



Japan's Kansai Electric's Huge Laotian Nam Ngiep 1 Dam Begins Transmitting Power

Construction News Laos Myanmar

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'Second Kurobe Dam' rivals Japan's largest in size and beats it in performance

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Nam Ngiep 1, on the Nam Ngiep River in Laos, rivals Japan's largest dam in size while containing 11 times as much water.

Japan's Kansai Electric Power began transmitting power from a newly built dam in Laos on Friday, marking the completion of a troubled project that now stands nearly as high as the utility's Kurobe Dam, the tallest in Japan.

Nam Ngiep 1 is the first hydropower project of this scale to be independently developed by a Japanese company overseas. Kansai Electric plans to sell electricity from the dam to countries including neighboring Thailand, where demand is high, as well as leverage its experience with the project to win others in Southeast Asia and beyond.

The dam sits in a mountainous area about 150 kilometers northeast of the Laotian capital of Vientiane, on the Nam Ngiep River, a tributary of the Mekong River. At 167 meters tall, it is slightly shorter than the 186-meter Kurobe Dam, completed in 1963, but it stores 11 times as much water. The Laotian dam also generates more power, at 1,600 gigawatt-hours a year to 1,000 GWh.

The utility will operate and sell power from the facility for 27 years before turning it over to the Laotian government.

In 1998, the Japan International Cooperation Agency began a feasibility test for the project, which Kansai Electric joined later. The Japanese utility secured exclusive development rights in 2006 and holds a 45% interest in a joint venture owned partly by Laotian and Thai state-backed enterprises.

This marks the fourth hydroelectric plant currently in operation abroad that Kansai Electric is involved in. The company plans to increase its offshore presence to counter competition at home from new entrants in the retail power market. Kansai Electric is looking at a hydroelectric project in Myanmar as well.

Source: <https://asia.nikkei.com/Business/Energy/Japan-s-Kansai-Electric-brings-huge-Laotian-dam-online>

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