

Serbian Government has made a plan for importing coal for electricity generation up until March 2015. The state plan was adopted in mid-October and, in addition to the restoration of the electricity generation facilities damaged in the flooding, it also envisages the possibility of procuring coal for the thermal power plants.

In the plan the import of coal within the next six months, starting in October this year, is considered. A total of three million tons or 17.000 tons per day would be imported. This quantity could vary within the limits of plus-minus 20 percent, and this would be decided upon by the EPS.

In the plan, it is also stated that, under these conditions, the import of coal would cost Serbia up to 106 million euros or 12.5 billion dinars. Power plants TENT are lacking 35.000 tons of coal daily. TENT TPPs produce more than 50% of Serbian electricity.

On one hand, the Government has considered the possibilities of importing coal, and on the other, the possibilities of procuring this fuel in Serbia. With respect to the uncertainties concerning the scope and schedule of a complete rehabilitation of the Kolubara mine which was submerged in the flooding, a six-month import of coal has been considered. Government has been looking for the cheapest possible solution and that the procurement of coal has advantages over the purchase of electricity.

By generating electricity, we would reduce the need for electricity import, and this would also mean a more favourable position for the EPS. In this way, we would also prevent the possibility of power cuts in Serbia due to a possible disruption on the market within the region, such as the cancellation of contracts, a gas crisis, and a reduced capacity of the companies from whom we are buying energy.

More than 50 percent of electricity in Serbia is generated from the Kolubara coal. The Kolubara mine Veliki Crljeni has been rehabilitated, and the pumping out of water from the mine "Tamnava West Field" is under way. This mine had been flooded with 187 million cubic meters of water, and close to 70 million cubic meters were pumped out from it by yesterday, it has been confirmed to us in the MB Kolubara.

The pumping out of water began in mid-September, and the time for work completion is 90 days. The source of "Blic" says that the pumping out is expected to be finished on time, but that the submerged excavators should also be rehabilitated afterwards.

The director of the Thermal power plant "Nikola Tesla" in Obrenovac, Čedomir Ponoćko, says that, due to the warm weather, the coal import could begin no sooner than in November and could last until April next year.

We will go for the option in which we can cancel the import during February and March if it turns out that we do not need the estimated quantity of coal - said Ponoćko. He added that there were 1.5 million tons of coal at the dump sites of the Obrenovac thermal power plants, which is enough to satisfy the needs of the thermal power plants in Obrenovac for 20 days in case that no coal arrives whatsoever.

Around 50.000 tons of coal arrive from Kolubara to the TENT dump sites daily. The thermal power plants are storing coal and larger quantities are not needed for now, because some blocks are operating with a reduced capacity during the day, and some are undergoing the overhaul.

HOW MUCH SYSTEM REHABILITATION COSTS

16.490.000 - HPP Đerdap

73.828.000 - HPP Drinsko-Limske

2.526.987.000 - TENT

12.508.000.000 dinars - costs of a semi-annual coal import

* estimate, the Regulation of the Serbian Government