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Top News - Oil

Hungary's foreign minister accuses EU of disrupting oil supplies from Russia

Hungary's foreign minister said on Saturday the European Commission's decision not to mediate in a dispute over a blockage of oil supplies from Russia via Ukraine into his country suggested that Brussels was behind the stoppage.

Hungary and its neighbour Slovakia have been protesting since Ukraine put Russian oil producer Lukoil on a sanctions list in June, stopping that company's oil from passing through Ukrainian territory to Slovak and Hungarian refineries.

The assertion from Hungary's Peter Szijjarto, which he made without providing evidence, came a day after the European Commission declined a request from Hungary and Slovakia for it to mediate between them and Ukraine over the sanctions.

"The fact that the European Commission declared that it was unwilling to help to secure the energy supply of Hungary and Slovakia suggests that the order was sent from Brussels to Kyiv to cause challenges and problems in the energy supply of Hungary and Slovakia," Szijjarto said at a conservative political festival.

A European Commission spokesperson declined to comment on Szijjarto's remarks.

The Commission, which has been supportive of Ukraine since Russia's 2022 invasion, has repeatedly urged EU countries to end their dependency on energy supplies from Moscow. The EU has imposed sanctions on most Russian oil imports.

On Friday, a Commission spokesperson said there were no indications that Ukraine's sanctions had endangered European energy supplies, as Russian oil continued to flow through the separate Druzhba pipeline, which also connects Russia to Slovakia and Hungary via Ukraine.

Ukraine's government did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the Hungarian statement on Saturday.

Slovakia and Hungary are both EU countries that have opposed Western allies' military aid to Ukraine as it fights the invasion that Russia launched in February 2022.

The pipeline's southern branch runs through Ukraine to the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, and has served as their refineries' primary supply source for years.

Last month Szijjarto made similar comments when he accused the European Commission of blackmail in the oil dispute and said that maybe "Brussels, not Kyiv, that invented the whole thing".

A Hungarian government official said on Thursday that Hungarian oil company MOL was in the final stages of discussions to establish a scheme to ensure crude oil flows from Russia.

New Zealand to push through law to reverse ban on oil and gas exploration

New Zealand said on Monday it would pass laws by the end of this year to reverse a ban on offshore oil and gas exploration, and take urgent steps to remove regulatory hurdles to import liquefied natural gas (LNG) amid energy shortages.

The law would end the ban, in place since 2018, on exploration outside onshore Taranaki, an energy-rich region on the country's North Island as the right-of-centre government plans to lure investment to the country's oil and gas sector.

Prime Minister Christopher Luxon said severe shortages over the last few weeks had led energy prices to spike to some of the highest levels among developed economies.

"We are responding to a situation as I said New Zealand should never have seen in the first place," Luxon said during a media briefing, and urged opposition parties to support the bill.

"It would be the sensible, common sense thing to do if they genuinely cared about New Zealand's energy security."

The previous centre-left Labour-led government banned offshore petroleum exploration.

Natural gas production fell by 12.5% in 2023 and a further 27.8% in the first three months of 2024, triggering a nationwide energy shortage as generators switched to more coal and diesel to power the grid, Energy Minister Simeon Brown said.

Renewables including hydro, solar and wind were not making up the shortfall, the government said.

"The lakes are low, the sun hasn't been shining, the wind hasn't been blowing, and we have an inadequate supply of natural gas to meet demand," Brown said.

The government will also make it easier and cheaper to consent, build and maintain renewable power generation, and electricity distribution and transmission.

The consent and re-consenting processing period for most renewable energy projects will be done within one year, and the government will aim to open a first feasibility permit round for offshore renewable energy schemes in 2025, Brown said.

Top News - Agriculture

US crop tour forecasts record-large soy crop above government estimate

The U.S. soybean harvest will be even bigger than the U.S. government's record forecast, advisory service Pro Farmer said on Friday, though it forecast a smaller corn crop than the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Near-perfect growing weather in most areas of the world's top corn exporter and No. 2 soybean exporter boosted bets on big crops, keeping futures prices of both commodities near four-year lows. The lower cost of growing soy versus corn, floods in some areas, and a timely winter-wheat harvest encouraged farmers to plant more soybeans than last year.

Pro Farmer forecast a soybean harvest of 4.740 billion bushels, which would be about 6% above the 2021 record and more than the 4.589 billion bushels forecast by the agriculture department. The tour forecast an average soybean yield of 54.9 bushels an acre, after surveying seven states over the past week.

