CEO: International Flights Resume Following Israeli-Imposed War

TABRIZ – **The Islamic Republic of Iran has resumed international flights following a 20-day hiatus due to Israel's war of aggression, conducting more flights from airports across the country.**

Passengers on board an Iranian ATA Airliner were flown from Tabriz, the capital city of East Azarbaijan Province, to Istanbul in Turkey on Saturday.

Ramin Azari, the Director General of East Azarbaijan Airports Company, told IRNA that the flight was carried out after inspectors from the Civil Aviation Organization approved the safety of two runways at Tabriz Shahid Madani International Airport following reconstruction work.

Both runways at the airport had been damaged in the Israeli war of aggression and taken out of service, but they are now fully operational for both domestic and international flights, he said, adding that the repair work was completed earlier on Saturday.

Also the same day, the Islamic Republic of Iran Airlines announced plans to launch direct flights to Dubai from Shiraz, the capital of Fars Province, and Ahvaz, the capital of Khuzestan Province, on July 7 and 9 respectively.

And a day earlier, Imam Khomeini International Airport, located near Tehran, welcomed its first foreign flight as the Flydubai flight from the United Arab Emirates landed there.

Israel attacked Iran in an unprovoked act of aggression on June 13, assassinating top military officials and nuclear scientists in targeted strikes, and killing hundreds of civilians in attacks on residential areas.

The United States joined the war on June 22 when it bombed three major Iranian nuclear sites.

Iran responded powerfully, launching drones and ballistic missiles on key targets inside the Israeli-occupied territories, inflicting heavy damage there. The Islamic Republic also fired missiles at a major U.S. airbase in Qatar in response to the strikes on the nuclear facilities, hours before a ceasefire came into force on June 24.

Official Outlines Plans for Expansion of Traditional Medicine Economy

TEHRAN -- **The Iranian government has reaffirmed its strong support for the development of the medicinal plants and traditional medicine sector as a key component of the country's knowledge-based economy.**

According to Damoun Razmjouyee, Secretary of the Headquarters for the Development of the Knowledge-Based Economy of the Sciences and Technologies of Medicinal Plants and Traditional Medicine, a range of targeted programs have been launched to support innovation and strengthen the sector's value chain.

Razmjouyee highlighted the strategic importance of this field, stating, "The medicinal plants and traditional medicine sector is one of the strategic capacities of the country's knowledge-based economy, which, with targeted planning and support for technological ideas, can play a decisive role in the development of production, employment, and exports."

He emphasized that the effective use of local capacities has created a unique opportunity for expanding Iran's knowledge-based economy. Among the top priorities for the Headquarters this year are developing the value chain, standardizing products, supporting innovative projects, facilitating market entry for companies, and enhancing cooperation between academia and industry.

The economic significance of this sector is also gaining increasing recognition. Seyed Seif Sahandi, Deputy Head of the Technology Development Headquarters for Medicinal Plants and Traditional Medicine, recently announced that Iran's herbal and traditional medicine market is projected to reach between $13 billion and $15 billion in the upcoming Persian calendar year, which begins on March 21.

Breaking down the figures, Sahandi said the production and harvesting segment alone is valued at $1.5 billion to $2 billion, while exports account for around $0.5 billion. Imports of medicinal plants and essential oils are estimated at $0.45 billion. The value chain for medicinal plant industries is projected at $10–11 billion, and that of traditional medicine at $2.7–4 billion.

Iran's agricultural capacity in this sector is also considerable. Over 224,000 hectares are currently under cultivation for medicinal plants, with saffron accounting for 50% of the total. Cumin, rosehip, and fixweed follow with 15%, 10%, and 5% shares respectively.

Report: Iran's Oil Production at Records Not Seen Since 1978

TEHRAN - **The report published on Thursday by Bloomberg said that Iran had produced about 4.3 million barrels per day (bpd) of crude plus another 725,000 bpd of other liquids in 2024.**

The report cited figures from the UK Energy Institute and its Statistical Review of World Energy, which was published last month.

It said that an oil production of nearly 5.1 million bpd has not been seen in Iran since the last year of Shah's reign when the oil industry in the country was still receiving huge investment and technology from Western companies.

However, it admitted that Iran has achieved a remarkable feat by raising its oil output to record levels at a time of increased American pressure.

"Developing its vast condensate and natural-gas liquids riches without foreign help wasn't easy," said the report by Javier Blas as he insisted that domestic companies, including those run by Iran's elite military force the IRGC, have contributed to the country's efforts over the past decade to develop its energy sector.

Iran has reported consistent rises in its oil production and exports since 2021, just two years after U.S. President Donald Trump enforced a harsh regime of sanctions on buyers of Iranian oil during his first term in office.

Estimates suggest Iran's oil exports, which mostly go to private buyers in China, have well exceeded 2.4 million bpd in recent months.

Bloomberg's report said Iran's rising oil exports and the revenues it generate would be key to the country's reconstruction efforts after a recent Israeli aggression.

It also reiterated that Israel's 12-day aggression against Iran, which ended on June 24, had failed to affect Iran's massive oil industry and its daily operations.

OPEC+ to Boost Oil Production by 548,000 Barrels Per Day in August

NEW YORK (AP) — **Eight members of the OPEC+ alliance of oil exporting countries say they will boost production by 548,000 barrels per day in August in a move that could further reduce gas prices this year.**

The group that includes Saudi Arabia and Russia made the decision at a virtual meeting Saturday. They cited a "steady global economic outlook" and low oil inventories.

