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Türkiye-Iraq energy ties gain momentum

The potential of Türkiye-Iraq relations is such that it can pave the way for collaborations in areas beyond oil, experts opined, as Ankara and Baghdad are expected to work on a new, more comprehensive energy deal

ISTANBUL - DAILY SABAH

» THE new energy deal between Türkiye and Iraq, which foresees broadening cooperation from merely oil to other areas such as gas, petrochemicals and electricity, is expected to be structured by taking into account the strategic potential of the Development Road project, according to a report yesterday.

Ankara announced earlier this month the

termination of a decades-long agreement covering the Kirkuk-Ceyhan oil pipeline and has submitted a draft proposal to Baghdad to renew and broaden an energy agreement between the two countries. The deal, which has been in effect since 1973, will expire on July 27, 2026. In line with this, Türkiye has initiated negotiations with Baghdad for a more comprehensive energy cooperation.

The new energy deal is planned to facilitate the transportation of Iraqi oil, with the

central governments of Türkiye and Iraq expected to aim for an outline that takes into account the strategic potential of the Development Road, according to an Anadolu Agency (AA) report yesterday.

According to information obtained by AA, the new agreement is expected to cover not only oil transportation but also multi-dimensional partnerships in natural gas projects, the development of hydrocarbon fields, investments in refineries and petrochemi-

cal, electricity generation and transmission and energy trade. Experts note that the new energy agreement to be formed between the two countries will be structured around the opportunities offered by the successful completion and sustainable functionality of the Development Road initiative.

The Development Road is envisaged as a high-speed road and rail link, running from Iraq’s port city of Basra on the Gulf to the Turkish border and later to Europe and

is seen as a major project linking Ankara and Baghdad. The multibillion-dollar project is also backed by Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Sercan Çalışkan, a researcher at the Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies (ORSAM) specializing in Iraqi studies, emphasized that relations between the two countries have evolved to a strategic level in the field of energy and that this process is linked to the Development Road project. PAGE 5

OPINION

FATİH OĞUZHAN İPEK

Revisiting the Türkiye-Iraq pipeline agreement

» THE 1.6 MILLION barrel per day Kirkuk-Ceyhan pipeline has been offline since 2023, when the International Court of Arbitration ruled that Türkiye breached the contract by directly trading oil with Iraq’s Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) beginning in 2013 and asked Ankara to pay \$1.4 billion (TL 56 billion) in damages for allegedly facilitating unauthorized Iraqi oil exports between 2014 and 2018. The court also awarded nearly \$600 million to Türkiye because of the low capacity of the pipeline and unpaid transportation fees. Overall, Türkiye appealed the decision. It’s worth noting that Ankara wouldn’t incur any financial losses because the deal includes an indemnity clause. Any award would be paid by the KRG, therefore by the Iraqi party.

Ever since the halt of the pipeline, Baghdad and Irbil have strived to reach an agreement for the implementation of the federal budget amendment, an internal political and legal dispute between Baghdad and Irbil, not that of Iraq and Türkiye. On July 17 of this year, the meeting between Iraq’s Federal Ministry of Oil and the International Oil Companies operating in Iraq’s Kurdish region ended with a resolution in favor of Baghdad. Iraq’s federal government has urged setting the transportation fee at \$16 per barrel, a move seen as a key milestone toward breaking the standoff over the resumption of crude exports through the Iraq-Türkiye pipeline. PAGE 8



A car damaged during Russian missile and drone strikes burns, Kyiv, Ukraine, July 31, 2025. (Reuters Photo)

RELENTLESS RUSSIAN ATTACKS KILL 8, WOUND 82 IN KYIV

RUSSIA launched overnight missile and drone strikes on Kyiv, killing at least eight people, including a 6-year-old boy, and injuring 82 others, Ukrainian officials said yesterday. Ten children, the youngest a 5-month-old girl, were among the injured, Kyiv City Military Administration head Tymur Tkachenko said.

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Trump envoy in Israel as int’l criticism of Gaza atrocities grows

» U.S. PRESIDENT Donald Trump’s Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff arrived in Israel yesterday to discuss ending the nearly 22-month war in Gaza, where severe food shortages and mounting civilian suffering have fueled growing international criticism.

Gaza’s civil defense agency reported dozens of Palestinians killed late Wednesday when Israeli forces opened fire on a crowd attempting to block an aid convoy – the latest in a spate of near-daily incidents of desperate aid seekers being shot.

