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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Poland Restores Druzhba Pipeline After Leak Discovery

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Polish law enforcement cordon off a road near a pipeline leak in October 2022. **Christian Ender / dpa / TACC**

Poland has resumed pumping oil through a key pipeline linking Russia to Europe that was damaged over the weekend, the Polish pipeline operator PERN said Tuesday.

Though flows through the Druzhba pipeline have dropped sharply after Russia invaded Ukraine, its operation was partly halted late Saturday after Polish operators discovered a leak at one of its sections. PERN said there was no indication of a third party causing the leak.

"PERN's technical services restored full functionality to the damaged pipeline on Monday evening," the Polish operator said in a statement.

Druzhba's repaired second section delivers oil to German customers, PERN said, adding that the first section remained operational throughout the incident.

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> !!◙@pern_sa wznowił przesył w naprawionej nitce rurociągu. Trwa dokładne oczyszczenie i rekultywacje terenu. Na miejscu do zakończenia prac pozostają służby ochrony środowiska spółki. ◙◙ https://t.co/hoPrtqs8jp pic.twitter.com/DS4Vaz64bZ
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> — Anna Trzeciakowska (@AnnaTrzeciakow3) August 8, 2023

Germany stopped buying oil from Russia in January, while the European Union placed an embargo on Russian oil supplies in December.

But Druzhba has been temporarily exempted from EU sanctions for Central European members Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, which still rely on energy supplies from Russia.

Kazakhstan supplies Germany with its own crude oil via Druzhba, with plans to deliver 1.2 million tons in 2023.

PERN said a task force has been set up to establish the cause of Saturday's Druzhba leak.

Druzhba is one of the world's largest pipelines with a maximum capacity of 2 million barrels per day.

The pipeline's infrastructure has been hit several times since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022.

Russia blamed the damage on Ukraine, which has not claimed responsibility.

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