
LIFESPAN OF ARMENIAN NUCLEAR POWER PLANT TO BE EXTENDED TO 2026

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A process of restoring the resources of the Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) of Armenia and extending its lifespan by another 10 years is currently underway, Yuri Sviridenko, the project manager of the Russian side for the extension of the operation of the Metsamor plant, said during a panel discussion in Yerevan on Friday.

He said according to the estimates the Nuclear Power Plant can remain operational until 2026.

"This deadline has been set based on necessary calculations and engineering research. The study of the remaining 5,000 units of equipment has been completed, power generation has increased by 10-15% due to its upgrading, Sviridenko said, adding that work to further enhance the safety of the plant operation has been done.

He stressed the need to ensure the level of safety of the power unit in accordance with international standards.

Rosatom State Nuclear Energy Corporation has the experience of doubling the lifespan of NPPs. In particular, the lifespan of the Kolkata and Novovoronezh Nuclear Power Plants have been doubled. We offer this concept to the Armenian side as well. Currently, the Armenian side is drawing up its own approaches, Sviridenko said.

He added that about 70% of the contract's loan funds had already been used, and according to the preliminary plan, work on extending the plants operation was to be completed by the end of 2021, but it is not yet clear whether this will be the case. Additional negotiations are now underway, he said.

Nune Aleksanyan, the acting head of the Atomic Energy Department of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure, said that in the near future Armenia will adopt a strategy for energy development until 2040, which is currently under elaboration.

Its preliminary phase is to extend the works of the second unit of the Armenian Nuclear Power Plant until 2036. After 2026, if the safe operation of the NPP is confirmed by studies, the government plans to extend the operation for another ten years until 2036, she said.

Aleksanyan, stressed that the option of extending the lifespan of the functioning reactor is considered the guarantee for the least costly development of the system, while the construction of

a new unit is one of the government's goals. Given the fact that Armenia lacks natural gas and oil resources, as well as the stable nuclear fuel prices in the international market, the Armenian government considers it necessary to have a new station to maintain and strengthen the necessary level of energy security and independence.

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