

Ethiopia embarks on Sudan power supply testing

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August 9, 2012 (ADDIS ABABA) - Ethiopia is making final preparations to begin permanently exporting power to neighbouring Sudan which would enable Khartoum to replace its thermal power generating units with electricity generated by Ethiopia's dams.

According to officials at the state power utility, the Ethiopian Electric and Power Corporation (EEPCo), Ethiopia has this week begun a test running electricity supply to Sudan.

The test run follows the completion of a World Bank funded US \$41 million Ethiopia-Sudan Transmission Line project.

The 230 kilovolt transmission line is 296 kilometers-long and has three sections with the last section stretching from Ethiopia's border town of Metema to the Sudanese nearby town of Gedaref where it connects with the Sudanese power grid.

"Sudan would initially be provided with 100 megawatts of electricity as Ethiopia embarks on the test run" EEPCo officials said.

Sudan will be the second country after Djibouti to receive Ethiopia's electricity, which is generated mainly from hydro-powered dams.

The Horn of Africa country has already begun trading 35 MW of electricity a month to Djibouti for US\$1.5 million. Ethiopia charges around \$70 for a kilowatt per hour (KWh) of electricity supply.

Ethiopia is also undertaking another power transmission project which will connect its power grid with Kenya which will enable Addis Ababa to export 400 MW a month of electricity to Kenya.

According to EEPCo, the Ethiopia-Sudan Transmission Line Project is expected to further develop the East African Power Pool encompassing power interconnection projects between Ethiopia-Kenya, Tanzania-Zambia-Kenya-Uganda and Ethiopia-Sudan-Egypt.

As part of the country's ambitious plans of being regional power supplier, Ethiopia is currently constructing Africa's biggest dam on the Blue Nile River.

Named as Ethiopia's renaissance dam, the power project will have generation capacity of 6,000 megawatts up on completion - 750 Megawatts higher than first estimated.

(ST)