For corn, Pro Farmer estimated a crop of 14.979 billion bushels, less than the 15.147 billion seen by USDA but a crop that would still be the fourth-largest ever. The tour forecast an average yield of 181.1 bushels an acre.

The four-day tour, which began on Monday, projected above-average corn yields for six of the seven Corn Belt states surveyed, except for Minnesota.

"The eastern Corn Belt was phenomenal. I will never forget this crop year," said Brian Grete, editor of Pro Farmer and leader of the tour's eastern leg.

"Barring some disaster ... (the 2024 crop) is set up well to finish, for both corn and soybeans."

EXCLUSIVE-Ghana's Cocobod to ask traders to pre-finance bean purchases in new funding model

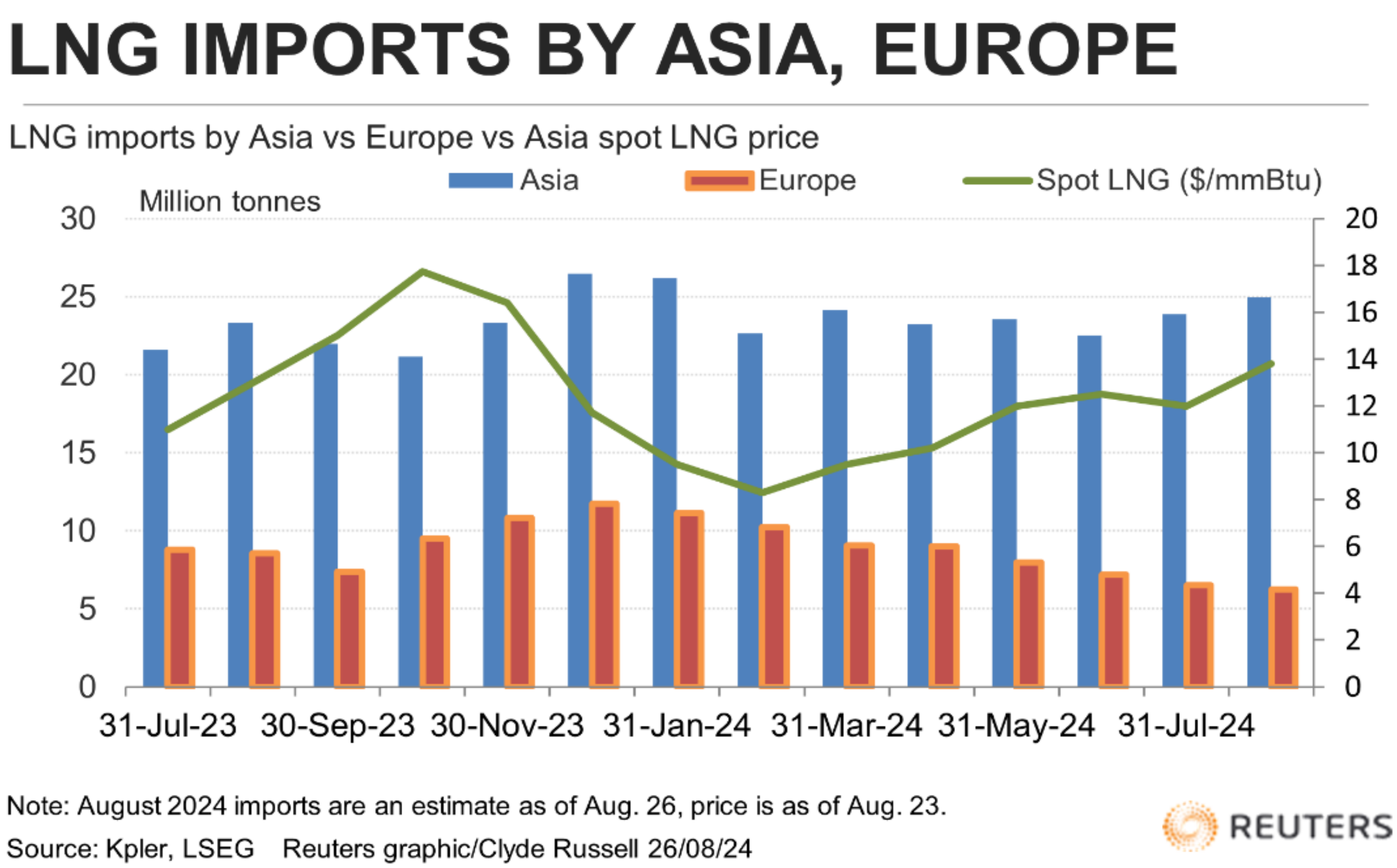
Ghana's cocoa marketing board, Cocobod, is fine-tuning a new funding model for bean purchases that will require global traders to deposit at least 60% of the value of their forward contracts at the start of the season, two sources told Reuters.

