

Fuel loaded at fourth Qinshan Phase II unit

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The process of loading fuel into the fourth reactor of the second phase of development at the Qinshan nuclear power plant in China's Zhejiang province has been completed.



Fuel loading operations at Qinshan II unit 4 (Image: CNNC)

China National Nuclear Corporation announced that, following an operation lasting 45 consecutive hours, the final fuel assembly was loaded into the CNP-600 design pressurized water reactor (PWR) at 5.42am on 23 October. The next stage in the unit's commissioning will be for it to achieve first criticality - a self-sustaining nuclear fission chain reaction. The 610 MWe reactor is expected to begin commercial operation in 2012, when it is set to become China's 15th operating power reactor.

Qinshan Phase II is already home to three operating CNP-600s, an indigenous reactor design built with a high degree of localisation. Units 1 and 2, comprising the first stage of Phase II, began operating in 2002 and 2004, respectively. Construction of the second stage was formally inaugurated at the end of April 2006, although first concrete had been poured for unit 3 the previous month. First concrete for unit 4 was poured in February 2007. Unit 3 entered commercial operation in October 2010.

Phase I of the Qinshan plant saw the construction of a 300 MWe PWR start in 1985 - the first indigenously-designed Chinese nuclear power station to be built. Phase III consists of two 750 MWe pressurized heavy water reactors (PHWRs) supplied by AECL of Canada and commissioned in 2002 and 2003.

*Researched and written
by World Nuclear News*