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Vietnam resumes nuclear power project

HANOI: After an eight-year hiatus, Vietnamese lawmakers have approved a plan to restart the Ninh Thuan nuclear power project, reaffirming the country's commitment to ensuring energy security and achieving its net-zero targets by 2050.

The National Assembly (NA) on Nov 30 passed a resolution, allowing the government to allocate resources and amend relevant laws, including the Law on Atomic Energy, to facilitate the project's revival.

The NA resolution realises a Nov 25 resolution by the Vietnam Communist Party Central Committee, which calls for resuming the study of nuclear energy development and restarting the Ninh Thuan nuclear power project.

The amended Law on Electricity, passed on the same day by the NA, underscores the importance of aligning nuclear power development with the broader national electricity plan.

This concerted effort aims to ensure a steady, long-term supply of energy while diversifying Vietnam's energy portfolio.

Under the new legislation, the government will maintain its monopoly on the construction and operation of nuclear power plants, reflecting the criticalness of nuclear energy in Vietnam's strategy for energy security and sustainability.

Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Hoa Binh on Nov 27 presented the government's proposal, highlighting "nuclear power's growing importance in global efforts to combat

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Nguyen Hoa Binh

climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions".

By the end of August 2024, there were 415 operational nuclear reactors worldwide with a combined capacity of 373,735 megawatts (MW).

An additional 62 reactors were under construction with a total capacity of approximately 64,970MW, Binh said.

He added that nuclear power was now a key focus for 32 countries with operating plants and 20 others exploring its potential to meet growing energy demands while fulfilling climate commitments.

Vietnam faces mounting electricity demands driven by rapid economic growth and industrialisation.

The national power system has a total capacity of about 80 gigawatts (GW) currently, but by 2030 projections indicate an additional 70GW will be required.

By 2050, capacity needs could soar to

between 400GW and 500GW.

"The development of nuclear power will not only diversify energy sources and ensure energy security but also support environmental protection," Binh said.

"Nuclear power offers competitive production costs compared to other energy sources.

"Vietnam is committed to adopting modern technologies to ensure safety and efficiency, he added.

Vietnam's ambition to transform into a digital and green economy is adding pressure on the nation's energy infrastructure.

Information and Communications Minister Nguyen Manh Hung highlighted the increasing importance of digital infrastructure, saying, "The next phase of development will rely heavily on data and data processing, which requires substantial electricity supply." — Viet Nam News/ANN

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