

# Turkmen Field Launched

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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GALKYNYSH GAS FIELD, Turkmenistan — Chinese President Xi Jinping helped inaugurate the world's second-largest gas field in Turkmenistan on Wednesday, showing Beijing's growing clout in Central Asia as it seeks resources for the Chinese economy.

The start of production from the Galkynysh field was also a major development for Turkmenistan, the world's fourth-largest holder of gas reserves, which seeks new export routes for the fuel to minimize its dependence on pipelines to Russia, which resells the gas.

Xi and his Turkmen counterpart, Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov, simultaneously pressed two symbolic start buttons — two globes the size of basketballs decorated with national flags — to ignite flares at a gas processing plant that towered over the surrounding landscape of sun-baked desert and sand dunes.

China has fast supplanted Russia as the main importer of gas from Turkmenistan, Central Asia's top producer, taking 20 billion cubic meters (bcm) last year via a pipeline commissioned in late 2009, Turkmen official data show.

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