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# Russia Willing to Discuss Ukraine Gas Price if Kiev Pays Debt

By The Moscow Times

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Russia will be ready to hold more talks with Ukraine on its natural gas supplies only when Kiev pays its gas debt to Moscow, Deputy Energy Minister Anatoly Yanovsky said on Monday.

"We want contract liabilities to be fulfilled ... To continue talks, the debt should be paid," Yanovsky told reporters.

Moscow says Kiev owes it $3.51 billion for gas, and has told Ukraine it must pay in advance for its gas from June.

Russia's top natural gas producer, Gazprom, supplies about 30 percent of the gas consumed in Europe, and ships about half of that via Ukraine.

Russia's Energy Ministry said last week Gazprom would send a preliminary bill for June before May 16 and deliver gas only in volumes that reflected what payments it had received before

May 31.

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