The new system will replace a three-decade old pre-export syndicated loan from international banks, which Cocobod said this week it would not raise for its 2024/25 cocoa season for the first time since 1992.

Ghana, the world's second biggest cocoa producer after Ivory Coast, previously used the loan to finance bean purchases from farmers and shore up its reserves, helping to cool pressures on the cedi currency.

But Cocobod paid a record 8% interest on last year's loan and now expects the new funding model to save it over $150 million in interest payments.

Chart of the Day



Under the new system, part of a trader's deposit will be used to fund purchases from farmers via an existing partnership with a licensed cocoa buying company (LBC). In this way, traders will work with LBCs by funding them to buy the cocoa, while Cocobod will act as an intermediary, said the source, requesting anonymity as they were not authorised to speak on the issue.
"Basically, we are saying traders work with LBCs and if so, they must fund them to buy the cocoa, but Cocobod will act as the intermediary," said the source, requesting anonymity as they were not authorised to speak on the issue.

"DON'T LEAVE ANYBODY BEHIND"
Much of Ghana's cocoa is bought by large, diversified trade houses with deep pockets, including Olam, Barry Callebaut, Cargill, Touton and Ecom.
Traders typically sign deals to buy beans - like any other commodity - months in advance in the hope of reselling later at a profit.
"With this (new) model, the trader pays the remaining 40% (of the contract sum) when picking the cocoa," the Cocobod source said.
Cocobod is yet to decide with traders if the pre-financing should attract interest or discount on beans supplied, it said.
President of LICOBAG, Samuel Adimado said if well-implemented, the model could address perennial delays in payments by Cocobod, raise buyers' margins and reduce their costs with a potential reduction in bank loans to fund purchases.
"It requires discipline; if there's no cocoa, LBCs shouldn't be given money. If the LBC receives money but can't find cocoa, it must return it. If these are properly applied, perfect," Adimado said.
Unlike multinational LBCs, local cocoa buyers lack trader partners, putting them at a potential disadvantage.
Adimado said the model must recognise this.
"The question is, what will be the arrangement for them? It's very important to take care of the indigenous LBCs and strengthen them so that we don't leave anybody behind."
Cocobod will launch the 2024/25 season on Sept. 1, earlier than usual, with a reduced production target of 650,000 tonnes.

Top News - Metals

FOCUS: BHP's return to Argentina marks new hope for untapped copper mines
A new incentive regime for mining in Argentina is attracting major players such as BHP, who are starting to eye the South American country as the world's next frontier for copper, more than half a dozen mining industry officials told Reuters.
BHP's investment last month marked the company's first foray into mining in Argentina in two decades. It teamed up with Canada's Lundin Mining in the $3.25 billion buyout of Filo Corp, with the aim of developing two copper mines along the Andes mountains bordering Chile.
The re-entry of one of the world's biggest miners has spurred hopes of other copper producers to secure better valuations for their projects so they can access finance and jumpstart projects. Copper mining has floundered for decades in Argentina's volatile economy.
President Javier Milei is aiming to light a fuse with a law passed in late June promising lengthy tax breaks for investments pledged in the next two years - a bid to allay investor fears and offset capital controls that some politicians dubbed instruments of torture.
The Incentive Regime for Large Investments, or RIGI, also guaranteed investors' access to international dispute courts, rather than needing to go through slow-moving local courts.
The need to mitigate risk in volatile mining locations was thrown into the spotlight after Panama's government last year forced First Quantum Minerals to shutter its massive mine after protests. The closure removed 1% of the world's copper supply and sent shockwaves through the industry.
"Mining in Argentina is set for exciting growth following the country's new RIGI investment protection regime. It is great news for our Taca Taca project in Salta," Tristan Pascall, First Quantum's CEO, told Reuters.
He added that its planned mine in Salta province could potentially deliver 250,000 metric tons of copper a year.
He noted Argentina could be opening up for the right investors to potentially come on board depending on the type of financing that is needed.
Still, Milei faces an uphill battle to right the economy, and analysts say investors will need to contend with the world's highest inflation, contracting GDP and worsening poverty.
"Argentina's economy still faces many challenges, and foreign companies will remain subject to financial volatility," said Christian Perlingiere, the Southern Cone specialist at business consultancy Control Risks.
Although Argentina has no current copper production, eight major projects are in various stages of development in the mountainous north.
That means the country has a potential pipeline of projects that the government says could come close to the output levels of Australia and Zambia by the end of the decade, although still far behind top producer Chile.
Javier Roberto, who oversees the early-stage Altar project in San Juan province for Aldebaran Resources, expects BHP's vote of confidence to help it secure financing - even though Altar is unlikely to qualify for Milei's investment perks because it is still in its exploration phase.
"Many things we were waiting for, the big investments from abroad, are starting to crystallize," Roberto said.
He said the company has begun to seek financing to push the project ahead up to the pre-feasibility stage in 2026, beginning with conversations with three major current investors, while looking at options such as issuing shares or bringing on an investment bank.
"We're feeling out, so to speak, some of the players in the market," he said.
The local unit of Canada's McEwen Mining, backed by

