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## **RUSSIA TO SUSPEND GAS SUPPLIES TO ARMENIA**

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Supplies of Russian natural gas to Armenia will be suspended on Thursday due to capital repairs on a pipeline in Russia, the Armenian national gas distribution network announced on Wednesday.

The Gazprom-Armenia operator said they will resume 30 days later, after the completion of construction works at a North Caucasus section of the pipeline transporting Russian gas to Armenia via Georgia. Gas supplies to individual and corporate consumers will continue without limitations in the meantime, it added in a short statement.

The company owned by Russias Gazprom energy giant will presumably tap its massive underground gas storage facilities north of Yerevan during that period. It might also use additional volumes of natural gas which Armenia imports from neighboring Iran.

Armenia already asked Iran to supply it with much more natural gas during a similar month-long suspension of gas imports from Russia last summer. A Georgian section of the pipeline underwent major repairs at the time.

Armenia has imported up to 500 million cubic meters of Iranian gas annually ever since it built in 2008 a gas pipeline connecting it to the Islamic Republic. By comparison, Russian gas supplies to the South Caucasus country total around 2 billion cubic meters.

With Armenia paying for Iranian gas with electricity, Iran is due to at least triple the gas supplies after the construction of a third power transmission line connecting the two states. Work on the \$120 million line is slated for completion in 2019.

Natural gas generates more than one-third of Armenias electricity. It is also used, in liquefied or pressurized forms, by most car owners in the country.

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Kaynak/Source: