

Iranian oil prices fetch premium for first time since 2022

Economy Desk

Iranian oil traded at a premium to the global Brent crude benchmark for the first time since May 2022, a sharp reversal from the steep discounts it had been forced to offer in recent years due to sanctions and restricted access to global markets.

The price for the nation's main export grade swung to a premium of \$1 a barrel to Brent on March 26, just days after the US temporarily rolled back sanctions on already-loaded Iranian oil shipments, according to Argus Media, an independent publisher that provides price information for the global petroleum market.

The decision to waive sanctions came after Iran's retaliation against unprovoked US-Israeli aggression, which began on February 28, heavily disrupted the global energy supply chains and caused shortages.

The Iranian Armed Forces have responded by launching daily missile and drone operations targeting locations in the Israeli-occupied territories as well as US military bases and assets across the region. They have also blocked access to the Strait of Hormuz to oil and gas tankers affiliated with the adversaries and those cooperating with them in an attempt to maintain security at the strategic waterway.

Furthermore, despite the ongoing



● IRNA

war against Iran, reports suggest that the highest oil revenue in the Persian Gulf region last month was recorded by Iran.

New data points to an unprecedented shift in the regional energy market: Iran has not only maintained its oil exports but, with a %37 increase in monthly revenue, has become the region's highest-earning oil producer in March.

According to data from oil tanker tracking firms, including Kpler and Vortexa, Iran's oil exports in March 2026 averaged between 1.5 million and 2 million barrels per day. This volume has not declined despite the war and has even increased compared to the previous month.

By contrast, member states of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council have faced a catastrophic drop in

production and exports.

According to the data, Iran's oil revenue increased by %37 and Oman's oil revenue rose by %26. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia's revenue recorded only a nominal increase of %4.3, largely due to the surge in global oil prices, while the country's actual export volumes have sharply declined. Iraq, Kuwait, and Qatar are experiencing the worst conditions. Iraq's oil exports have fallen by about %70, and Kuwait has declared an emergency situation. Experts believe this pattern will continue until the Strait of Hormuz is reopened.

As the only country with operational control over this vital waterway, Iran is in a unique position both in terms of securing its exports and benefiting from higher prices.

No shortages felt in market: *Industry minister*

Economy Desk

Iran's Minister of Industry, Mines, and Trade announced that since the beginning of the recent imposed war, trade guilds, chain stores, and producers have not allowed any shortages to be felt in the market through round-the-clock efforts.

Mohammad Atabak also praised the actions of the incumbent government and the ministry in securing essential goods and keeping stores across the country fully stocked during the Ramadan War.

The minister noted that the country's capacity to supply essential goods is in good condition.

The head of the House of Industry, Mines, and Trade also said that the industrial community has emphasized resilience as the most important principle of war since the first day of the US-Israeli war on Iran, and that all production units and factories are operating so that the country's production cycle does not stop.

Abdolvahab Sahl-Abadi said that, aside from sectors that have been attacked by the enemy, all production and industrial sectors across the country are operating around the clock. He added that today, no distri-



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (L) inspects the stocked shelves of a chain store in Tehran, Iran, on March 27, 2026, during the US-Israeli war on the country. ● IRNA

bution center or store in the country that supplies people's daily needs is empty of goods.

The head of Iran's Food Industries Associations said that currently more than 95 percent of the country's food industry factories are operating at maximum capacity, and there is no concern regarding the supply of essential goods. Mohammad Reza Mortazavi said, "In wartime, there is always initial pressure. Based on experiences in different countries, we have seen crises on store shelves. But in Iran, both the private sector and the government were prepared due to the experience of the 12-Day War. The government understood well that

the food sector is extremely important."

He said that forecasts had been made in the wheat and flour sector, including the possibility that bagging operations might be disrupted. "Therefore, we were prepared to deal with the effects of such disruptions so that flour would be supplied on time. As a result, we have not faced shortages in the bread sector."

The businessman also assessed reserves of essential goods, such as corn and cooking oil, at the country's ports as adequate.

Mortazavi also maintained that factories in the cooking oil sector are operating with efficiency above 90 percent.

