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Construction begins of third unit at Egypt's El Dabaa nuclear power plant

03 May 2023



First concrete has been poured into the foundation slab marking the start of the main construction phase for unit 3 of the El Dabaa nuclear power plant project, and follows the issuing of a construction licence by the Egyptian Nuclear and Radiological Regulatory Authority on 29 March.



A ceremony was held to mark the pouring of first concrete (Image: NPPA)

Chairman of Egypt's Nuclear Power Plants Authority (NPPA), Amged El-Wakeel, said: "This past year has witnessed the achievement of many key project milestones including the first concrete pouring for units 1 and 2 and the delivery of the core catcher for unit 1." He added that the project was "progressing in accordance with the agreed time schedules" and said he was sure "further outstanding achievements will take place with a view of successfully delivering Egypt's first nuclear power plant".

Alexander Korchagin, Senior Vice President for NPP Construction Project Management at Rosatom's ASE, said: "The start of construction of the third power unit of the El Dabaa NPP indicates that the project is gaining momentum. Last year, work was launched at the first and second power units. Today we are taking another important step. For JSC ASE, the construction of power units under the VVER-1200 project is already a familiar and well-established process, which allows us to fine-tune the process of manufacturing equipment and form the backbone of construction personnel." He added that the El Dabaa NPP construction project "has its own individual characteristics - I thank our Egyptian partners for well-coordinated joint work. Together we will achieve success in the implementation of this grandiose project".

The El Dabaa nuclear power plant project - about 320 kilometres north-west of Cairo - is based on contracts between NPPA and Russia's state nuclear corporation Rosatom that entered into force on 11 December 2017. The plant will comprise four VVER-1200 units, like those already in operation at the Leningrad and Novovoronezh plants in Russia, and the Ostrovets plant in Belarus.

The contracts stipulate that Rosatom will not only build the plant, but will also supply Russian nuclear fuel for its entire life cycle. They will also assist Egyptian partners in training personnel and plant maintenance for the first 10 years of its operation. Rosatom is also contracted to build a special storage facility and supply containers for storing used nuclear fuel. Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power is constructing 80 buildings and supplying materials for the non-nuclear turbine islands.

NPPA applied to the Egyptian Nuclear and Radiological Regulatory Authority for construction licences for units 3 and 4 in January 2022, six months after applying for those of units 1 and 2. Construction of unit 1 began in July last year, with that of unit 2 following in November.

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