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All clear for construction of 700MW coal plant

Thou Vireak | Publication date 30 June 2020 | 21:54 ICT

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The cooling tower of a coal-fired power plant in Datteln, Germany. In Cambodia, a 700 MW coal-fired power plant in Preah Sihanouk province is set to begin construction soon. AFP/Getty Images

A 700 MW coal-fired power plant in Preah Sihanouk province is set to begin construction soon, as authorities announce they have completed an environmental and social impact review.

The \$1.3 billion project is developed by Cambodia International Investment Development Group Co Ltd (CIIDG), in coordination with partner Huadian Sihanoukville Power Generation Co Ltd.

Huadian Sihanoukville Power Generation is a subsidiary of China Huadian Corp Ltd, one of the five largest Chinese state-owned power generation enterprises. China Huadian invested in the 338MW Russey Chrum Krom hydro-electric dam in Koh Kong province in 2009.

The project was approved by the Council of Ministers in May 2018 under a build-own-operate-transfer (BOOT) concession.

In BOOT projects, private entities receive a concession from the state to provide the capital for construction, design the project, build it to their specifications, own the facility and operate it for an agreed period of time.

At the end of that time, ownership of the facility reverts back to the government and, presumably, revenues flow into public coffers.

Preah Sihanouk Provincial Hall spokesman Kheang Phearum told The Post on Tuesday that following completion of the impact review, provincial authorities met with CIIDG on Monday to discuss the results.

A national meeting will be held for final review and approval soon, he said.

The provincial administration supports the development of the power plant, which he said, will boost the province's electricity supply.

"The project will greatly pay off for the people. It'll create jobs for them and will also reduce electricity imports from neighbouring countries," Phearum said, stressing the tourism and commercial potential of the province.

The project will be built on 54.9ha of land in the province's Stung Hav district, with construction scheduled to be completed by the end of 2022, he said.

"The power sector is absolutely central to the livelihoods of the people and factory business operators. The plant will provide electricity to Preah Sihanouk province and supply other provinces and Phnom Penh," said Phearum.

In December, Electricite du Cambodge (EdC) director-general Keo Rattanak said the proposed power plant will be constructed in two phases, with each phase capable of producing about 350MW (net) of baseload power.

Phase I is expected to be connected to the national grid by 2023, and Phase II is set to be integrated the following year, he said.

CIIDG already operates a \$383 million coal-fired power plant in Preah Sihanouk province. The 270MW capacity plant was also split into two phases, with the second 135MW phase slated to be completed next year.

General Department of Energy director-general Victor Jona told The Post that the Kingdom generates most of its energy from hydropower dams and coal-fired plants, accounting for around 36-40 per cent and 32 per cent of power production, respectively.

The remainder, he said, comes from solar power and imports from neighbouring countries.

He said the project will provide a stable base of electricity supply to all areas in need, such as housing, industry, handicrafts and other services.

"The project will go ahead with the plan and a reasonable price can be acceptable in line with the government's electricity price reduction policy," said Jona.

The Kingdom's power supply reached 3,382MW last year, up 28 per cent from 2,650.26MW in 2018, said a Ministry of Mines and Energy report.

This figure was 18 per cent higher than the Electricity Authority of Cambodia's 2,870MW target for the year.

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The government has decided to place several border provinces in lockdown for two weeks in a bid to prevent the new coronavirus Delta variant spreading further into community. According to a directive signed by Prime Minister Hun Sen late on July 28, the provinces include Koh Kong,



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Cambodia is tentatively planning to reopen schools - at least at the secondary level - when the vaccination of children aged 12-17 is completed, even though daily transmissions and deaths in other age groups remain high. Schools across the country have been suspended since March 20, one month



Two luxury hotels latest quarantine options for inbound travellers

The Inter-Ministerial Committee to Combat Covid-19 has designated two luxury hotels as alternative quarantine options for travellers who wish to enter Cambodia through Phnom Penh International Airport - Sokha Phnom Penh Hotel & Residence and the Courtyard by Marriott Phnom Penh. In a notice detailing guidelines issued



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As the US and its allies joined hands last week to expose what they allege to be China's Ministry of State Security's malicious cyber activities around the world, the attention also turned to Cambodia with the US Department of Justice claiming that four