

Energy Ministry seeking to diversify Iran's energy portfolio

Economy Desk

Over 4 billion cubic meters less natural gas were allocated to Iranian power plants compared to last year, according to the spokesperson for the electricity industry, who outlined the Ministry of Energy's initiatives to diversify the country's energy portfolio, ILNA reported.

Mostafa Rajabi-Mashhadi noted that 90 percent of the country's electricity is generated by thermal power plants as diesel has been used as an alternative fuel for gas, ILNA reported. He added that using mazut at plants such as Shazand, Shahid Montazeri, and Montazer Ghaem—each with about 37 percent efficiency—has led to serious environmental problems, demanding a gas-only fuel supply for these facilities.

"What can help the power industry is prioritizing fuel supply for power plants, particularly natural gas. Additionally, we hope that consumers will save 10 percent in gas and electricity usage to get through this period well," he added. Rajabi-Mashhadi emphasized that while mazut accounts for 7 percent of all pollution, most emissions come from the transportation sector. He said the Energy Ministry can make "dynamic decisions" about using gas or fuel oil based on environmental and fuel availability conditions.

"The electricity generation mix should be diversified," he said, highlighting accelerated plans to expand renewable energy. "In the Seventh Development Plan, the renewable energy target is set at 12,000 megawatts."

Talking on power plants for industries with the capacity of over one megawatt, he pointed out that energy-intensive industries should build at least 10,000 megawatts of power capacity. He assured that electricity generated by these plants will be supplied to them by the Ministry of Energy.

The official went on to say that if industries establish power plants, Tavanir and the Energy Ministry will ensure the delivery of that electricity, exempting them from load management programs proportional. Rajabi-Mashhadi also noted that effective coordination exists between the government and the Ministry of Energy. "A taskforce comprising representatives from the Ministries of Oil, Energy, Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), the Department of Environment, and other related bodies has been formed and meets regularly to address or mitigate energy challenges."

Iran's gas output jumped by 30 mcm in 100 days: **NIOC**

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The managing director of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) announced that gas production in Iran has increased by approximately 30 million cubic meters since the start of President Masoud Pezeshkian's administration (July 30).

According to Shana, Hamid Bovard highlighted the complexity of gas production processes and stated, "NIOC is responsible for upstream gas production, and through our measures, we've managed to boost gas output."

"By bringing new wells online since the beginning of the 14th administration, we have added about 30 million cubic meters to the country's gas production," he said.

The official also pointed

to the early onset of cold weather this fall, explaining that "each one-degree drop in temperature adds nearly 25 million cubic meters to gas consumption, highlighting inefficient gas usage."

Bovard assured that all maintenance plans have been completed, and NIOC is committed to maximizing gas production. "We have no concerns about maintaining maximum gas production through the end of the year. However, we ask the public to conserve gas. In previous years, high consumption caused supply issues in some northern and north-eastern cities," he said.

He added that if people reduce gas consumption by just 10 percent, Iran can better manage the cold season and ensure adequate supply for industries



and power plants. The NIOC head concluded by emphasizing the high

level of gas production in Iran, which exceeds one billion cubic meters

per day. "Although we are among the world's top three gas producers, exces-

sive consumption continues to create supply challenges in some sectors."

Tehran-Caracas history facilitated finalization of nearly 300 deals: **Venezuela FM**

The Venezuelan foreign minister highlighted the historical ties between his country and Iran, stressing that this cooperation has paved the way for the Latin American state to finalize 298 agreements.

Yvan Gil Pinto made the remarks in a social media post on Tuesday while referring to the 10th Venezuela-Iran Intergovernmental Committee meeting in the capital Caracas, IRNA reported. He stated that he attended the committee meeting on behalf of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro with the participation of Iran's Ambassador to Caracas Hojatollah Soltani.

In his remarks, the Venezuelan foreign minister said the aim of holding the 10th joint committee was the strengthening of friendship and cooperation between the two nations which are united in their fight against the



West's coercive measures.

The 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran and the 1999 Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela have solidified the ties between the two sides.

Venezuela and Iran continue development of cooperation during the 10th commission meeting, Gil noted.

He emphasized that during the past two years, Venezuela and Iran signed 80 agreements on cooperation; and the presidents of the two countries travelled to the respective states in 2022 and 2023.

Venezuela is proud to

have a partner, friend, and brother like Iran, he stressed.