The Israeli military claimed to have fired “warning shots” as Gazans gathered around aid trucks, but said it did not know of casualties in the incident. An AFP correspondent saw the bullet-riddled corpses of Palestinians in Gaza’s al-Shifa hospital.

Jameel Ashour, who lost a relative in the shooting, told AFP at the overflowing morgue that Israeli troops had opened fire after a crowd surged toward the convoy.

“When people saw thieves stealing and dropping food, the hungry crowd rushed in hopes of getting some,” he said.

With indirect cease-fire and hostage release negotiations between Hamas and Israel at an impasse, Witkoff will meet Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to discuss humanitarian aid and the “next steps” on Gaza.

He may also visit a U.S.-backed humanitarian group distributing food in Gaza, according to Israeli reports. PAGE 10

Tourism revenues jump 7.6% to nearly \$26B in first half of 2025

» TÜRKİYE’S tourism revenues jumped by 8.4% in the second quarter of the year, continuing a positive momentum from the first three months to bring the total income from the key sector to nearly \$26 billion in the first half of the year, official data showed yesterday.

From April to June, tourism income came in at close to \$16.3 billion, up 8.4% from the year ago, the data from the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat) revealed. At the same time, the number of departing visitors increased by 2%

compared to the same quarter of the previous year to 16.4 million, TurkStat said.

In six months of 2025, total revenues reached some \$25.78 billion, marking the highest-recorded revenue for the half year ever, according to officials. The figure was up 7.6% from the same period in 2024, the data showed.

Announcing the figures, Culture and Tourism Minister Mehmet Nuri Ersoy hailed the increase in revenues and per capita nightly revenue, despite what he described as “very challenging” first six months. PAGE 5

Action plan to reduce massive food waste kicks off

» THE PRESIDENTIAL Food and Agriculture Policy Board has launched an initiative to tackle the growing problem of food waste in Türkiye, which amounts to 23 million tons annually.

According to the “2025 Waste Report” prepared by the Waste Prevention Foundation of Türkiye (TISVA), global food waste continues to increase annually. While approximately one-third of all food produced globally is either lost or wasted, this results in an annual cost of around \$1 trillion (approximately TL 40 trillion) to the global economy.

The U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) revealed in its 2025 Global Outlook Report that 343 million people in 74 countries experienced acute food insecurity in 2024, a 10% increase from 2023. Meanwhile, the U.N. Environment Programme (UNEP) reported that 1.5 billion tons of food are wasted globally each year, meaning one in every five plates ends up in the trash. While one in every 11 people in the world goes to bed hungry, more than 25,000 children die each day due to hunger and malnutrition. PAGE 3

Trump gets his way on tariffs, but can global trade system endure?

» U.S. President Donald Trump has largely succeeded in convincing nations to accept higher tariffs on exports to the U.S.; yet for now, some experts see little threat to the postwar trend of lower duties, although potential changes in the global trade system are visible.

Since World War II, most politicians and economists have viewed free trade as a pillar of globalization, enshrined in the 1947 signing of the GATT accord.

It was the precursor to the World Trade Organization (WTO), which now has 166 members and covers 98% of global com-

merce. “What we’ve learned in the postwar is that lower tariffs are better for the prosperity of your own country,” said Richard Baldwin, a professor at the IMD Business School in Switzerland. “And it’s also good if other countries lower their tariffs, so we have a vibrant international economy,” Baldwin, who was a member of former U.S. President George Bush’s Council of Economic Advisors, told Agence France-Presse (AFP).

Trump, however, has embarked on a punishing trade war, claiming that deficits with other nations show they are “ripping off” the U.S. PAGE 4

Iran vows no talks before compensation, slams new US sanctions

» IRAN will demand U.S. compensation for losses from last month’s war before resuming nuclear talks, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told the Financial Times yesterday, signaling a tougher stance toward the Trump administration.

“They should explain why they attacked us in the middle of ... negotiations, and they have to ensure that they are not going to repeat that (during future talks),” Araghchi told FT in an interview in Tehran. “And they have to compensate (Iran for) the damage that they have done.”

The report said Araghchi and U.S. spe-

cial envoy Steve Witkoff exchanged messages with each other during and since the war, with the Iranian official emphasizing to his American counterpart the need for a “win-win solution” to end the long-running standoff over Iran’s nuclear program.

Iran’s chief nuclear negotiator told the newspaper that Iran needs real confidence-building measures from their side after Witkoff proposed resuming talks. He said this should include financial compensation, without giving details and assurances, that Iran would not be attacked during negotiations again, according to FT. PAGE 10