carmaker Stellantis and Australian miner Rio Tinto, are also poised to benefit.
"We do think our valuation will go up considering we are building our Los Azules copper mine geographically in a much easier location compared to Josemaria-Filo," said Michael Meding, vice president of McEwen Copper, referring to the two mines to be developed by BHP and Lundin.
The company is discussing its next funding round with partners ahead of a 2029 production target.
Milei's reforms, part of his tough-medicine drive to fix Argentina's stunted economy, come as mining M&A heats up globally. Larger copper miners are targeting smaller rivals, keen to stockpile the red metal that is expected to be in huge demand for the global clean energy transition and artificial intelligence technologies, which will need to be powered by high capacity data centers.
Glencore CEO Gary Nagle, speaking in the company's latest results call in August, highlighted Milei's reform as a driver for more deals.
"Argentina is the next frontier for copper growth, no question," he said. The company plans to spend up to $400 million in the next two years at its Argentina projects, Mara and El Pachon, but has not said when production might start.

CHASING INCENTIVES
Under Milei's RIGI incentive scheme, miners are promised 30 years of tax credits, lighter customs duties and a progressive easing of capital controls.
Lundin Chief Operating Officer Juan Andres Morel told Reuters the scheme's passage into law was a catalyst to finalize the BHP deal, slated to close early next year.
From there, the joint venture will look at investment needs and financing options for Josemaria, the most advanced copper project in Argentina, he said. BHP did not respond to a request for comment, but noted "improving investment conditions" in Argentina when it announced the Lundin deal.
If Josemaria and several other major projects come online, Argentina could produce 793,000 metric tons of copper a year by 2030, according to mining ministry projections in a government report last year.
The Mining Ministry has not yet updated its forecast.
Copper exports by that time could reach between $5 billion and $10 billion, depending on how many projects are successful, according to a separate government report this year.
Developers will have to move fast to make a play for RIGI perks. Once a mining project is approved, it must spend 40% of its declared investment in two years, with the possibility for a one-year extension.
Morel acknowledged the timeline was demanding.
"It's good and bad, of course. It gives us some sense of urgency to move forward with Josemaria," Morel said.
The initiative includes building roads and power lines, and securing water.
Some analysts cautioned against putting too much hope into incentives for the long-term, given potential for political change, as well as the rocky macroeconomic

MARKET MONITOR as of 07:00 GMT

Contract	Last	Change	YTD
NYMEX Light Crude	$75.64 / bbl	1.08%	5.57%
NYMEX RBOB Gasoline	$2.13 / gallon	0.62%	1.21%
ICE Gas Oil	$714.75 / tonne	0.92%	-4.80%
NYMEX Natural Gas	$2.02 / mmBtu	-0.30%	-19.81%
Spot Gold	$2,515.87 / ounce	0.15%	21.98%
TRPC coal API 2 / Dec, 24	$127.5 / tonne	2.82%	31.44%
Carbon ECX EUA	€71.42 / tonne	0.41%	-11.14%
Dutch gas day-ahead (Pre. close)	€36.55 / Mwh	1.53%	14.76%
CBOT Corn	$3.89 / bushel	-0.58%	-19.68%
CBOT Wheat	$5.27 / bushel	-0.14%	-17.55%
Malaysia Palm Oil (3M)	RM3,956 / tonne	2.30%	6.32%
Index	**Close 23 Aug**	**Change**	**YTD**
Thomson Reuters/Jefferies CRB	329.68	1.49%	9.38%
Rogers International	26.48	0.82%	0.59%
U.S. Stocks - Dow	41,175.08	1.14%	9.25%
U.S. Dollar Index	100.69	-0.03%	-0.64%
U.S. Bond Index (DJ)	445.27	0.46%	3.38%

