
Russia and Slovenia could ink deal on South Stream - Report

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RIA Novosti reported that Ljubljana and Moscow have finalized an agreement to take the South Stream gas pipeline through Slovenia and could sign it in Moscow next week.

Mr Borut Pahor Slovenian Prime Minister is expected to visit Moscow for talks with his Russian counterpart, Mr Vladimir Putin next Saturday. His visit will coincide with the first playoff between Slovenia and Russia for a 2010 World Cup qualifier.

In an interview with the Dnevnik paper, Mr Janez Kopac acting director general of the Energy Directorate at the Slovenian Ministry of Economic Affairs said the two countries could sign the South Stream deal on the day of the match. He said that "We can confirm that after extensive talks with Russia we have reached agreement."

Mr Pahor said the talks led by Economy Minister Mr Matej Lahovnik had been tough. He said issues related to taxation and the security of Russian investment and assets has yet to be solved.

Mr Pahor and Mr Putin met in Gdansk in early September and urged efforts to speed up talks on South Stream. He said that Russian energy giant Gazprom and Slovenia Geoplin Plinovodi will each hold a 50% stake in a joint venture to be set up under the deal.

Dnevnik reported that "Under EU rules, the new company should provide access to the pipeline to other players on the gas market and obtain approval from Brussels before starting to operate."

Slovenia is a member of the European Union.

(Sourced from RIA Novosti)

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