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Colombia: State-run Oil Company Losses Due To Rebel Sabotage

by Barbara Khol

Category/Department: General
Published: Tuesday, July 16, 1991

On July 12, spokespersons for the state-run oil company Ecopetrol told reporters that since Jan. 1, rebel sabotage has caused a production loss of 7 million barrels of crude oil. The Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN) have carried out at least 127 attacks against oil pipelines, storage tanks, and transportation facilities in the first six months of 1991. At present oil production is averaging 400,705 barrels daily, a 5.3% decline from 1990 levels. Production capacity is about 500,000 bpd. Of the lost output, 5 million barrels would have been exported. Ecopetrol estimated a $87.5 million loss of export revenues. The largest pipeline, the Cano Limon, which transports 230 million barrels of oil daily from the Venezuelan border to the Caribbean port of Covenas, has been a favorite target. Sections of the nearly 740 km. long pipeline have been dynamited 40 times this year. (Basic data from AP, 07/12/91)

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