# LNG Unlimited

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# Qatar aims to resume normal LNG exports "within weeks"

**Qatar expects to restore normal liquefied natural gas production "within a few weeks," Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani told the Financial Times, provided the US and Iran establish a "hotline" to ensure safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz.**

**LNG carrier docked at a loading terminal at Ras Laffan**

All eyes are on whether the "US-Iran hotline," described by mediators as a crisis-management channel for the strait, holds long enough to support uninterrupted tanker traffic. Any durable easing in transit risk would be critical for Qatar, one of the world's top LNG exporters, and for buyers across Asia and Europe that rely on its cargoes.

QatarEnergies is already repositioning LNG carriers back into the Middle East Gulf as loadings resume and is understood to be seeking short-term charter coverage. The return of ballast vessels marks a shift after weeks of disruption in the beleaguered waterway. Seven empty Qatar-linked LNG tankers entered the Gulf between June 11 and June 23, the first such movements since the regional escalation began, according to Kpler and Vortexa ship-tracking data. Additional empty ships are still en route to the Ras Laffan terminal.

The vessel movements are closely watched because Qatar is

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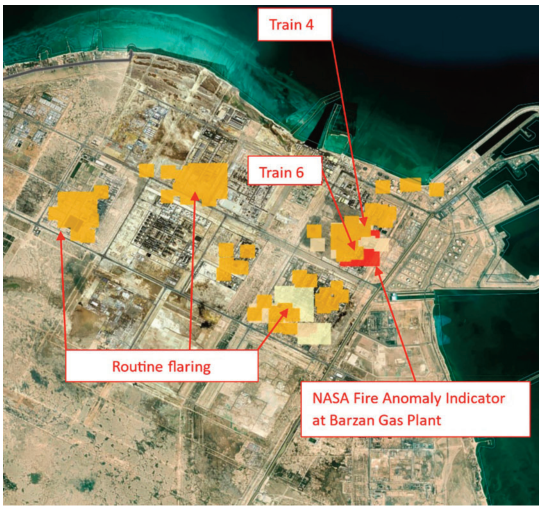
# Barzan blast reframes Ras Laffan's restart risk




*Ras Laffan Industrial City. Source: NASA FIRMS as of 23 June 2026*

No LNG carriers are at the Ras Laffan berths and no loadings under way, our vessel tracking data shows, and Sunday night's explosion and fire at the Barzan plant points to a slower return to market for the complex than its recent restart signals had implied.

Barzan is a domestic-supply plant, feeding power generation and water desalination rather than the liquefaction trains, so the blast does not directly remove export capacity. Its significance lies in confidence, not volume.

By QatarEnergy's own account the explosion came during the start-up of operations, so the operator was bringing this part of the complex online having judged it ready to do so.

"The explosion shows that judgement did not hold. Whether the cause was undetected damage from the March strikes or a fault in the start-up itself, the read on the readiness of this part of the post-strike complex was wrong," our Data Analytics Editor, Alex Wilk commented.

That is what travels beyond

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## UNLIMITED AGENDA

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the world's second-largest LNG exporter, with 77 mtpa capacity before the Iran conflict. Any disruption to its shipping schedule can ripple through Asian spot markets and charter rates. QatarEnergy signalled to customers earlier it could restore about 50 percent of production capacity within a month once safe navigation through Hormuz resumes, and up to 80 percent within two months.

### US toll threat lifts TTF winter prices

Bullishness abounds for LNG prices and winter 2026/27 contracts at Europe's benchmark TTF gas trading hub after US President Donald Trump threatened to impose a US toll on shipments through the Strait of Hormuz. For spot prices, the sell-off after the peace memorandum was short-lived.

If no final and stable peace agreement can be reached, the United States intends to compensate itself for its services as the region's "guardian angel," Trump said on his online platform. The peace deal, in contrast, mandates Iran to not charge any fees during the 60-day negotiations.

Shipping companies and fleet owners, including Chevron and Mitsui OSK Lines, have opposed the transit fees, arguing that charging for passage through international waters violates established UN conventions and could undermine freedom of navigation.

Greece, the world's largest merchant-fleet owner, called the US-Iran toll plan "unacceptable," with Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis saying the agreement "cannot include a sort of a fee that ships will have to pay every time they cross the strait."

