

Nuclear silences in Korea...

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If Japan is wondering about the future of its nuclear industry, South Korea has already chosen : it is to be developed. Thus despite recent problems, such like emergency stoppage on January 12 of one of Wolsong plant's reactor, the third in a month. ON January 13, the company in charge of dealing with nuclear wastes announced a new delay in completion for a medium-low-level radioactive waste treatment facility in Yangbuk-myeon, Gyeongju, North Gyeongsang Province, due to safety problems. The extra-cost is to be around 30 to 100 bln wons.

In 2008, Korean government announced a basic national energy plan that calls for an increase of power generated by nuclear energy from the current 34.1% percent to 59% by 2030. Based on that, on December 23, 2011, the Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power, which is in charge of nuclear policy, named Yeongdeok in North Gyeongsang and Samcheok in Gangwon as final candidate cities to host new nuclear plants.

The decision had been acclaimed by leading (mainly conservative) medias. In an analysis titled "Going nuclear the only option", the newspaper Joongang wrote on December 26 "the public has two choices: accept the plan for the two new reactors or welcome higher utility bills and more power disturbances".

Basically, Fukushima nuclear crisis had little influence on this policy. Ji Young-sun, of the Korean Federation for Environmental Movement (KFEM) said "Reactors have problems, but the government does all he can to minimize it". And worries expressed on Fukushima accident nuclear influence in Korea have been quickly silenced.

Yun Sun-jin, expert in energy and environment at Seoul University considers there is no discussions because "regulation administration is part of the government and people are clearly misinformed". Here, she said, "people still believe nuclear is good for environment and economic growth. More than half of Korean are supporting it."

So it's no surprise government said after Fukushima Korean reactors are totally safe. But, in a strange move, he decided to allocate 1000 bln won... to improve their safety!

P.S.

* From <http://mesmer.blog.lemonde.fr/>