

Turkmenistan to Privatize Companies

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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ASHGABAT, TURKMENISTAN — Turkmenistan will privatize state-held assets in its tightly regulated economy in coming months, but it looks set to keep control of the vital oil and gas industry, officials said Saturday.

"I have just signed an order to approve Turkmenistan's privatization program for 2013 to 2016," state media quoted President Gurbanguly Berdimukhammedov as saying at an expanded government meeting Friday.

"Selloffs of some state companies will start at the beginning of this year," he said without giving a time frame.

The president made no mention of the oil and gas sector in the country, which sits on the world's fourth-largest natural gas reserves.

A government official, who requested anonymity, said the sector would remain under state control.

The government compiled a list of other "strategic companies of national significance" that will not be privatized, the official said.

(Reuters)

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