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Morocco to import oil after refinery fire

Import of 90,000 tonnes of diesel oil is to offset supplies destroyed by fire which damaged main oil refinery.

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CASABLANCA, Morocco - Morocco is to import 90,000 tonnes of diesel oil to compensate for supplies destroyed by a fire that ravaged the country's main oil refinery, economic daily L'Economiste said on Thursday.

Oil companies Total and Afriquia had issued a call for tender, the paper said. The imported diesel oil will enter the north African country via the port of Jorf Lasfar, some 200 kilometres (125 miles) south of the capital Rabat.

Butane gas will also be imported, the paper said.

A huge fire devastated the Mohammedia refinery near Rabat on Wednesday. The refinery is operated by the SAMIR company, which provides Morocco with the bulk of its refined oil products.

It caught fire when floodwaters caused by torrential rains lifted waste oil and brought it into contact with hot parts of the refinery.

The Economist said butane imports were needed because 75,000 tonnes of the gas were currently underwater at Mohammedia as a result of the flooding.

It said the cost of the damage to the refinery could only be evaluated once it was cleaned and restarted.

The Mohammedia refinery is 67.3-percent owned by Saudi-Swedish group, Corral Holdings AB.



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