

Three Iranians killed in petrol rationing riots

Contributed by Administrator
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At least three Iranians killed in petrol rationing riots underlining the oil-rich country's fuel vulnerability
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For lack of refining capacity, the oil-rich country imports 40% of the gasoline and oil products consumed by its population of 70 million. This dependence constitutes one of Iran's military vulnerabilities, curtailing its ability to endure a long war. Another is its elderly air force, consisting mainly of American warplanes of 1970s vintage.

The Islamic Republic has resorted to three emergency measures to alleviate its fuel shortage and boost allocations to the military in case of war:

1. Indiscriminate petrol rationing for all types of private vehicle and taxis in every parts of the country regardless of higher consumption in the cities compared with rural areas.
2. Instructions to Iran's agents in the Gulf region to buy up as much fuel as they can lay their hands on, upping the price for fast delivery.
3. To instill popular confidence in the Islamic regime's competence to run the country, various energy products including gas are heavily subsidized. A liter of gasoline costing 50 cents to buy is sold for 5 cents. Iran spends more than \$8 billion a year on imported refined fuel products. According to DEBKAfile's sources, \$2.5 billion worth of fuel products were purchased in the last three months alone. Rationing civilian consumption was calculated to release funds for laying in military supplies.

The Tehran government failed to take into account that the rationing decree would spark violent anti-government protests – in actual fact demonstrations against government sleaze.

DEBKAfile discloses why Iran never built refineries at home:

The Islamic regime decided to allocate national funds for establishing oil refineries in Malaysia and Indonesia to enable its top officials to skim millions of dollars off those budgets and funnel them into their personal businesses and private bank accounts in the Far East. Like many a corrupt regime, its leaders fondly believed the people knew nothing of their abuses. The violent protests which the fuel rationing decree sparked across the country told them the population had not been fooled. (from Debkafile)