

Pezeshkian calls for integrated management across oil, gas sectors

‘Flare gas recovery as a technical, economic necessity’



Economy Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian called for integrated communication and management systems across the country's oil and gas sectors, saying the industry should align with global standards, advanced technologies and modern monitoring systems. According to IRNA, Pezeshkian made the remarks during a visit to the Na-

tional Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) on Sunday, where he said that despite progress in monitoring and surveillance, some issues could still go undetected, according to IRNA. He said developing integrated management systems and expanding training in new technologies should be among the Oil Ministry's priorities. Pezeshkian also described flare gas recovery as a technical and economic ne-

cessity, saying better management and the use of modern technologies could reduce energy waste and improve refinery efficiency. He called for faster implementation of flare gas recovery projects. The remarks come as Iran has accelerated flare gas recovery projects under the current administration. According to the National Iranian Oil Company, flare gas collection has increased from

about 5 million cubic meters per day at the start of the administration to more than 9 million cubic meters per day, with a target of 35 million cubic meters per day by the end of the government's term. The Oil Ministry has said projects including the \$1.6 billion NGL 3100 development are expected to eliminate several major flare sites, significantly reduce gas wastage and supply additional feedstock to the country's gas network. The World Bank has identified Iran as one of the world's largest gas-flaring countries. Its latest report said gas flaring in Iran increased 12% in 2024, reflecting higher oil output and insufficient investment in projects to capture and utilize associated gas. Pezeshkian also described technological development as essential for competing in global markets, saying the oil industry should continuously assess its strengths and weaknesses to improve productivity. He also urged officials to send specialists abroad for technical training if needed to update their expertise. During the visit, the president received briefings on oil and gas production and consumption, energy management during the country's two recent wars, flare gas recovery and the progress of national oil industry projects. Iran came under a 12-day US-Israeli attack in June 2025 and another war that began in late February 2026, during which parts of the country's oil and gas infrastructure were targeted.

Gov't prioritizes war-scarred regions as summer power strains loom



Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi speaks to reporters in Hormozgan Province, Iran, on July 19, 2026. ● IRNA

Economy Desk

Iran's Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi said on Sunday that regions suffering from war-related infrastructure damage are being prioritized for electricity supply, as the country grapples with enemy attacks on its power grid and peak summer heat. Aliabadi, accompanied by the Executive Vice President and the Minister of Roads and Urban Development, arrived in the southern Hormozgan Province on Sunday morning for a one-day trip to attend a provincial crisis meeting, IRNA reported. "During recent attacks, the enemy has targeted four 400-kilovolt transmission lines," the minister added. Iran has remained on a war footing since a US-Israeli coalition launched attacks on the country in late February, particularly targeting civilians and infrastructure during a 40-day conflict. After a pause of several weeks, the US resumed attacks on Iran's infrastructure on July 7, it said, after three vessels were targeted in the Strait of Hormuz. "During recent attacks, the enemy has targeted four 400-kilovolt transmission lines," the minister said. Emphasizing the implementation of a nationwide "Solidarity Initiative" for the fair distribution of electricity, Aliabadi stated that under current conditions, priority for energy supply is given to provinces whose infrastructure has been attacked and are in greater need. "Currently, Hormozgan Province and southern provinces, which are facing problems caused by enemy attacks for various reasons, including damage to power plants, transmission lines, and substations, are being prioritized, and we are repairing and managing this damage to restore normal conditions as quickly as possible," he said. Aliabadi stressed that the prioritization is not limited to the north or south of the country. He noted that any region subjected to attacks and in need will be prioritized, adding that the country would collectively share its available resources and would not be alone in this path. "We ask the public to assist the power grid in these difficult days by conserving energy, even if it is just by turning off a single light bulb," he said. Iran was already experiencing energy shortages prior to the attacks, a situation that has been exacerbated by the conflict and the peak of the summer heat season. Separately, Ardeshir Mozkouri, CEO of the Iran Grid Management Company, said at a peak load management meeting that rising temperatures across the country are driving up demand. Based on current forecasts, if consumption trends continue, electricity demand this week will surpass this year's recorded peak of 74,801 megawatts, he added.

Joint chamber: Tajikistan ...