environment.
"RIGI definitely helps C-Suites feel warm and fuzzy towards Argentina again, but I wouldn't base my investments solely on them," said Christopher Ecclestone, a mining strategist at advisory firm Hallgarten & Company.
Milei's four-year term ends in 2027 and he can seek re-election. The far-right libertarian has so far remained relatively popular, though risks losing support with an austerity plan that includes slashing the size of government, trimming back fuel and transport subsidies, shutting state institutions, and auditing welfare schemes.
Mining projects in general are often subject to environmental concerns and community protests, issues that have dogged miners around the world from Serbia to Panama.
Glencore's Mara project in Catamarca province encompasses one of Argentina's only copper mines ever to be operational, Bajo de la Alumbrera. It was forced to shutter over an environmental dispute in 2018, and never reopened.

Pilbara Minerals annual profit sinks on weaker lithium prices
Australia's Pilbara Minerals reported an 86% plunge in annual profit on Monday, citing lower prices for lithium - the key metal for manufacturing electric vehicle (EV) batteries.
Once a niche metal used primarily in ceramics and pharmaceuticals, demand for lithium has grown rapidly over the past decade. But oversupply from China and slowing EV adoption rates have dragged down prices recently.
Pilbara, the country's biggest pure-play lithium miner, said its average realised price for lithium raw material spodumene concentrate fell 74% to $1,176 per tonne in fiscal 2024.
Underlying profit after tax dropped to A$318 million ($215.83 million) in the year ended June 30, from A$2.28 billion a year earlier.
Pilbara said its P1000 expansion project in Pilgangoora, Western Australia would increase its production capacity by 47% to 1 million tonnes and is expected to come online this time of next year.
The miner has begun assessments for another expansion project, P2000, CEO Dale Henderson said in an earnings call.
He, however, said a year in the lithium market is an eternity and the miner would be watching for signals such as price recovery before moving forward on further expansion.
The miner said it had received commitments from a banking group for a new A$1 billion debt facility to refinance its existing project debt and further strengthen its balance sheet.
"It's not intended to be something which is solely directed to investment in growth, but it has that optionality," said CFO Luke Bartoli, referring to the banking facility possibly funding more bottom of the cycle growth for potential acquisitions.
Shares of Pilbara, which entered an agreement to buy smaller rival Latin Resources earlier this month, fell 0.3% in early trade.

Top News - Carbon & Power

COLUMN-Asia spot LNG price slips as demand peaks, prior rally bites: Russell
The spot price of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in Asia eased last week amid signs that seasonal demand may be peaking and the five-month rally is trimming purchases by price-sensitive buyers.
The price of spot LNG for delivery to North Asia dropped to $13.80 per million British thermal units (mmBtu) in the week to Aug. 23, a decline of 2.1% from the eight-month high of $14.10 the prior week.
It was also the first time the benchmark price had fallen in four weeks, although it is still 66.3% above the low so far this year of $8.30 per mmBtu hit at the beginning of March.
Asian LNG prices have been driven higher by strong demand from heavyweight buyers such as China and Japan, amid a warmer-than-usual northern summer that has stoked power demand for air-conditioning.
Asia's imports of the super-chilled fuel are on track to reach a seven-month high of 25.03 million metric tons in August, according to data compiled by commodity analysts Kpler.
This is up from 23.86 million tons in July, and also above the 23.32 million in August last year.
Much of the increase has been driven by China, the world's biggest LNG importer, with its August arrivals estimated at 6.94 million tons, the most since January and up from July's 5.91 million.
While China has seen rising power demand because of hot weather, only small volumes of LNG are used to generate electricity, the bulk being supplied by coal, renewables and nuclear.
Rather it's China's increasing use of LNG in trucking that is driving consumption, with consultants Wood Mackenzie saying in a report last month that LNG truck sales "rose from below 10%to reach as much as 30% of the market in the latter months of 2023".
LNG demand in Japan, the world's No. 2 importer, is being driven by more traditional factors such as increased air-conditioning use.
Japan's imports are estimated at 5.83 million tons in August, a five-month high and up from 5.45 million in July.
South Korea, the third-biggest LNG importer, shows a similar pattern, with August arrivals of 3.86 million tons being the most since April and up from 3.16 million in July.