### Bearish on the front, bullish on winter

Against this backdrop, analysts are bullish on bullish TTF Q3-26 and winter 2026-27 contracts as Hormuz flows will still take months to normalise. Signature of the long-delayed US-Iran peace memorandum triggered a sharp selloff across the TTF curve, but Energy Aspects doubts that the deal gives LNG tanker owners the confidence to resume Hormuz transit.

"We would caution against treating the MoU as a rapid fix," analyst warn, suggesting: "Any recovery will be gradual and lengthy, particularly if Iran retains some control over traffic during the next phase of negotiations." Until transit through the beleaguered waterway normalises in practice, Europe's gas storage deficit – created by the prolonged supply disruption – will keep impacting TTF winter pricing.

A divergence — bearish flow on the front, accumulating length on the winter — captures market's central tension.

Short-building was rampant prior to MoU signing: Energy Aspect's momentum models having crossed the key systematic trigger of €48 per Megawatt-hour (MWh), with 8.5k lots of flow-to-trade execution expected — systematic selling that compound the recent fundamental short-building. But analysts cautioned this short-selling should not be mistaken for a shift in the underlying supply picture, which remains tight into the third quarter of 2026.

TTF gas prices fell after the peace deal, but fundamentals limit how much those losses can persist, considering Europe is struggling to secure enough LNG cargoes as the injection season advances. ■

## India's ONGC pivots to gas

India's state-run Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) is repositioning itself as a "gas-and-oil" company as natural gas overtakes crude in its production mix, Chairman Arun Kumar Singh said, underscoring a structural shift in the company's growth strategy.

"Gas is now slightly more than oil in our portfolio," Singh told analysts, adding that future output growth will be driven primarily by gas as crude production remains broadly flat in the absence of major discoveries.

"We should call ourselves a gas and oil company, not an oil and gas company," he said, according to local media reports.

The shift reflects rising domestic gas demand, supportive pricing reforms and new field developments, which are boosting output and improving project economics.

"Gas is a more valued fuel in the Indian context, and ONGC is gradually becoming a more gas-heavy company," Singh said, noting that gas production has already surpassed oil and is expected to expand further in the coming years.

He said oil output is likely to stagnate, while gas production will grow as new fields come online. Pricing reforms have made gas increasingly attractive, with "new well gas" linked to 12 percent of crude prices, enhancing returns.

ONGC expects annual gas output to grow by around 7-8 percent, supported by a pipeline of projects scheduled to start up over the next fiscal year.

Exploration and production (E&P) accounts for roughly two-thirds of ONGC's business, with gas playing an increasingly dominant role. Singh said "new well gas" already contributes about a quarter of total gas output and could rise to 30-36 percent in the near term, eventually overtaking output from mature fields. ■

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Barzan. Sunday forces a question the operator now has to answer without ambiguity: what else across the complex is less ready than it is assumed to be?

None of this means another incident is coming, or that liquefaction trains other than Trains 4 and 6 are damaged. The exact cause at Barzan remains officially open. But, in Wilk's view, it means the restart can no longer be treated as a low-risk ramp on a known-good complex. The risk profile around Ras Laffan's return has changed. ■

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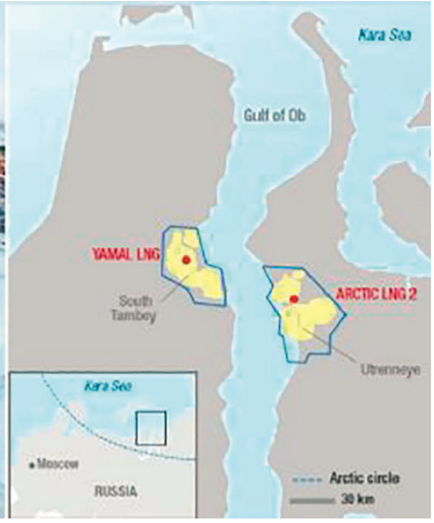
# All Russian LNG trade banned for EU operators from 2027




Trading and reselling Russian LNG will be forbidden for EU-based companies starting from 2027 – regardless if the Russian LNG is destined for the European Union or not, EU Energy Commissioner Dan Jorgensen specified.

TotalEnergies, Naturgy and SEFE are all importing Russian LNG under long-term contracts, but Jorgensen stressed in a letter to the ship brokerage Poten and Partners that this practice will be prohibited from next year.

Patrick Pouyanne, CEO of TotalEnergies acknowledged earlier the company might be forced to completely stop exports from the Yamal LNG project, where it is contracted for 4-5 mtpa as a 20 percent equity holder. Initially, the French major sought to redirect shipments from Yamal LNG to buyers outside of Europe, notably Asian utility buyers.

