
FACTBOX - Georgia's importance as an energy transit state

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Georgia, fighting Russia over Georgian pro-Russian separatist region of South Ossetia, is an energy highway to the West with two major pipelines routed via the capital Tbilisi and a number of mid-sized oil export ports.

Georgia and other transit states have an obligation to ensure the security of the pipelines, which carry oil and gas from the Azeri section of the Caspian Sea.

From Tbilisi, the links head south into Turkey, away from the breakaway South Ossetia region, the scene of the fighting.

They are particularly valued by the European Union because they reduce dependency on Russian supplies and do not cross Russian territory.

But exports of gas and oil have been disrupted following a blast in Turkey earlier this week.

The Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) claimed responsibility for the attack. A fire on the pipeline was extinguished on Monday and it may take around two weeks to repair it.

Oil and refined products exports from some Georgian Black Sea ports have been also cut. Following is a factbox on Georgian and Azeri oil and gas export routes.

BAKU-CEYHAN PIPELINE Capacity - 850,000 barrels per day. The BP-led pipeline to the Turkish Mediterranean coast is a strategic link for both Azerbaijan and Europe as it became the first line on the former territory of the Soviet Union to ever bypass Russia.

Its capacity is due to rise to 1.2 million barrels per day (bpd) sometime next year after another BP-led group expands output at its Azeri offshore fields. Capacity may rise even further to 1.6 million bpd when the link is joined by oil firms working in Kazakhstan.

The pipeline has been out of action since Wednesday, due to an explosion its Turkish stretch. BP declared force majeure on its exports from the pipeline's Mediterranean terminal at Turkey's Ceyhan and is trying to re-route volumes to Georgian and Russian Black Sea ports.

GEORGIAN BLACK SEA OIL PORTS BATUMI - capacity 300,000 bpd, but ships 200,000 bpd including 100,000 bpd of Exxon Mobil's Azeri oil and 100,000 bpd of refined oil products from Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, which come via the Caspian Sea to Azerbaijan to travel to the port by rail.

The port currently ships volumes from Exxon after Kazakhstan ordered to halt deliveries.

POTI - Capacity - 100,000 bpd of refined products which arrive from Azerbaijan by rail. Not operating after Georgia said Russia heavily bombed the port.

Russia denied it.

KULEVI - The newly built terminal has capacity of 100,000 bpd which can

gradually rise to 200,000. It ships mainly refined products from Azerbaijan by rail. Trading sources say the port operates but volumes have been significantly reduced.

SUPSA - The port has been out of operation for many months after BP put Baku-Ceyhan on stream. It can ship up to 150,000 bpd of Azeri crude getting it by a pipeline. BP has already started diverting crude from Ceyhan to Supsa, located outside the conflict area.

RUSSIA'S NOVOROSIISK Azerbaijan can also ship around 90,000 bpd of crude via an existing pipeline to Russia's Black Sea port of Novorossiisk, where its Azeri Light crude is mixed with Russian Urals crude. Baku has been underusing the route in the past years as supplies run at around 50,000 bpd. Russia has allowed to increase shipments via the route following problems on Baku-Ceyhan.

BAKU-TBILISI-ERZURUM GAS PIPELINE Also known as the Shakh-Deniz Pipeline, takes gas from the BP and Statoil Shakh Deniz field in the Caspian Sea to Erzurum in Turkey.

It began exports to Turkey in 2007 and will eventually be able to carry 20 billion cubic metres of gas.

BP said it was forced to reduce associated production of gas condensate from the field due to problems at Baku-Ceyhan.

(Compiled by Barbara Lewis, Margaret Orgill and Dmitry Zhdannikov, editing by William Hardy)
