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CSG's Nam Tha 1 Hydropower Station Starts Commercial Operations

Nam Tha, Laos - Minister Khammany Inthirath of the Ministry of Energy and Mines of Laos issued a document confirming the COD of China Southern Power Grid's multi-year Nam Tha 1 Hydropower Station project.

This symbol of the official recognition of the project by the Lao government marked yet another milestone in the development of the station since its launch date.

Starting April 1

Co-founded by Électricité du Laos (EDL), Nam Tha 1 Hydropower Station was China Southern Power Grid's first international hydropower project under the state's framework of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Located within the Nam Tha River, a left-bank branch of Mekong River north of Laos in Bokeo Province, the station was built with the goals of power generation, together with additional services such as flood control and irrigation.

The project adopted the BOT mode, with a construction period of four years, a franchised operating period of 28 years, and installed capacity of 168 MW.



Since construction began on the station's main part in November 2014, the project team has had to overcome many technical and geographic challenges including rigors local environmental concerns, complex geology and inconvenient transportation.

The river was successfully blocked on November 6, 2015 as the reservoir began to fill on June 26, 2018.

The dam's three generators were put into operation on October 26, 2018 and the recent document issued by the Ministry of Energy and Mines of Laos marked the COD of Nam Tha 1 Hydropower Station on April 1, 2019.

Resettling Tens of Thousands

Of the collective 55 dams in Laos, the Nam Tha 1 Hydropower Station has been the most difficult hydropower project with the largest scale of resettlement thus far.

During the three-year development of the project, 11 resettlement sites have been constructed and more than 10,000 residents having to be resettled.

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resettlement sites with access to road, water and electricity, significantly improving the quality of life for many Lao residents.



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The previous resettlement site (left) and current (right)



The largest resettlement site in Pha Oudom District, Bokeo Province, Laos

Long-lasting Benefits

In 2018, the Nam Tha Hydropower Station made an outstanding achievement of connecting three generators to the power grid within 13 days, which, later on, played an important role in flood control in the central south of Laos during the severe floods in years in the rainy season, freeing downstream villages from the threats of disaster.

Minister Inthirath praised the work of CSG, saying, “in the future, the station can also help boost local tourism and navigation, improve the environment of the Nam Tha River basin, protecting the ecology surrounding the reservoir, and coordinating the development of local economy. After the COD of the station, work dedicated to improving the locals’ livelihood will be resumed, paving the way for poverty alleviation and economic prosperity.”