Naturgy has nearly $11 billion in Russian LNG offtake – less than a quarter of its total commitments – that will be affected by the ban. The Spanish company is contracted for 2.5-3 mtpa from Yamal LNG through to 2041.

Germany's state-owned SEFE has offtake contracts for 2.9 mtpa offtake from Yamal LNG running through 2038/2040, and has imported rising volumes of Russian LNG. Imports increased by 19.3 percent last year, as SEFE acted as the buyer of 58 cargoes with a total volume of 4.1 million tons.

### Further EU and UK sanctions to hit Russian LNG carrier sector

Both the European Union (EU) and the UK Government have proposed new restrictions on Russia's LNG shipping sector, including a ban on the sale of LNGCs to Russian interests and new restrictions targeting vessels that support Moscow's energy export network. The latest packages would expand sanctions on Russia's shadow fleet, adding 30 vessels to the list that already contains more than 600 ships.

Also proposed by the EU are sanctions against vessels that provide support services to the 'shadow' fleet, including bunkering, logistics and other operational assistance. However, these measures still require approval from member states.

The latest restrictions are intended to make it more difficult for Russia to expand its LNG export capabilities, particularly in the Arctic, where Ice Class LNGCs are essential for transporting cargoes from projects, such as NOVATEK's Yamal LNG and Arctic LNG 2 developments, industry sources said. ■

# Exxon to supply LNG to South Africa's first regas terminal

Exxon Mobil has signed a preliminary LNG supply agreement with Zululand Energy Terminal (ZET), South Africa's planned first LNG import facility, as the US energy major seeks to grow its global LNG supply to more than 40 mtpa by 2030.

**Vopak's Zululand Energy Terminal at Richards Bay**

The planned terminal is part of South Africa's pivot away from coal- to gas-fired power generation. Andrew Barry, chairman of ExxonMobil LNG Market Development said the agreement "reflects our global LNG experience and our commitment to support South Africa's energy security with reliable supply."

ZET is being built on South Africa's east coast at Richards Bay. Phase 1 will include a floating storage unit and an onshore regasification system with capacity of around 3 million metric tons per annum (mtpa), or roughly 400 million standard cubic feet (mscf) of gas per day.

Phase 2, which will bring the project's total expected cost to $1 billion, will add extra regasification capacity and onshore storage, boosting total volumes to 4.5 mtpa, or about 600 Mscf/day, ZET director Oliver Naidu specified.

### Eskom as foundation customer

South Africa's state power utility Eskom earlier this month entered an LNG supply agreement with ZET underpin its planned 3,000 MW gas-to-power project in Richards Bay. The deal will make Eskom a "foundation customer" at the proposed regas terminal, which will offer open-access LNG imports. ■

# Developing countries won't solely rely on US LNG, Cheniere says

Cheniere Energy does not expect developing countries put all eggs in one basket by relying solely on US LNG for their energy security, Chief Finance Officer, Zach Davis said at a conference in Houston.

Buyers are currently hesitant — not only in developing countries, but also in Europe — to sign long-term offtake agreements, as a potential interim deal to end the US-Iran war and reopen the Strait of Hormuz could bring substantial volumes of Qatari LNG back to the market.

Davis acknowledged Qatar's position as one of the world's largest LNG suppliers and said Cheniere would welcome its full return, as it would give buyers more options to diversify supply, pricing, and contract structures. Qatari cargoes are typically priced against Brent crude, while US LNG is indexed to Henry Hub gas prices.

Negotiations between US LNG exporters and prospective European buyers have generated plenty of interest but few firm commitments. Meanwhile, Southeast Asian buyers — notably Pakistan and Bangladesh — are eagerly awaiting a steady stream of Qatari shipments.

"Creating demand is more important than capturing margins in the current price environment," Davis said, stressing Cheniere will stay disciplined in its capacity expansion drive, prioritising shareholder value over scale.

Though Cheniere has the financial means to fund a $20 billion expansion at Sabine Pass, it chose a smaller, roughly $6 billion build-out at its flagship terminal. Reflecting buyers' continued reluctance to commit to long-term US LNG offtake. ■

**Cheniere's Corpus Christi LNG terminal**

# Solar, wind batteries squeeze Asia's LNG demand outlook

Rising renewable capacity and cheaper batteries are weakening the investment case for LNG import terminals and gas-fired generation, with Ember signalling out China as the clearest example of that shift.

