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Pakistan pins hopes on LNG, but pipelines still a priority

For more than a decade, Pakistan has suffered a natural gas supply/demand imbalance severe enough to constrain its economic growth. The crisis came to a head in 2015 when gas-fired power stations were left without sufficient gas, compressed natural gas (CNG) re-fuelling stations were shut down, industrial sectors (such as textiles and fertilisers) were left without energy and feedstock, and costly oil imports soared. Now, LNG is coming to the rescue and the most optimistic projections see Pakistan becoming a major importer – of up to 30 mtpa – during the 2020s. The government expects volumes to reach 15 mtpa within three years, making Pakistan the fifth-largest LNG importer based on 2016 trade. But two major import pipelines, from Iran and Turkmenistan, will still be essential if unconstrained demand is to be met and the country given the chance to fulfil its economic potential.



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