INDIA, THAILAND
However, looking at the more price-sensitive Asian buyers reveals a different pattern, with India, the region's

fourth-biggest importer, forecast to have arrivals of 2.09 million tons in August, the lowest since April and down 18% from July's 2.56 million.
Thailand's August LNG imports dropped below 1 million tons for the first time since April, with Kpler estimating arrivals of 880,000 tons, down from 1.04 million in July.
It's likely that higher prices have curbed imports by India and Thailand, with market sources indicating utilities in both countries have failed to award spot tenders in recent weeks.
This suggests that spot prices may have to ease further in order to tempt buyers in South and Southeast Asia back into the market.
It's also likely that demand in North Asia may return to its normal seasonal pattern, which typically sees a peak in summer, usually August, followed by declining imports until October before arrivals kick up again to meet winter demand.
A further factor that may see Asian spot LNG prices ease is the ongoing weakness in demand in Europe.
The second-biggest importing continent is on track to import 6.25 million tons in August, the lowest monthly total in three years, and down from 6.52 million in July and 8.58 million in August last year.
LNG demand is slipping as the European Union's natural gas inventories reached 90% of target last week, which is 10 weeks ahead of the target set by Gas Infrastructure Europe.
It's also likely that Europe's natural gas demand has shifted structurally lower since the continent was forced to cut reliance on pipeline supplies from Russia in the wake of Moscow's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine.
The opinions expressed here are those of the author, a columnist for Reuters.

EXCLUSIVE-Equinor halts Vietnam offshore wind plans, to close Hanoi office

Norway's state-controlled energy giant Equinor has cancelled plans to invest in Vietnam's offshore wind sector, a company spokesperson told Reuters, in a setback for the Southeast Asian country's green power ambitions.
Vietnam has attracted international interest in its renewables plans because of its strong winds in shallow waters near coastal, densely populated areas, according to the World Bank Group, but delays in regulatory reforms have recently pushed some would-be investors to reconsider their plans.
"We have decided to discontinue our business development in Vietnam and to close our office in Hanoi," Magnus Frantzen Eidsvold, an Equinor spokesperson, said in an interview.
It is the first time Equinor has closed an international office focused on offshore wind development.
The company has previously exited more than a dozen countries where it had oil and gas activities over the last few years to focus on renewables and low-carbon systems.
Equinor's exit deals a further blow to Vietnam after Danish offshore wind company Orsted, another major player in the industry, said last year it would pause its plans to invest in large offshore wind farms in the country.
Vietnam has no current offshore wind projects but wants to install wind farms for 6 gigawatt (GW) by 2030, equal to 4% of its planned capacity, as part of plans to reduce coal and reach net zero carbon emissions by the middle of the century.
Its plans, however, have been repeatedly delayed, as recent political turbulence in the country has paralysed reforms and projects.
The industry is also considered sensitive by Vietnamese authorities because projects would be developed in the contested South China Sea, a crucial shipping waterway that Beijing claims almost in its entirety.
The industry ministry in the Communist-ruled country is pushing to assign to state-owned companies the first pilot project on offshore wind, a move that foreign investors said would slow down the development of the industry because domestic firms do have not enough capabilities.
The Vietnamese industry ministry did not immediately reply to a request for comment.
Two Vietnam-based offshore industry executives, who dfeclined to be named because they were not authorised to speak to media, said in the best scenario Vietnam could install only about 1 GW of capacity by the end of the decade because of regulatory hurdles.
They said talks are underway to convince the government to allow a foreign partner to co-develop the pilot project.
Equinor had decided to quit Vietnam after a regular review of its portfolio of renewable assets, Eidsvold said.
"The offshore wind sector has been facing significant headwinds lately and we need to be disciplined in our approach," he added.
Equinor opened a representative office in May 2022 in Hanoi, Vietnam's capital, describing the nation of 100 million as having a "high potential to become an interesting growth market for offshore wind," according to Equinor's website.
"The country has among the best wind resources in Asia," the website said.