Art narrates Minab school tragedy



● chtn.ir

Art & Culture Desk

Marking the 40th day since the tragic martyrdom of schoolchildren in Minab, a poignant art-centric ceremony titled "The Eighth Seen: Sug-e Minab (Minab's Mourning)" was held at Tehran's City Theater.

The event, organized by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, IRIB, and other national cultural institutions, was framed within the context of Iran's cultural diplomacy. The initiative aims to utilize the power of art to narrate humanitarian stories on an international scale, ISNA wrote.

"The Eighth Seen"— a symbolic extension of the traditional Iranian Haft-Seen — was presented as a conceptual tool to recount the suffering and innocence of children who fell victim to structural violence and international injustice. Organizers described the event as a narrative designed to reach beyond borders and appeal to the "awakening conscience of the global community."

A central feature of the ceremony was an

artistic, symbolic reconstruction of the Minab's school classroom. This installation served as a haunting representation of the unfinished lives of the children who were victims of one of the most harrowing contemporary tragedies, attributed to US and Israel aggression.

By blending performing arts, ritual expression, and musical traditions, the ceremony created a medium capable of conveying the deepest layers of sorrow, resistance, and awareness. The unified rhythms of Kurdish Daf drums, the voices of Iran's diverse ethnic communities, and the symbolic spatial design together embodied a cultural solidarity in telling the story of a shared pain.

The ceremony was attended by several government ministers, high-ranking state and city officials, prominent artists and cultural figures.

The ceremony can be regarded as a prime example of utilizing cultural diplomacy to address human crises; an event that demonstrated how art can transcend the language of politics to become an effective tool for narrating the truth, persuading public opinion, and recording the historical memory of nations.

Migratory flamingos return to Norouzlu Wetland

Social Desk

Following the full restoration of the Norouzlu Wetland in Miandoab, West Azarbaijan Province, the first flock of migratory flamingos has arrived at the site, announced the head of the city's Department of Environment.

Speaking to IRNA, Mousa Jasour stated that environmental guards spotted the first group of flamingos during their routine daily patrols.

He noted that this marks the first time in two decades that the Norouzlu Wetland has been completely filled with water.

"Given the ideal conditions, we anticipate a significant influx of migratory birds in the coming days for nesting and breeding," Jasour said.

He attributed the birds' return to the high level of security, an abundant food supply, and the ample water cur-



● IRNA

rently available in the wetland.

The official further explained that parts of the 1,200-hectare protected area are now covered with dense reedbeds and trees, providing a safe haven for birds to build nests. While a vital stop for migratory species, the wetland also serves as a year-round habitat for various aquatic and semi-aquatic wildlife.

To ensure the safety of the ecosystem, a ranger station has been established

on Norouzlu Hill. Environment officers monitor the area to prevent trespassing, poaching, or potential fires in the reedbeds.

The Norouzlu Wetland, which was designated a protected area in 2012, derives its water from the Zarrineh-Rud River. With its unique vegetation, including tamarisk and cypress trees, it stands as one of the most valuable habitats in southern West Azarbaijan Province.

Resilient Iran pharma withstands strikes

Social Desk

During the recent conflict, 25 pharmaceutical units and companies in Iran were targeted through direct and indirect attacks.

Hadi Ahmadi told IRNA that among the facilities hit, two major pharmaceutical entities — Tofigh Daru and the Pasteur Institute of Iran — sustained direct US-Israeli strikes.

"Tofigh Daru is a critical producer of raw materials for hospital-grade and anti-cancer medications," Ahmadi



● IRNA

noted, adding that the Pasteur Institute, a century-old institution and one of the country's primary vaccine

production hubs, was also a target of direct aggression. "We have 240 medicine manufacturing plants and

80 raw material factories operating across the country. Currently, there are no disruptions in the production of essential medicines and vaccines, and all units remain operational," Ahmadi emphasized.

Ahmadi reassured the public that strategic reserves are in very good condition. He also highlighted that Iran's network of 18,000 pharmacies serves as a vital part of this strategic reserve, playing a key role in ensuring medicine accessibility.