

Ramokgopa sheds more light on China energy deals

Minister in the Presidency for Electricity, Dr Kgosientsho Ramokgopa has emphasised that the agreements signed in the past week with Chinese state owned entities and the donation by the People's Republic of China are to address this country's emergency energy solutions.



Minister in the Presidency for Electricity, Dr Kgosientsho Ramokgopa. Source: x.com

South Africa concluded a significant amount of agreements with Chinese state owned entities (SOEs) with the signing of two overarching memoranda that were witnessed by President Cyril Ramaphosa and President Xi Jinping when the country hosted the 15th BRICS Summit last week. It was also President Xi's fourth state visit to South Africa ahead of the Summit.

Addressing the media on the Energy Action Plan on Sunday, Ramokgopa explained that the two agreements include amongst others, addressing issues of green energy solutions, exploitations of renewable energy sources and the use of modern technology.



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"The two agreements – the first one addresses issues around green energy solutions- the partnership agreement we will be entering in relation to the exploitation of renewable energy sources in our country; the use of modern technology and the degree to which we are able to connect renewable energy onto the grid," he said.

"The rationale for entering with the Chinese in this regard is because they are a dominant player on the renewable energy space. They have 688GW of installed capacity of renewables, a combination of PV and wind. They have done one of the biggest expansions of transmission and they have also worked on the kind of transmission modernisation required to be able to accommodate the intermittency of renewable sources."

Donation for emergency solutions

In regards to the donation by the People's Republic of China, the Minister said this is aimed at addressing South Africa's emergency energy solutions, which is targeted at key public facilities such as police stations, health institutions and

correctional centres.

Minister Ramokgopa emphasised that provincial departments will play a role in identifying the key public areas.

“The second one, was an exchange of letters in relation to a donation that we are receiving from the People’s Republic of China that is meant to help us in addressing the emergency energy solution in the country,” explained Ramokgopa.

“I did indicate that it’s likely going to be targeted in key public facilities such as hospitals, clinics, correctional services, and police stations. In this regard, we will be working with the nine provincial governments for them to be able to identify sites that are suitable for this. We already have a technical capacity that is supporting us in relation to the appropriateness of the technology solutions that are given to us and those that have been agreed upfront,” he said.

Ramokgopa further announced that the first shipment of the technology solutions by China is en route and an announcement will be made when it arrives in the country, having left Chinese shores on 14 August.

“We will announce at the right time when the first shipment lands and give an indication of the first public facilities that will benefit from this generous donation.”

Load shedding

Turning to the performance of the system for the past week, the Minister said that the available capacity has come down.

“I did indicate that we are beginning to normalise being above 28GW on average. We have kept close to that most of the week and the average is about 27,56MW,” he said.

“We did indicate that we were going to slow down planned outages and once we get out of a very difficult winter we are going to ramp up because we need to protect these machines, generation and units to ensure their sustainability and reliability going into the future. We still remain above 15GW in relation to unplanned capacity lost factor. I made a point that we want to bring it down,” the Minister said.

Ramokgopa said government was confident the system was stabilising and the country will continue to have lower stages of load shedding as the system recovers.

“On the issue of performance, we are more that satisfied. We have shown where we moved from a historic low of 48% of energy availability factor. We have been averaging 60% energy availability factor,” he said.

“When we went to the winter period, the worst case scenario was Stage 8. We only had 30 hours of Stage 6. You can see the intensity of load shedding is coming down. The issues of outage slips, I have shown to you, they have come down from a high of 3,300MW to 766MW,” concluded the minister.

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