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## **RUSSIAN COMPANY BRINGS MORE OIL ONLINE IN IRAQ**

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-- Production from three new wells brought online at the Badra oil field add to the total daily output from OPEC-member Iraq, a Russian field operator said.

Russian energy company Gazprom Neft, which operates the field in Iraq's eastern Wasit province, said the three new wells are producing around 24,000 barrels of oil per day.

"The total number of wells at the Badra field has now reached nine, all of which are in free-flow operation, with total production increasing to 64,000 bpd," the company said in a statement.

Among the 13 members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, crude oil production in April increased the most from Iran and Iraq. Production from Iraq was around 4.4 million bpd in April, a 33 percent increase from the average rate for full-year 2014.

In May, the Iraqi government and the International Monetary Fund agreed on the terms of a \$5.4 billion loan arrangement with low interest rates to help offset the economic woes emerging from conflict and lower crude oil prices.

Iraq called on international oil companies from BP to Exxon Mobil to cut their investment plans for the country in order to clear debt. This has a spillover affect, however, as it reduces oil-generated revenue in the Iraqi budget, which in turn starves the country of the funds needed to support military operations against the Islamic State terrorist group.

Wasit province is far from conflict that's been centered in Sunni-dominated western parts of Iraq. Gazprom Neft said it's in the process of drilling three new wells in the Badra field and a fourth should be commissioned by August.

According to Gazprom Neft, the field holds an estimated 3 billion barrels of oil.

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Kaynak/Source: