tonnes, is capable of beneficiating 30% grade iron ore to up to 67%, a level deemed proper for use in the steel industry.

The beneficiation plant's construction started in late 2013 with private sector investment. Jalalabad Iron Ore Complex, located in Zarand County in Kerman Province, is home to over 190 million tonnes of the steelmaking material with an annual production capacity of 870,000 tonnes.



Interpipe plans to enhance its presence in Qatar

Ukrainian steel producer Interpipe, which currently supplies 50 percent of seamless steel pipes in Qatar, plans to significantly enhance its presence in the market over the next five years, as the country transforms its infrastructure to meet growing demand ahead of the 2022

Fifa World Cup. Interpipe, one of the world's leading producers of steel pipes, is well positioned to broaden its share of the Qatari market over the next five years.

Opportunities for development around chilled water systems, fire-fighting applications and infrastructure were discussed during a meeting held at the Ukrainian Embassy in Doha. Viktor Bisovetskyi, Interpipe Qatar Country Manager, and Andrey Burtsev, Vice-President of Pipe Sales in the Middle East together with Yevhen Mykytenko, the Ukrainian Ambassador to Qatar and Volodymyr Kuruts, the Ukrainian Counsellor for Trade and Economic Affairs, were all in attendance at a meeting to increase



bilateral co-operation between Qatar and key Ukrainian businesses. Interpipe's Andrey Burtsev, Vice President of Pipe Sales in the Middle East, said "The supply of high quality, certified steel products is critical to the region's massive infrastructure programme, and nowhere is that more true than in Qatar today as it prepares for the event of a lifetime in 2022.

Interpipe's project portfolio includes Doha Oasis, Mall of Qatar, Grand Park, Hamad International Airport, Internal Security Forces Camp and other jobs. In the second half of 2016, Interpipe will produce steel pipes for Qatar Rail's Doha Metro Red Line South.