



Delta-Eko

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Ankara to be awarded by council

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has decided to award the Turkish capital of Ankara.

The council's Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs agreed to give the 2009 "Europe Prize" to Ankara. The Polish town of Katowice received the prize last year, Istanbul got it in 1955, and the northwestern city of Bursa won it in 1991.

Istanbul to host an energy conference

The 15th International Energy & Environment Fair and Conference will be held in Istanbul on May 13-15.

The theme of the event, which nearly 100 firms will take part in, will be "Energy Supply Reliability, Energy Efficiency, Sustainable Energy and Environmental Policies in the Process of Globalization." The 2009 conference will present a general outlook on the energy sector worldwide and in Turkey.

First facility opened for waste to produce energy

Environmental factors have started attracting more attention in Turkey, with steps being taken to ensure environmental health and sustainability. The latest step came Saturday with the opening of the first waste-to-energy facility in Istanbul's Kemerburgaz

It was the scene of a rock concert and the feeling was excitement, but the venue was a landfill and the occasion was the opening of a waste-to-energy facility.

Despite the windy cold weather and the dominant stench of decaying garbage, the hundreds, most of whom were headscarf-clad women waiting for Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan resembling in their haste teenagers wait for their favorite male rock star, were gathered in Odayeri Waste Field near Istanbul's Kemerburgaz district on Saturday. Erdoğan was expected to appear for the opening of Istanbul's first waste-to-energy facility built by Ortadoğu Group.

"The aim is to extract the methane gas from the landfill gas and get rid of it because methane is 21 times more poisonous than carbon dioxide," said Bülent Keklik, Ortadoğu Group's general vice coordinator, in an interview with the Hürriyet Daily News & Economic Review.

Although Ortadoğu Group is situated in the conservative side of the political spectrum, it is quite willing to take risks when it comes to business and environmental issues. This is why the group decided to enter the tender organized by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality. The tender was for waste-to-energy treatment in two main waste areas in Istanbul, Odayeri in Kemerburgaz in Istanbul's European side and Kömürcüoda near Şile in Istanbul's Asian side. Both areas are run by the Istanbul Environmental Preservation and Assessment of Refuse Materials, or İSTAÇ, municipal enterprise and have been used to dispose of domestic waste since 1995. Waste has been "caked" with 60 centimeters



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of clay and 50 centimeters of earth between every 5 meters of waste. The wastewater created at the landfill is transported to a water treatment facility also on the grounds.

A former incident

The landfill itself now appears as a cluster of dusty bare hills punctuated by pipes placed here and there to prevent the accumulation of methane, which may lead to explosions. In fact, one such accumulation of methane gas caused an explosion in the Ümraniye Hekimbaşı landfill in 1993, claiming the lives of 39.

Under the project, the methane gas formed by the fermentation of domestic waste in the landfill will be vacuumed out and used to produce electricity. The project differs in this regard from many of its examples in Europe, such as Sysav waste-to-energy plant in Sweden, which admits all domestic waste to the plant, burns it, collects the gas emitted from the burning process, and then uses this gas to produce electricity.

"Energy is Turkey's biggest short-coming. Many companies want to enter the field; hydroelectric, wind, solarÉ It has been our dream; we already had native infrastructure and engineering groups. We received loan from the Development Bank of Turkey," said Keklik, adding that the group had received know-how from Canadian Biothermica Technologies, German Haase Energietechnik, and had used General Electric's Jenbacher Landfill Gas Engines.

Keklik said the vast population of Istanbul, currently estimated around 17 million, creates a lot of waste. "The gas emitted from this waste is dangerous; it can explode, it causes air pollution, the gas itself thins the ozone layer," said Keklik. "Turkey signed the Kyoto Treaty. So emissions of carbon dioxide and other gases [in Turkey] should be put within a limit."

Carbon emissions to decrease

The two plants are expected to produce a total of 35 MWh of electricity each day and will be sold to the municipality's power distribution grid, currently at 0.055 Euros for every kWh. "These will produce enough energy to satisfy the needs of 112,000 residents," said Istanbul Mayor Kadir Topbaş during his speech at the opening. He said carbon emissions in the city would be decreased by 1.2 million tons.

During the opening ceremony Environment Minister Veysel Erođlu, recalling that Turkey signed the Kyoto Protocol this year, said Turkey has taken big steps to tackle with the global climate change and this will be a big indicator in European Union, or EU, environment negotiations.

