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Putin Hails Installation of First Reactor at Egypt's Russian-Built Nuclear Plant

November 19, 2025

Construction of the El Dabaa nuclear power plant. **Rosatom**

President Vladimir Putin and Egyptian leader Abdel Fattah el-Sisi on Wednesday marked the installation of the first reactor at Egypt's inaugural nuclear power plant, one of the largest joint projects between the two countries in decades.

The leaders joined the ceremony by videoconference, with Putin calling the installation a "successful" step in building the El Dabaa plant, located around 300 kilometers (187 miles) northwest of Cairo.

"We're entering a key stage in the technological outfitting of the station, and it will be able to start producing electricity in the near future," Putin said in televised remarks.

El-Sisi said the project would help bolster Egypt's energy security.

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Launched under a 2015 intergovernmental agreement, El Dabaa is being built with the help of Russia's state nuclear company Rosatom. The plant is expected to eventually include four reactors with a combined capacity of 4.8 gigawatts — enough to meet roughly 10% of Egypt's electricity demand.

Rosatom is supplying reactor fuel, technical support and training. Putin said 55% of the construction and subcontracting work has been taken on by Egyptian firms, creating jobs and laying groundwork for a domestic nuclear sector.

More than 100 Egyptian students are currently enrolled in specialized training programs, the Russian president added.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitri Peskov said earlier that there were "strong grounds" to expect the plant to start generating electricity soon.

Once fully operational, El Dabaa is expected to produce up to 37 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity annually.

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