Top News - Dry Freight

Canada labor board orders end to railway work stoppage

The Canada Industrial Relations Board ordered on Saturday a halt to work stoppages at the country's largest railways, signaling an end to an unprecedented service disruption at both main freight rail carriers that threatened to hammer Canada's export-driven economy.

The independent labor tribunal made the decision after Canada asked it on Thursday to end an impasse in separate talks between more than 9,000 Teamsters members, and Canadian National Railway and Canadian Pacific Kansas City.

The Teamsters said in a statement that workers' rights were "significantly diminished" with the ruling and that it would appeal in federal court.

The board's decisions are the latest twist in the labor disputes at CN and CPKC, which locked out Teamsters members on Thursday, triggering a simultaneous rail stoppage that business groups said could inflict hundreds of millions of dollars in economic damage. Canada, the world's second-largest country by area, relies heavily on trains to transport a wide range of commodities and goods.

Canadian Labour Minister Steven MacKinnon said on social media site X that he expects "railway companies and employees will resume operations at the earliest opportunity." The decision will restart railway operations at CPKC where workers had been both locked out and on strike, by 00:01 ET on Monday, the railway said in a statement.

A Teamsters spokesperson said workers would not come back earlier, despite CPKC's request for employees to return on Sunday. "We anticipate it will take several weeks for the railway network to fully recover from this work stoppage and a period of time beyond that for supply chains to stabilize," CPKC said. The labor board's decision averted a planned strike on Monday by locomotive engineers, conductors and other workers at Montreal-based CN just days after Canada's largest railway ended a lockout and began restoring service.

The Teamsters confirmed its CN workers would not strike on Monday after the CIRB decision. Along with ordering an end to the stoppage, the board implemented government requests to impose binding arbitration on the parties to reach new deals and to impose a continuation of the existing contracts until new agreements are reached.

"This decision by the CIRB sets a dangerous precedent," said Paul Boucher, president of the Teamsters Canada Rail Conference.

"It signals to corporate Canada that large companies need only stop their operations for a few hours, inflict short-term economic pain, and the federal government will step in to break a union." A CN spokesperson said the company would have preferred a negotiated agreement, but "we are satisfied that this puts an end to the labor stoppage."

The disruption could have drastically affected farmers and agriculture companies in both Canada and the United States. Wade Sobkowich, executive director of the Western Grain Elevator Association, which represents grain companies, said they had urged the government for weeks to refer the matter to the CIRB. "It means that the government has really listened to what Canadians were telling them," he said.

"We can't take a self-inflicted wound on the economy." Mike Steenhoek, executive director of the U.S. Soy Transportation Coalition said the Canadian government had to intervene to help farmers who rely on seamless cross-border trade. "We have not taken a side between railroads and railroad workers," Steenhoek said. "However, we are on the side of the American farmer."

On Thursday, MacKinnon, said his decision to refer the matter to the CIRB would survive a court challenge given his broad power under the country's labor code.

The Teamsters union wants its members' working conditions and pay to be determined by bargaining, despite disputes with CN and CP over scheduling, shift duration and availability. CN, for example, wants employees to work up to 12-hour shifts, compared with 10 hours in the current agreement, a move opposed by the union.

South Korea’s MFG buys about 67,000 T of corn in tender

South Korea's Major Feedmill Group (MFG) purchased an estimated 67,000 metric tons of animal feed corn expected to be sourced from South America in an international tender on Friday, European traders said. One consignment was bought at an estimated $234.70 a ton cost and freight (c&f) included, plus a $1.20 a ton surcharge for additional port unloading. The seller was said to be trading house CJ International. Reports reflect assessments from traders and further estimates of prices and volumes are still possible later.

The tender had sought up to 70,000 tons of corn sourced only from South America or South Africa for arrival in South Korea in one consignment around Dec. 23. Shipment was sought between Oct. 25 and Nov. 13 if sourced from South America or for between Nov. 4 and Nov. 23 if from South Africa.

Asian import interest was sparked after Chicago Board of Trade corn futures fell on Thursday as strong results from a major crop tour in the United States reinforced expectations of a bumper U.S. harvest, traders added.

Picture of the Day

Monserrat Fernandez, mayor of the Asturian town of Tineo, stands next to her cattle in Tineo, northern Spain, August 24. REUTERS/ Vincent West

(Inside Commodities is compiled by Indrishka Bose in Bengaluru)

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