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CONSTRUCTION OF NAM CHIEN HYDROPOWER PROJECT BEGINS

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KIM GEHEB / MAY 15, 2014 /

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Vientiane Times, May 8, 2014

A groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of Nam Chien Hydropower project was held last weekend in Xieng Khuang province and will hopefully be completed by the end of 2018.

Nam Chien hydropower plant project is valued at US\$250 million and stretches from Keosed village in Khoun district, Xieng Khuang province to Samkothong village in Thathom district, Xaysomboun province.

The newly proposed state-owned investment project will be implemented by Electricite du Laos (EDL) with China Gezhouba Group International Engineering Company Limited as project developer.

EDL Managing Director, Mr Sisavath Thiravong speaking at the ceremony said the hydropower plant would be equipped with an installed capacity of 104 MW and is expected to generate over 450 million KWh of electrical power annually.

“Nam Chien hydropower plant is one of the government’s prioritised policies and it is also in line with the strategic plan 2013-18 of EDL and the government to provide people of the two provinces and other northern parts of Laos with access to electricity,” he said.

Deputy Prime Minister Somsavat Lengsavad, Governor of Xieng Khuang province, Prof. Somkot Mangnomek, Minister of Energy and Mines, Mr Soulivong Daravong, representatives of the Chinese Embassy in Laos and Xaysomboun authorities were present at the ceremony.

According to a senior official from the Ministry of Energy and Mines, EDL is beefing up implementation of the government policies by investing in the installation of transmission lines, building substations and other necessities to ensure rural people have access to electricity and to meet the government timeline of covering 90 percent of Lao families by 2020.

By 2015-16 almost 20 power projects will have been completed with an installed capacity of around 4,000 MW. Currently a total of 23 projects have been successfully completed with an installed capacity of more than 3,200 MW.

The country is building a number of hydropower plants in the hope of providing sufficient electricity for domestic consumption, however the government has also asked members of the public to use electrical energy

economically, especially firms in commercial production.

By doing so the government will be able to decrease its payments for purchasing electricity from neighbouring countries and as a result domestic electrical bills may be cheaper.



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