China added 278 GW of solar and 79.8 GW of wind last year, lifting combined solar and wind capacity above 1,400 GW and beating its 2030 target by six years.

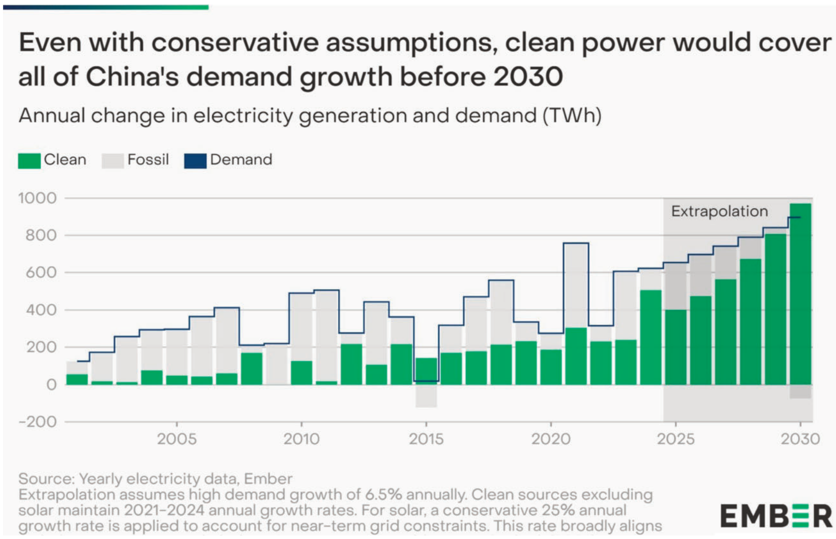
Asia now accounts for more than 60 percent of global solar and wind capacity, while 79 percent of the region, including Japan, India, Vietnam, China and Pakistan, is ahead of the U.S. on solar installation, Ember figures show.

That trend matters for LNG exporters because power-sector gas demand in many Asian markets has been expected to provide the next leg of LNG growth. But the combination of rapidly falling battery costs, grid-scale storage deployment and stronger energy-security concerns is changing the economics.

The International Energy Agency expects battery storage capital costs to fall by as much as 40 percent by 2030, making renewables more competitive as a firm power source.

Cost of battery storage could fall below $160 per kWh on average this year, from $375 per kWh in 2019, a drop that is making solar-plus-storage a more credible alternative to LNG-fuelled peaking plants and mid-merit generation. Ember has separately said lithium-ion battery pack prices fell to $115 per kWh in 2024, down 84 percent over the past decade.

Importing LNG for power generation is no longer deemed a secure option for generation baseload electricity supply, considering the Iran war rattled global fuel markets. Governments and utilities are looking harder at domestic renewables and storage as a hedge against commodity-price shocks. Analysts say that is especially relevant for import-dependent Asian economies, where gas price volatility has often translated into electricity-cost spikes. ■




# JERA takes first LNG from Barossa

Japan's JERA has received its first LNG cargo from Australia's Barossa project, marking the start of contracted deliveries. Barossa has a nameplate capacity of about 3.4 mtpa, and JERA is entitled to lift roughly 425,000 tpy of LNG, reflecting its equity participation.

The cargo was delivered by the LNG carrier Sohshu Maru to JERA's Futtsu terminal on June 12. Barossa, located offshore the Northern Territory, began production in late 2025, with gas processed at the Darwin LNG plant and exported to global markets.

The Barossa project is operated by Santos and is a backfill source for the Darwin LNG facility, replacing declining output from the Bayu-Undan field.

Australian supply remains a key pillar of JERA's procurement strategy as the utility expands its portfolio to mitigate market volatility. In addition to Barossa, JERA holds interests in the Wheatstone LNG project and the Scarborough gas development, the latter expected to start production later in 2026. ■

# Cyprus to finalise long-delayed LNG terminal

Cyprus is to finish its long-delayed LNG import terminal, Cyprus Energy Minister, Michael Damianos told Platts in an interview. He stressed that while Cyprus is also focused on building renewable capabilities, it will also need LNG-fuelled power for years to come to complement intermittent solar output.

"Gas is definitely going to be a bridge fuel, and it's going to be a bridge fuel for maybe three decades — if not three, then it's going to be two," Damianos said.

