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Uzbekistan to Import Russian Gas for First Time Amid Energy Crisis

By AFP

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Gazprom Chairman Alexey Miller (R) and Uzbek Energy Minister Jurabek Mirzamakhmudov. **Gazprom**

Uzbekistan will import natural gas from Russia for the first time ever as the Central Asian country faces an energy crisis, the authorities in Tashkent announced on Thursday.

Despite being home to a wealth of natural resources, including gas, Uzbekistan has faced energy shortages amid historically cold temperatures this winter.

Like its Central Asian neighbors Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, Uzbekistan suffers from frequent power and heating outages due to its aging Soviet-era infrastructure.

An Energy Ministry spokesperson told AFP that the deliveries of Russian gas, which have been agreed with Russian energy giant Gazprom, would begin on March 1.

Uzbek gas firm Uztransgaz said the country had never imported Russian gas before.

The volume of the agreed deliveries and the cost of the transaction have not been made public.

The agreement comes as Moscow seeks to pivot to the Asian market following its slashing of energy exports to Europe amid tensions with the EU over its invasion of Ukraine.

European countries have also sought to reduce their reliance on Russian gas since the war broke out in February.

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