Erođlu said he was proud to launch a green facility in Istanbul with the project of turning the waste gas in landfills into electric power.

"This facility is important for Istanbul. In 1993 the situation of the solid waste was in a bad state. There were mountains of waste in the streets. They were being thrown here and there under the name of unsanitary disposal. Even the hospital waste was thrown into garbage bins in the streets," Erođlu said.



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In the beginning of 1990s there was an explosion in Istanbul's Asian neighborhood Ümraniye that led the death of 38 people. Eroğlu drew attention to the time when Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was the mayor of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and him giving an order to establish garbage disposal depots.

Solid waste transferring centers were set up in each district of Istanbul and medical waste was sent to incineration plants back then.

Emphasizing that a facility that produces electricity from a regular waste depot has been established for the first time in Turkey, Eroğlu said. "The facility will produce electric power from coal gas, which triggers the global warming 21 times more compared to carbon dioxide. By producing 28 megawatts of energy, the facility will bring 15 to 20 million dollars of profit," he said.

Heavy fines for fish farms breaching laws

Environment and Forestry Minister Veysel Eroğlu said there would be fines for those who did not move fish farms on the shores of Aegean provinces to open seas.

Fish farms on Aegean cities' shores had previously polluted the surrounding sea and were an eyesore.

"March 30, 4:59 p.m. was the deadline to move the fish farms, we will not indulge anyone who did not meet this time limit," said Eroğlu. He said they were working to move the fish farms to new locations without polluting the environment, adding that they helped the fish farm owners by showing them suitable locations to move their farms. Despite all the help, there are some farm owners who still have not moved their farms, said Eroğlu. "First we will impose first level fines and then the fine will be doubled. At the second level, the farm will be forcefully removed and the owner will pay the cost of transportation at a price 50 percent higher," he said. The ministry has signed a protocol with the coast guard to fine the farms that do not move.

Government urged to seize the opportunity

Turkey could come out of this crisis with a much stronger economy if it seizes the opportunity the crisis presents and implements much-needed structural reforms, according to Shigeo Katsu, the World Bank's vice president for the Europe and Central Asia region.

Katsu, within the framework of the 2009 Spring Meetings of the World Bank Group and International Monetary Fund, told Anatolia news agency yesterday that Turkey learned its lesson the during financial crisis it experienced in 2001. Following the crisis, which hit Turkey's banking sector, Turkey took plenty of structural measures, which provided much benefit to the country, according to Katsu. Turkey has been keeping a close eye on the development of the current global turmoil, said Katsu. The government took all the necessary measures to minimize the negative impact of the global economic crisis, he said, adding that Turkey would continue to implement needed measures.

The measures taken after the 2001 crisis enabled the country to assemble a strong banking system, Katsu said. In fact, Turkey has one of the strongest banking systems in the region, he said. Turkey could



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take advantage of the crisis climate and implement new structural reforms, said Katsu. He also highlighted the importance of implementing key structural reforms such as labor force reforms, which would be the foundation of improving studies into Turkey's investment environment as well as the base of new employment opportunities.

Turkey could benefit from the World Bank's "Global Trade Liquidity Program," Katsu said. The program will begin operations in May, channeling much-needed funds to back trade in developing countries. The program should be able to support up to \$50 billion of trade. It raises funds from international finance and development institutions, governments, and banks, and it works through global and regional banks to extend trade finance to importers and exporters in developing countries.

'Architecture: Turkey's recognized art branch'

Doğan Hasol, a cunning and humanistic architect, has achieved much success in his career. Hasol is the chairman of the Building Information Center, or YEM, and runs his company with his wife and daughter. He is now the creator of İzmir's renewed symbolic Efes Hotel

Doğan Hasol is one of the few people who can still be down to Earth and humanistic despite his numerous success stories. He said it is because of his will to create and give the best to people in the architectural field.

Hasol has been the editor-in-chief of architecture magazines, a leader for organizations of conferences and meetings about architecture and the chairman of the Building Information Center, or YEM, for 40 years, which he established with a group of friends in 1968.

Managing to organize continuous construction fairs under the name of International Turkeybuild Fairs since 1978 and extending them to three big cities, Istanbul, Ankara and İzmir, Hasol also accomplished his plans to open an architecture library with a vast range of green buildings, historic buildings, engineering, architecture and design books within the YEM center and publish the Yapı Magazine.

Not surprisingly Hasol's architecture office, Has Mimarlık, and its being rewarded for the projects is also because of the achievements of his wife Hayzuran and daughter Ayşe Hasol Erkin, who are architects as well.

