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LUKOIL UKHTANEFTEPERERABOTKA LAUNCHES A NEW UNIT

OAO LUKOIL Ukhtaneftepererabotka (Ukhta refinery) launched a new railway overpass for light oil products loading in Ukhta today. Yuri Spiridonov, Head of the Komi Republic, and Vagit Alkperov, President of LUKOIL, attended the launching ceremony.

This unit was built as part of a complex program of the Ukhta refinery upgrade in 2000-2005. The new unit comprises a double-sided railway overpass with two service platform for simultaneous loading of gasoline and diesel fuel in 34 four-axle or 20 eight-axle tank cars, a tank farm for 35,000 tons of gasoline, 8,000 aviation kerosene and 57,000 tons of diesel fuel, and a pumping unit. An advanced control unit makes it possible for only one operator to control the process of preparation, storage and loading of oil products. To minimize atmospheric discharge the tank farm is equipped with the Ultra-Float system for hydrocarbon fumes trapping. The railway overpass is furnished with a modern automatic fire-extinguishing system. Besides, for control purposes the unit is equipped with the Weighline system for weighing tank cars in motion designed by an English firm, Railweight.

The upgrade program of the Ukhta refinery was approved at the end of 1999 after the refinery joined LUKOIL group. At present, upgrade of the primary refining unit AT-1 is in progress and it includes replacement of a primary fractionator, furnaces and installation of pumping and technological equipment. The work is expected to be finished in the second quarter 2001. The program envisages an upgrade of catalytic reforming, atmospheric vacuum distillation and bitumen units, readapting of the AT-2 unit for visbreaking and construction of a hydrodewaxing unit for diesel fuel. In addition to that, refurbishment of all the facilities and services of the refinery will be accomplished. Implementation of the complex upgrade program will enable the Ukhta refinery to increase output of premium gasoline up to 45% in the total product output and produce environmentally friendly diesel fuel with sulfur content lower 0.05%. The refinery will be able to launch production of arctic diesel fuel, aviation kerosene and to improve its environmental safety standards. Refining depth is expected to reach 65-70%.

"Launch of the new railway overpass is the first big step in implementing the Ukhta refinery upgrade program, the main objective of which is to ensure uninterrupted supplies of oil products to the Republic of Komi and other regions adjacent to it,"

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said LUKOIL President Vagit Alekperov.