Oil prices spiked sharply last month during the bloody, 12-day conflict between Israel and Iran but then tumbled back down as the U.S. helped broker a peace deal after dropping bombs on three of Iran's key nuclear sites.

Saudi Arabia holds significant influence in OPEC+ as the dominant member of the OPEC producers' cartel, and Russia is the leading non-OPEC member in the 22-country alliance.

Along with Saudi Arabia and Russia, the group that met Saturday is made up of Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Algeria and Oman.

A statement said the new measures were in accordance with a December decision to put off increasing production at that time, but gradually increase it by 2.2 million barrels per day over an 18-month period starting in April and ending in fall 2026. The delayed ramp up reflected weaker-than-expected demand and competing production from non-allied countries.

Renewable Revolution With Solar-Hydro Synergy

TEHRAN - Iran is preparing for a transformative shift in its energy landscape with a strategy aimed at expanding renewable energy capacity, combining the reliability of hydroelectric power with the growing potential of solar energy.

In a country long dependent on fossil fuels, the move to integrate solar power into the existing dam infrastructure signals a clear pivot towards a more sustainable energy future.

The government's latest initiative, which envisions the construction of solar power plants adjacent to hydroelectric dams, takes advantage of Iran's natural resources and existing infrastructure.

With a mix of innovative ideas and practical solutions, this project promises to improve grid stability, reduce carbon emissions, and help the country achieve its ambitious energy goals.

Iran's strategy is built on a simple yet powerful concept: synergy. The government recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Iranian Renewable Energy and Electricity Efficiency Organization (SATBA) to build solar power plants at strategic dam sites across the country.

Officials emphasize that by combining solar with hydroelectric power, Iran can effectively integrate renewable sources into its energy mix while reducing dependence on fossil fuels.

The goal is to generate 500 megawatts of new solar capacity, a significant step towards achieving Iran's broader renewable energy targets.

Given Iran's high number of sunny days, solar power is uniquely positioned to provide a reliable and sustainable energy source for the country.

But perhaps the most forward-thinking aspect of this energy transition is the move towards floating solar power plants.

With land prices in urban centers rising sharply, the need for alternative locations for solar farms has never been more urgent. Iran, facing similar constraints, is turning to its extensive network of dams and reservoirs as potential sites for floating photovoltaic (PV) systems.

The country has already launched a pilot floating solar project at Mahabad Petrochemical Company, utilizing domestically developed floating structures. This initial success paves the way for larger-scale projects and exemplifies the country's growing expertise in renewable energy.

The floating solar model eliminates the need for expensive land near population centers. These plants can be sited on reservoirs, reducing the need for costly transmission infrastructure and mitigating issues like dust accumulation, which hampers the efficiency of desert-based solar farms.

The environmental benefits of floating solar power are significant, particularly for a country like Iran, which faces both water scarcity and a harsh climate. By positioning solar panels on bodies of water, Iran can significantly reduce water evaporation from its reservoirs.

This not only helps conserve vital water resources but also improves the overall efficiency of the solar panels, as the cooling effect from the water can boost their performance by 5 to 10 percent.

From an economic perspective, floating solar can provide a more cost-effective solution to Iran's growing energy demands. With its ability to increase efficiency, reduce water evaporation, and offer a more sustainable source of energy, floating solar could ultimately help reduce electricity production costs over time, contributing to the country's long-term energy stability.

One of the most compelling aspects of this initiative is the potential synergy between solar power and hydroelectric energy.

Iran has a long history of hydropower generation, with the Iranian Water and Power Development Company responsible for over 70% of the country's hydroelectric plants.

These plants have traditionally provided a reliable and steady source of energy. However, the development of new hydroelectric projects has slowed in recent years due to financial constraints and other challenges, chiefly drought.

By combining solar energy with hydroelectric power, Iran could reduce the intermittency issues that typically plague renewable energy sources.

Solar energy is generated during the day, while hydroelectric power can provide a steady flow of electricity at night. This complementary relationship could help stabilize the grid, ensure a more consistent power supply, and enhance the overall resilience of the energy system.

Moreover, during dry seasons when water levels in hydroelectric reservoirs are low, solar energy production could help offset the reduced output from hydroelectric plants.

Conversely, during rainy seasons, when solar energy generation is limited, hydroelectric plants could pick up the slack. This synergy could offer a more reliable energy mix and enhance Iran's ability to meet electricity demand throughout the year.

Despite the promising potential, Iran's renewable energy ambitions are not without challenges. The technical complexities of floating solar systems in fluctuating water levels present engineering hurdles.

Additionally, the financial costs of such projects are higher than land-based solar farms due to the need for specialized materials and installation processes.

Furthermore, while Iran is rich in natural resources, securing the necessary capital for large-scale renewable energy projects remains a significant challenge. Years of international sanctions and domestic financial pressures have limited Iran's access to investment, which could delay the pace of development.

Nevertheless, the global success of floating solar systems—exemplified by large-scale projects in China, India, and South Korea—demonstrates the viability of this technology.

With rising land costs and increasing pressure to conserve water resources, floating solar is becoming a key part of the renewable energy solution worldwide.

In this context, Iran's initiative to integrate floating solar into its renewable energy strategy places it at the forefront of an emerging trend. By capitalizing on its vast water resources and ample sunlight, Iran is well-positioned to make significant strides in both energy production and water conservation.