

Ashgabat Plans Gas Launch

By [The Moscow Times](#)

November 15, 2012

The  Moscow Times

Turkmenistan plans to begin production at the world's second-largest gas field next year, a senior Turkmen official said, opening up new U.S.-backed supply routes to Europe and Asia at the risk of Russian opposition.

The Central Asian nation plans to build two new pipelines to carry gas from the Galkynysh field. One would run to Pakistan and India, and the other would cross the Caspian Sea en route to the European Union, easing the bloc's dependence on Russian gas.

"We can launch industrial output at Galkynysh next year," said the Turkmen government official, who declined to be named because he is not authorized to speak publicly on the matter.

"Right now, three gas-processing plants are being built, and two of them are certain to be ready in January or February," he said on the sidelines of an energy conference.

(Reuters)

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