

Bulgaria is seeking a total of 6.6 billion U.S. dollars to extend the life cycle of its two operating nuclear reactors and build one more, an official said Thursday.

"We make every effort first to extend the life span of the fifth and sixth reactors of Kozloduy nuclear power plant (NPP)," Aleksandar Nenkov, member of the Parliamentary Energy Committee said on behalf of the government and ruling parliamentary majority.

In this regard, the government and the state have to find enough funding, namely about 650 million euros (some 728 million U.S. dollars) to allow these two 1,000 MW units to operate until 2050, Nenkov said while addressing an international seminar on human resources development in nuclear security.

On the other hand, the state sought possibilities to increase the country's nuclear power capacity through the construction of a seventh reactor of Kozloduy NPP, Nenkov said.

"The government has sent invitations to any possible investors that are willing to invest in the construction of this reactor," he added.

However, the government was not willing to take risks because construction of the seventh reactor would cost about 5.3 billion euros, a huge share of GDP," Nenkov said.

This project "undoubtedly" had to be financially secure in a way that would not burden the state budget and citizens in case of a lack of market demand for this electricity, Nenkov said.

"Nevertheless, every investor is welcome, and we will do everything possible to get to a crossing point where the national interest is protected and this seventh unit of Kozloduy NPP be built," he said.

Kozloduy is the only NPP in Bulgaria and provides more than one third of the total annual electricity output of the country.

It has six reactors in total. The first four 440-MW units were shut down in 2002 and 2006 as one of the conditions for Bulgaria's accession to the European Union. Meanwhile, the two operating reactors that were connected to the grid in 1987 and 1991 respectively must be closed in 2020.

source: energyworldmag.com