Cyprus' Government has taken about a decade to develop the terminal to be located at the southern port of Vasilikos, as the project has been beset by delays and disputes, including the termination of the initial EPC contract with a consortium led by China Petroleum Pipeline Engineering. Currently, the project is around half-built. The government aims to select a new contractor for the remaining work by the end of this year, Damianos said, although he did not provide further details on when the Vasilikos terminal could be completed.

**Birds eye view of Cyprus Vasilikos LNG terminal**

Cyprus faces a degree of energy isolation unique among EU member states, with no direct connection to external electricity sources. A major project to develop a subsea interconnector with Greece is not expected to link it to the wider EU grid before 2031 "The political decision is actually to finish [the terminal] because we need gas and the fastest way of actually having gas in Cyprus is to finalise the project," the minister said, stressing: "It's not something that we're pushing for at this point in time."

Damianos said the expectation is that the most advanced of these projects — Cronos — will reach a final investment decision (FID) by the end of June. Pending that, the field, which boasts an estimated 3 trill cu ft of gas, should begin production in the first half of 2028.

Cronos' gas will be processed and exported as LNG via Egypt's Damietta terminal. Damianos insisted "the intention" is for "at least 80 percent" of the volumes to go to Europe, though he acknowledged stakeholders Eni and TotalEnergies could take the gas anywhere once liquefied. ■

# China readies second terminal for Arctic LNG 2 cargoes

PipeChina is gearing up to add a second regasification terminal for cargoes from Russia's sanctioned Arctic LNG 2 project. The newly built Longkou LNG terminal in Shandong province meant to receive shipments before October.

The Longkou LNG terminal, under construction in the coastal city of Yantai in Shangdong province, has completed its mechanical build phase and is expected to be ready for commissioning before October — in time for peak winter demand, sources told Reuters.

Longkou would expand PipeChina's options of receiving Russian LNG beyond its Beihai terminal and provide a lifeline for Novatek's sanctioned $21 billion Arctic LNG 2 project. A second regas terminal would allow PipeChina to take greater advantage of buying discounted Russian LNG, while giving the 19.8 mtpa Arctic LNG 2 terminal another outlet to support project economics.

**Render by Nanshan Group of PipeChina's Longkou LNG terminal**

China has been openly buying sanctioned Russian LNG since August 2025, when the first Arctic LNG 2 cargo arrived at PipeChina's Behai terminal in Guangxi. Since then, 41 cargoes or 2.6 mtpa from Arctic LNG 2 have been landed and discharged at Beihai, along with three cargoes from Russia's sanctioned Portovaya terminal, according to Kpler estimates.

Beijing is keen to get hold of more sanctioned Russian cargoes, sold at a steep discount to market prices in the Pacific Basin. Novatek reportedly slashed cargo prices by 30-40% since August 2025 to attract Chinese buyers who appear undeterred by Western sanctions.

Longkou was chosen because, like Beihai, it is operated by state-run PipeChina and is situated closer to the Koryak floating storage unit in Russia's Far East, where Arctic LNG 2 cargoes are reloaded, Reuters was told. Upon completion, the Longkou will have a regas capacity of 5 mtpa — slightly smaller than the 6 mtpa at Beihai. ■

## GTT wins tank order at PipeChina's Yuengdong terminal

GTT has received an order from China Chengda Engineering Co. to design three very large onshore LNG storage tanks for PipeChina's Yuedong LNG terminal in Jieyang, Guangdong province.

The French LNG containment specialist said each tank will have a capacity of 240,000 cubic meters, which it described as the largest onshore LNG storage tank size in the world fitted with its GST membrane full-containment technology. GTT did not disclose the value of the order.

The project is part of the Yuedong LNG terminal, a strategic hub in South China's natural gas network. Existing project data show the terminal has a nominal capacity of 2.0 million tonnes per year (mtpa) and is designed to handle LNG carriers of up to 267,000 cubic meters.

The new tanks are intended not only for LNG storage but also for future flexibility, GTT specified, with possible service for other liquefied gases such as ethane, propane, ethylene and ammonia. Delivery of the three tanks is scheduled for the fourth quarter of 2028.

The timing suggests PipeChina is rushing to build out storage and import capacity at Yuedong, which already forms part of a broader transport corridor linking coastal receiving infrastructure with inland demand centers in Guangdong and beyond. ■

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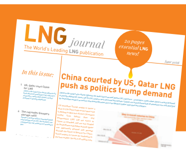


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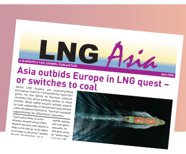


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