

Plane carrying Iranian refinery materials lands in Venezuela

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This file photo shows a plane belonging to Venezuela's Conviasa airline. (Photo: teleSUR)

Caracas, February 14 (RHC)-- A plane carrying Iranian catalysts has landed in Venezuela to help jumpstart the oil refineries in the South American country amid a fuel crisis, a report says. It was confirmed over the weeked that the shipment of the catalysts to the 955,000 barrel-per-day (bpd) Paraguana Refining Complex, a crude oil refinery center in western Venezuela, arrived on Saturday.

According to Reuters, an Airbus plane belonging to Venezuelan state-run airline Conviasa arrived at the Las Piedras airport on the Paraguana peninsula on February 11 after taking off from Tehran the previous day, with a stopover in Belgrade.

The plane was carrying catalysts intended for the state oil company Petroleos de Venezuela (PDVSA), said the source, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, adding that over a dozen further similar flights are expected.

Last year, Iran sent more than a dozen flights to help restart the 310,000 bpd Cardon refinery and alleviate acute gasoline shortages in Venezuela. It also dispatched three flotillas of vessels carrying fuel to the Latin American state.

The Iranian catalysts, the report noted, are expected to help restart gasoline production at Amuay, whose catalytic cracker has been offline since late 2019, in anticipation of planned maintenance at Cardon.

Iran and Venezuela, both OPEC members, have boosted their economic ties in recent years. Close Tehran-Caracas relations have infuriated the U.S., which has imposed illegal sanctions on both countries with the aim of crippling their oil sectors.

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