

Electricity shortages whittled down to less than 10,000 megawatts: Minister



Abbas Aliabadi

Economy Desk

Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi announced on Monday that the 20,000-megawatt power imbalance at the beginning of the current administration had decreased to less than 10,000 megawatts during peak consumption periods, stressing that the achievement had enabled the ministry to provide more electricity to industries. “Fortunately, the Ministry of Energy has been able to provide more electricity to industries and distribute energy more optimally. Power outages in the household sector have been minimal and during the day, and fortunately, we do not have blackouts at night. Therefore, it can be said that we have a difficult month ahead,

and we will overcome it with mutual cooperation,” Aliabadi said. Speaking to reporters after a parliamentary meeting, Aliabadi pointed to the extent of blackouts and the country’s water supply status, saying, “The Ministry of Energy has faced challenges in all periods, but this year we are facing a drought, which affects both water and electricity.” Regarding the water shortage for cooling in thermal power plants, he added, “The Ministry of Energy is trying to implement air cooling in these power plants, and due to the difficult conditions we are in, we ask people to cooperate in consuming less water and electricity, as in previous periods.” Elaborating on Ministry of

Energy’s plan for water and electricity reserves under the special conditions prevailing in the country, Aliabadi said, “The country has experienced consecutive droughts for five years, and this year we have received about 43.9% less water compared to the medium and long-term average, and this number changes over time. Given the emergency situation in four provinces, a special meeting was held to address the situation in such provinces.” The energy minister underlined that the main plan of the ministry is to control water consumption and added, “If people cooperate and observe the consumption pattern, resilience can be maintained until the rainy season. However, a

lack of necessary cooperation leads to the implementation of plans such as imposing penalties for excessive consumers and incentives for efficient consumers; therefore, meetings were held, and it was decided to inform people about the consumption pattern so that they can act accordingly.” Aliabadi said the ministry has plans underway to develop power plants and better manage consumption load, adding that more than a thousand power plants (with low megawatts) are being built across the country, which will be connected to the grid and supply local electricity. “This is a good opportunity to ensure our stability and increase resilience in the difficult times ahead,” he noted.

Tehran, Beijing underscore boost in container trains to bolster trade ties

Economy Desk

CEO of Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (RAJA) Jabbar Ali Zakeri and his Chinese counterpart on Monday placed a premium on increasing the number of container trains between the two countries. Zakeri and Guo Zhuxue met and discussed during the former’s trip to China to participate in the General Assembly of the International Union of Railways (UIC) and also the 12th World Congress on High-Speed Rail. The chairman of China Railways pointed to the deepening of cooperation between Tehran and Beijing in recent years, and commended the 2024 resumption of container trains between the two sides, expressing hope that bilateral cooperation would expand. Guo hailed Iran as an important partner within the framework of the “One Belt, One Road” initiative and emphasized the need for coordination to stabilize prices and fa-



CEO of Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (RAJA) Jabbar Ali Zakeri (2nd L) and his Chinese counterpart Guo Zhuxue (2nd R) meet in the capital Beijing, China, on July 14, 2025. ● IRNA

cilitate customs procedures in the southern corridor. The CEO of Iranian Railways also, referring to the historical relations between the two countries, outlined Iran Railways’ plan for developing the rail network and increasing transit and freight transport. Referring to the electrification

and double-tracking projects of the East-West corridor in Iran from Sarakhs border to Razi border, Zakeri said, “A contract for the electrification of about one thousand kilometers of this route, with the aim of increasing rail freight capacity from five million tons to 15 million tons, has been finalized

with one of the Chinese companies.” Stressing that the East-West corridor is divided into the three branches of northern, central, and southern, he said, “A proposal has been made by Afghanistan Railways to Iran regarding the construction of a railway line from Kashgar, China, to Afghanistan with a standard gauge in the East-West corridor. This is a good opportunity for Iran and China to establish integrated rail connectivity between these two countries with a standard rail line.” Zakeri, pointing to the investment of several foreign companies in the Aprin dry rail port, invited China Railways to invest in the strategic port.

Snapback or return ...

If international agreements can be activated, paused, or weaponized at the discretion of powerful actors irrespective of their current legal status, we risk entering an era where legal instruments are manipulated as tools of domination rather than cooperation. This undermines not just Iran’s sovereign rights, but the credibility of global diplomacy as a whole.

