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Russia's Gazprom Says Ukraine Has Paid for 5 Days of Gas

By The Moscow Times

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A woman walks along the footpath near the headquarters of the Gazprom company in Moscow.

Russian natural gas exporter Gazprom said on Thursday that it had received a $15 million prepayment from Ukrainian state energy firm Naftogaz following warnings supply could be cut off if no payment was made.

The payment is enough for 45.6 million cubic meters of gas, or about five days' supply at current rates of delivery, Gazprom said by e-mail.

Gazprom had warned supply to Kiev could be cut off as soon as Friday if no payment was made.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday he did not want a repeat of pay disputes that have seen the Russians cut off supply to Ukraine three times in the last decade.

Once Gazprom's largest export market, Ukraine has managed to reduce its reliance on direct

gas imports from Russia in recent years.

Its imports from Russia in January and February fell by half from a year earlier, according to gas transit monopoly Ukrtransgaz.

Russia and Ukraine have agreed to discuss a new gas deal before a current pact ends at the end of March.

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