Eco-design

Hasol follows the latest developments in architecture, such as eco-design which has gained more importance with the rise of climate change, global warming and scarce natural resources. "The world is getting excited. It is so close to facing a catastrophe but we need to clean it just like we contaminated it," said Hasol.

"Architecture and construction have a big share in energy consumption. With all the things we do in this sector we are trying to raise awareness," Hasol said.

"Architecture is a reflector of culture. When asked what an architect does, people can hardly answer but it is the only branch of art that makes Turkey recognizable in the world."



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Hasol is one of the most well known Turkish architects. He said Turkey is very far behind in architectural policies and that the government does not have the courage to get there.

According to the information he gave there are 36,000 architects in Turkey but most of them prefer working in other fields of the business, where as the European Union, or EU, has determined three professions that are a priority for humans: architecture, medicine and justice.

One of the most important topics Hasol and his daughter agrees on is that there is a lack of urban planning in Turkey that could prevent uncontrolled growth, which leads to slums and illegal constructions being built.

Although according to Hasol, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic, tried to create the awareness of city planning in Ankara, which failed because of industrialization. He said urban planning is just gaining importance and it is a new sector in Turkey. Before urban planners the job was trying to be handled by architects.

Hasol thinks those who pollute the environment are the industrialized countries. "The technology of recycling is not something new yet in Turkey it started in the beginning of the year 2000," said Hasol, adding that Turkey will have a new law for construction and structures to have a CE certificate, which enables products to be commercially used in European Economic Area, or EEA, in December. "Turkey will take this step of having a standard in architecture before the United States," Hasol said. "The construction company or the architects have to give reports about issues such as energy consumption and many more environment-related plans," Hasol said, adding that state-owned buildings should be an example for others to follow and they should be leading the sector.

Hasol thinks that ecologic architecture is a sector that can boost the economy. The awareness of its benefits came about after the August 1999 earthquake in the Marmara region demolished 285,211 houses and killed thousands of people.

Hasol is also the creator of the symbolic Efes Hotel located in the center of İzmir. After the State Retirement Fund offered it for sale, the Efes Hotel was bought by Murat Vargı and Tahinciöđlu Group. The owners later made an agreement with Swiss Hotel to manage it.

Erktin said the duration of the hotel being sold took too long. The construction of the hotel, for it to be Grand Efes Ė Swiss Hotel, took 18 months. With Has Mimarlık planning the project, the hotel's doors were opened a total of 26 months after the sale.

Owning the hotel

According to Hasol the owners of the Efes Hotel are the residents of İzmir. "They were so curious about the construction and what was going to happen to the hotel, which is like a symbol for İzmir people because it is on Cumhuriyet Meydanı (Republic Square) where the Atatürk statue stands," Hasol said.



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Erktin said because of the importance of the hotel, they have made the plan with the utmost respect.

The hotel has been strengthened against earthquakes and the garden and the kitchen have changed, but the shape of the rooms and all the art pieces are still the same.

Hasol looked upon his work with great pride and completed his words with a quote from Jacques Herzog: "An architect should be a diplomat at the same time."

Taking out garbage from the sea

The clean up project for the waters around Bodrum revealed that one of Turkey's most important tourism centers suffers severely from pollution.

Organized by the Bodrum Mariners Association, Bodrum Chamber of Marine Commerce and Bodrum Municipality, the cleaning project was held by four professional divers and 15 volunteer environmentalists on Saturday.

After one hour, the divers took out the objects lying deep in the sea, and put them on display, much to the surprise of tourists. There were blankets, plates, forks, knives, a hat, beds and placards.

Mehmet Bař, who worked several years as searching for sponge underwater, said that the water around Bodrum was cleaned for the first time in years. "People who make a living from the sea do not now its worth," said the 60-year-old. "They throw what they eat, what the drink and what they use into the sea. "It's like a supermarket down there," he said. "There is nothing that you cannot find. I can't see why people keep polluting the sea, while 99 percent of Bodrum locals are earning their lives from it."

The cleaning project will continue for six more weeks.

Croatia and Kosova to attend summit

The Marmara Group Foundation announced that Croatian and Kosovar presidents would attend the 12th Eurasia Economic Summit in a press release.

A wide range of topics, including energy issues, energy security and cooperation, the global financial crisis, regional cooperation, ecology and environment, will be discussed during the summit that will be held between May 6 and 8 with the participation of 41 countries.

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