Geopolitical calculus behind snapback threats

The threat of the snapback of sanctions is rarely about technical non-compliance; it is often tied to broader objectives. For the United States and certain European allies, the invocation of the snapback can serve multiple purposes: to pressure Iran into further concessions, to influence domestic politics in Tehran, or to signal firmness to domestic and regional audiences. However, such tactics are fraught with risk. History has shown that coercive approaches, particularly when perceived as legally illegitimate, tend to entrench resistance rather than foster compliance. Furthermore, global perceptions of Western duplicity—exiting an agreement only to re-enter its punitive clauses—undermine trust not just in the JCPOA but in international diplomacy writ large. In a time when multilateralism is already under severe strain, such acts send a harmful message to other nations considering negotiated solutions to complex security challenges.

Reimagining legal integrity in global governance

The snapback debate is not solely about Iran or nuclear diplomacy. It is emblematic of a larger crisis in international law—namely, the gap between formal legal structures and the geopolitical realities that shape their application. When the enforcement of law becomes selective or expedient, the very idea of a rules-based international order comes into question.

This calls for a renewed commitment to legal coherence and multilateral accountability. The JCPOA was, and remains, a test case for the viability of negotiated diplomacy in resolving high-stakes security issues. If its provisions are to be respected selectively, the precedent set will ripple far beyond the Middle East.

Call for constructive engagement

Rather than reverting to punitive mechanisms with questionable legal grounding, the international community must recommit to diplomacy as the first—and not last—resort. Genuine engagement, mutual respect, and adherence to international norms are not signs of weakness; they are pillars of sustainable peace and stability. For its part, Iran has consistently signaled readiness to return to its JCPOA commitments, provided that sanctions relief is verifiably restored. The onus now lies with Western powers to decide whether they seek compliance through trust-building or coercion through legal manipulation. The international community must ask itself: Do we stand for law as a shared foundation or as a weapon wielded by the powerful? The answer will define not only the fate of the JCPOA but the credibility of international diplomacy for decades to come.

Iranian olive oil notches up global quality gold award

Economy Desk

The Iranian Agriculture Ministry announced on Monday that the country’s olive oil has won a gold medal for quality at the Global Olive Oil Stars 2025 in England. Karim Zolfaghari, head of the ministry’s farming mechanization department, said one of the processing industry units with an operating license from the Tehran Province Agricultural Jihad Organization succeeded in notching up a gold medal in the quality section of the latest global olive oil event, known as Global Olive Oil Stars 2025, in London. The international competition was held from June 27 to 28 with the participation of 427 product samples from 21 countries. “In this section of the event, the chemical and sensory quality of extra virgin olive oil, laboratory tests to check the level of phenolic compounds and their compliance with EU regulations, evaluation of added flavors for flavored olive oil, and packaging design were the criteria for selecting the best,” Zolfaghari said. The official stated that the number of active units with operating licenses from the Agriculture Ministry in the olive oil extraction industry is 63 units with a nominal production capacity



of 53,600 tons of various oils, including virgin and extra virgin. “Processing industries can play a key role in preventing waste, increasing product shelf life, creating added value, and generating foreign exchange from exports for the country,” Zolfaghari

said. “Regarding olives, a portion of the product produced in the country is also converted into various types of canned olives by processing industry units.” Olive oil is divided into several different types, each with its own specific characteristics and properties. The classification is usually based on color, taste, and acidity. Extra virgin olive oil is the highest quality olive oil, containing all the properties and benefits of olives. To produce this oil, perfectly healthy olives are washed and their oil extracted by pressing as quickly as possible after harvesting. This oil has a rich taste and essential vitamins, and due to the preservation of polyphenols and antioxidants, it offers anti-inflammatory and health benefits. Virgin olive oil is a type of olive oil produced from healthy, high-quality olives using the cold-pressing method. This oil has an acidity between 0.8% and 2% and has a mild taste and olive aroma. Virgin olive oil contains vitamins and antioxidants that are beneficial for health and can help reduce bad cholesterol. This oil is commonly used in sauces and cooking at medium temperatures and is a healthy and nutritious option for the diet.