

Increase in Dam Construction

Iran ranks first in the world in terms of design and safety measures in dam construction, managing director of Iran Water Resources Management Company said, adding the construction projects for about 125 dam reservoirs with a capacity of 19 billion cubic meters are underway.

Speaking to reporters in Khorramabad, Lorestan, Alireza Almasvandi said, "This is while Iran still ranks third in the world in terms of the number of dam construction projects, implementation, and engineering capacities," Mehr News Agency reported.

He went on to say that some 120 reservoir dams with the capacity of 43 billion cubic meters of water are operational in the country.

Almasvandi put the regulatory volume of Iranian dams at 32 billion cubic meters and said "This is while at present 158 reservoir dams are under study. We hope that these studies are completed speedily in light of correct planning schemes. It is forecast that we will experience the highest level of dam construction in the country in the post-Islamic Revolution era in 2013 and 2014."

Celebrations for acquiring self-sufficiency in dam construction will be held in the Iranian month of Esfand (February 20-March 20), added the official.

He emphasized that all Iranian dams are designed by local experts and built by local companies.

The official further said needed parts for hydro-mechanical and electrical equipment are manufactured locally.

"All these issues hint at self-sufficiency and independence of the country in the arena of dam building," he noted.

Electricity Exports to Iraq

Iran will increase electricity exports to Iraq to over 1,000 MW after establishing a new transmission line. Deputy Energy Minister Mohammad Behzad made the announcement in a meeting with his Iraqi counterpart Adel Hamid Mehdi, IRNA reported. Behzad attached importance on the immediate execution of the project. The 400-KV Karkheh-Al-Emareh transmission line is 73 km in length, 70 km of which will be established in Iraq. This project is being executed with 178 towers and in three phases.

Preliminary operations such as topography and equipping of the workshop have been completed. Tavanir Company is the executor of the project funded by the Exports Development Bank of Iran. Currently, Iran exports 650 MW of electricity to Iraq.

On Friday, Iran's electricity exchanges with neighboring states reached 1,150 MW. The largest share of electricity imports pertained to Turkmenistan with over 223 MW and the largest share of exports of over

528 MW was transmitted to Iraq.

The total volume of electricity exports to Afghanistan, Iraq, Republic of Azerbaijan, Pakistan and Turkey was 755 MW while the total volume of electricity imports from Armenia and Turkmenistan was 395 MW.

Figures released by Iran's Ministry of Energy say the country's power exports topped 4,918 MWH between March 21 and December 28, which amounts to a 6.12-percent rise in comparison with the same period in 2009.

The Islamic Republic currently transfers electricity to and from Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Pakistan, the Republic of Nakhjavan, Turkey and Turkmenistan.

Iran's exchange of electricity transmission with the countries reached 1,341 megawatts in late December, which reflect that most imports originate from Armenia, amounting to 237 megawatts, and highest exports are destined for Iraq, totaling 650 megawatts.

The total of Iran's electricity exports to Afghanistan, Iraq, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Pakistan and Turkey reached 878 megawatts and the total of imports from Armenia and Turkmenistan was recorded at 463 megawatts.

Earlier in December, the Iranian Energy Ministry said Jordan, India, Oman, Qatar, Russia, Syria, and the UAE are the new countries that have expressed interest in acquiring electricity from the Islamic Republic.

Iran seeks to become a major regional exporter of electricity and has reportedly attracted more than \$1.1 billion in investments to build three new power plants.