Shirdel said a delegation of Iranian traders and business representatives recently visited Tajikistan, where they held talks with the country's Chamber of Commerce and Investment Committee on coordinating imports through Tajikistan. Shirdel encouraged Iranian businesses to consider Tajikistan as a destination for trade and exports to the region, saying their linguistic and cultural similarities provide favorable conditions for expanding economic cooperation. He said that if trade restrictions on southern routes continue, Iran could import part of its raw materials, industrial machinery and essential goods through Tajikistan and Central Asia from China, Kazakhstan or Russia. Shirdel also said repeated increases in Tajikistan's customs tariffs during the current calendar year had slowed Iranian exports and reduced bilateral trade. He said the tariff hikes were mainly aimed at raising Tajikistan's budget revenues and called on Iran's Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade and Trade Promotion Organization to negotiate preferential tariffs with the Tajik side. Although Shirdel did not provide further details, news reports indicate that Tajikistan's latest customs tariff increases, which took effect in late June, are part of a broader regional trend. For example, Uzbekistan raised import tariffs on cement from Tajikistan from \$35 to \$300 per metric ton in November 2024, with such reciprocal measures affecting the regional trade environment. Shirdel said annual trade between Iran and Tajikistan currently stands at about \$300 million, with more than 95% of the trade historically in Iran's favor, although efforts have recently been made to increase imports from Tajikistan. He said Iran mainly imports cotton, aluminum and edible oils from Tajikistan, while its exports to the country include food products, steel products, detergents, construction materials and petrochemical products. Shirdel said Tajikistan has substantial reserves of metals, minerals and particularly gold, although most of its gold mines are controlled by Chinese companies. He said Iran could cooperate with Tajikistan in developing the country's mining sector. He added that Iran's main competitors in the Tajik market are China, Turkey and Russia, but said Tajik consumers generally prefer Iranian products when locally available because of the two countries' shared language and cultural ties.

AEOI raps US strike on Darkhovin nuclear plant construction site



Iran's Darkhovin nuclear power plant, Khuzestan Province ● IRNA

Economy Desk

Iran's Atomic Energy Organization (AEOI) on Sunday condemned a US strike on the construction site of the Darkhovin nuclear power plant in the southwestern province of Khuzestan, saying the attack violated international law and targeted a peaceful nuclear facility under international safeguards. In a statement, the AEOI said the attack took place at about 3:39 a.m. local time, when the US launched "a number of projectiles" at the site under construction, Press TV reported. The organization described the attack as "an aggressive and barbaric act in violation of international law," saying it was intended to obstruct Iran's scientific progress and independence. "The Darkhovin construction site, one of the symbols of the Iranian nation's scientific dignity and self-sufficiency, was targeted in an unjustifiable terrorist attack," the statement said.

The AEOI stressed that the facility is "fully subject to the supervision and safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) under the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement between Iran and the Agency," adding that its activities are "peaceful and lawful." The organization also cited IAEA General Conference Resolutions 444 and 533, saying they explicitly declare threats or attacks against peaceful nuclear facilities to be contrary to international law, the UN Charter and the IAEA Statute. Calling on the IAEA to respond, the statement said Iran expects the agency's director general "to move beyond silence and inaction, condemn this crime, which further undermines the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the nuclear safeguards system and the IAEA Statute, and fulfill his statutory responsibilities."

IAEA opens investigation into reports
In a statement, the IAEA an-

nounced that it has opened an investigation into the reports, saying, "The facility is in the very early stages of construction and contained no nuclear material when last visited by the IAEA." "While the reported attack is not believed to pose any radiological risk, DG @rafaelmgrossi (the director general, Rafael Grossi) reiterates the call for military restraint in the vicinity of all nuclear-related sites," the statement added. The IAEA also confirmed it has contacted Tehran about the reports and will provide further information as it becomes available. Iran's Atomic Energy Organization also urged "peace-loving, freedom-seeking and truth-seeking countries" to condemn the "aggressive act" and reject a course of action that poses an increasing threat to international peace and security. The statement concluded that such actions "will not create the slightest disruption in the Iranian nation's iron will," but will instead strengthen the determination of the country's nuclear specialists to continue pursuing "progress, advancement and self-sufficiency." The United States has resumed its criminal aggression against Iran since last week by targeting civilian sites across southern Iranian provinces. A US-Israeli coalition launched attacks on the country in late February, particularly targeting civilians and infrastructure during a 40-day conflict.