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Work Starts on Floating Nuclear Station

19 May 2009

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Russia began building its first floating nuclear power plant on Monday as Rosatom chief Sergei Kiriyenko laid out ambitious plans for the sector in a meeting with President Dmitry Medvedev.



Dmitry Astakhov / ria-novosti

President Dmitry Medvedev meeting with Sergei Kiriyenko at his Gorki residence outside Moscow on Monday.

The power plant, which is being assembled at the St. Petersburg-based Baltic Shipyard by Energoatom, a subsidiary of Rosatom, is the first of seven floating nuclear power plants that the company plans to build, Energoatom head Sergei Obozov told reporters on Monday.

Obozov said the first two power plants are to service the towns of Vilyuchinsk, in the Kamchatka region, and Pevek, which is located in the Chukotka autonomous district. Future power plants could be built for and sold to foreign buyers, he said.

The contract for building the first of the floating nuclear power plants is worth 983 billion rubles (\$30.6 billion), Interfax reported.

Building new atomic energy facilities is a key priority for the industry, Kiriyenko told Medvedev on Monday.

He said Russia's atomic energy industry compared unfavorably with Western firms in terms of efficiency and promised that he would increase labor productivity by a factor of 4.5.

"When it comes to modernization, the key thing is labor productivity," Kiriyenko told Medvedev. "We've set before ourselves parameters that were even tougher than the ones you set for the economy in general. We have made it our goal to increase productivity 4.5 times."

Kiriyenko said the company was able to win back several key markets in 2008.

"We are back in the Czech Republic, in Hungary, in Slovakia and Finland," he said.

Kiriyenko described an incident that occurred in the Czech Republic, where authorities were in such a hurry to use Russian nuclear fuel that they ordered U.S. fuel to be unloaded from their reactors ahead of schedule.

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Partly Cloudy 6° C

Winds: NW at 4.5 m/s
Pressure: 751 mb
Humidity: 78%

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