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EDF says first nuclear chain reaction carried out at Taishan EPR

Reuters Staff

PARIS, June 6, 2018 (Reuters) - French state-controlled utility EDF said on Wednesday that a first nuclear chain reaction has been carried out at the Taishan European Pressurised Reactor (EPR) in China, signalling an initial startup of the long-delayed project.

EDF's head of new nuclear and engineering Xavier Ursat, said on his official Twitter account that Taishan EPR had had its first chain reaction, and it was a good news for the entire nuclear industry.

EDF holds around 30 percent of the project.

China General Nuclear Power (CGN), which holds the remaining stake in the project in the southeastern province of Guangdong, said in April that fuel loading had started at the reactor after it was cleared to go ahead by China National Nuclear Safety Commission.

Construction of the new generation reactor began in 2009 and was expected to be completed by 2013, but had been hit by delays, technical problems and cost overruns that have also affected the EPR reactor series under construction in France and Finland.

A spokesman for EDF said the reactor will undergo a series of initial tests in the coming weeks while gradually being ramped up. The reactor is not yet connected to the electricity grid.

China energy regulators expect the reactor to be completed and connected to the grid by the end of the year. (Reporting by Bate Felix ; editing by John Irish)



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