The 10th Venezuela-Iran Intergovernmental Committee meeting was held in Caracas on Monday to review promotion of strategic relations.

The two countries have already signed several documents on bilateral cooperation in the fields of culture, trade, technology, science, gas, petrochemicals, oil and agriculture.

During Maduro's visit to Iran in June, 2022, Tehran and Caracas signed a document on a 20-year strategic cooperation agreement.

Hemmati: Internet-based businesses beset by huge losses due to filtering

Economy Desk

Abdolnaser Hemmati, the Iranian economy minister, elaborated on his reasons for supporting the lifting of Internet filtering in a post on the social media platform X (formerly Twitter), saying that Internet-based businesses suffer enormous losses due to filtering.

He wrote that 80 percent of Iranian people use virtual private networks (VPNs), and the restrictions have caused tens of thousands of billions of tomans in loss to online businesses, ILNA reported on Tuesday.

He wrote in a Persian-language post on X, "Why do I, as the Minister of Economy, advocate for lifting the restrictions on Internet access?"

He added, "There is no doubt that cyberspace in the country needs to be managed wisely, but censorship is by no means a



prudent way to manage it."

Asking as to why censorship is not wise, Hemmati responded in the post that 80 percent of our people use VPNs, creating a massive black market in the national economy under the label of VPN sales, which, according to some reports, rivals the country's official communications economy.

The damage inflicted on online businesses amounts to tens of thousands of billions

of tomans, affecting the livelihoods, incomes, and services of significant groups of people who rely on social media platforms, he noted.

Stressing that filtering poses a serious threat to the security of the digital economy, endangering the country's Internet infrastructure, Hemmati said, "Restricting people's legitimate freedoms negatively impacts the country's progress and development. Thus, censorship acts as a barrier to national advancement."

Germany, US on ...

The German economy is simultaneously grappling with domestic political instability caused by the collapse of the coalition government and anticipated early elections in 2025, alongside the economic repercussions of the Ukraine war. The upcoming elections imply prolonged coalition negotiations and increased public expenditure. Additionally, the end of access to cheap Russian oil and a decline in exports to China have disrupted Germany's economic model, plunging the nation into its second consecutive year of recession. Amidst these multifaceted pressures, Germany is no longer capable of decisively leading Europe in today's chaotic global

security landscape.

On the domestic security front, Germany faces internal terror and chaos. Border controls within the Schengen Zone have become increasingly challenging, and Germany's internal security is deteriorating amid the growing influence of populist and anti-European parties opposed to immigration and support for Ukraine. These factors make forming stable regional security alliances or partnerships increasingly difficult.

The state of Germany's domestic politics reflects a clear picture of the severe decline of European democracies. A single event, such as the Ukraine war, has imposed both economic and political costs on Germany. The collapse of the

traffic light coalition has been a disillusionment for those who believed in a progressive alliance between market advocates, green energy proponents, and social justice supporters. Half of Germany's internal political disputes have revolved around disagreements on its role or approach in the Ukraine war.

At the European level, under the shadow of the Ukraine war, Germany faces a fractured and alarmed bloc. Trump's victory would further amplify illiberal stances akin to those of Hungary's Viktor Orbán. In the recent European leaders' summit in Budapest, discussions on the Ukraine war, migration, and Trump's second-term plans took center stage. Not only did

Orbán, by hosting the meeting, hold sway over forty European leaders, but the discussions also seemed to favor his and Trump's divisive agenda for Europe. According to Orbán, "The world is changing faster than we imagined... It's evident that the number of peace supporters (those advocating for concessions to Russia in the Ukraine war) is growing, and with the US elections, the peace camp will multiply."

Orbán, who abstained from providing military aid to Ukraine during the war, is inclined toward a resolution similar to Russia's terms—a scenario disastrous for both Europe and Hungary itself. Ukraine's exclusion from NATO would mean a lack of security guarantees, sig-

nificantly increasing Europe's future risks. A swift peace settlement proposed by Russia would not only undermine Ukraine's sovereignty and independence but also devastate Europe's autonomy and security.

Germany, amid its domestic challenges, failed to perform effectively during the European Political Community Summit at Puskás Arena, further demonstrating its lost leadership role in Europe. Germany's relations with the US have historically been rooted in economic ties. However, under Trump's restrictive economic policies, it will take years—and a significant change in leadership styles—to restore German-American relations to their former state.