

Serbia: River and highway relocated because of new mines - new power plant built in Kalenic

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Continuation of project design for the 350 megawatt unit in line with environmental standards. Everything ready to open the Radljevo mine, which was 40 years in the making. Relocation of Ibar highway sections completed due to the needs of Kolubara

In order for the powerful bucket-wheel excavators to reach the coal in the new open cast mines of the Kolubara Mining Basin, sections of the Ibar Highway, the Peštan River and the local Baroševac-Medoševac - Vreoci road had to be recently relocated. The new section of the Ibar Highway has been completed, and the traffic will start running as soon as the use permit arrives, for which procedures are pending.

The relocation of 7.2 kilometres of the Ibar Highway, from the *Grand* restaurant in Veliki Crljeni to the Matijašević stone-cutting shop in Šopić, cost about 720 million dinars. The route has, in fact, been moved east towards the Belgrade-Bar railway line, and the new road has been built to the highest standards.

- Relocation of the Ibar Highway section was completed in mid-December last year - EPS said. – The relocation is a prerequisite to continue mining operations on an already active Field G open cast mine. Considering the high calorific value of lignite on this deposit, this coal mine is of strategic importance for the stability of the Serbian energy sector. Coal from the Field G mine significantly improves the quality of lignite delivered to the Nikola Tesla thermal power plant in Obrenovac.

Many activities are underway at the Kolubara Mining Basin to improve production of existing mines, as well as to open so-called replacement capacities, EPS states. Thus, the preparations for the start of the Radljevo and Field E mines and expansion of Field G were intensively carried out. Everything has been prepared to open the Radljevo mine, which has been in the making for four decades. Overburden removal has already begun in this mine.

When the planned works are completed, preconditions are created to open Field E with a capacity of about 450 million tonnes of best quality Kolubara lignite, from which coal can be mined over the next five decades. That is why, they point out, this project is one of the most important for Kolubara and EPS.

The relocation of about four kilometres of the Peštan riverbed, worth about 1.2 billion dinars, is a precondition to start mining coal in Field E, which is a replacement for Field D, whose operating life is coming to an end. Water was released through a new riverbed, which is six

meters wide and three and a half meters deep. Parts of the new riverbed allow for faster flow of water in the event of floods.

Because every other kilowatt of electricity in Serbia is produced from coal originating from Kolubara! Last year, Kolubara miners produced about 30 million tonnes of coal. It has been announced that Kolubara mines will take a virtually new shape this year, which is extremely important for the safety of coal and electricity generation.

The construction of a 350-megawatt unit at the Kolubara B Thermal Power Plant in Kalenic continued, which began in the 1980s but was discontinued. A positive feasibility study has been done, the project, EPS noted, was supported by Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic. The EPS strategy has been completely changed - instead of shutting down units and reducing capacity, new ones are being built and existing ones are being modernized.

Bridge

The project also included the construction of a bridge on the Peštan River, three intersections, 10 concrete culverts, and the relocation and construction of transmission lines and telecommunications installations, such as fibre optic cables along the new section. The contractors, which began works in October 2018 and finished everything on time, were led by Strabag.

No fear of environmental pollution

Citizens have no reason to worry that another thermal power plant will in any way contribute to additional environmental pollution, EPS said. On the contrary, EPS has so far invested a lot of money to install the necessary electrostatic precipitators, and the desulphurization project is underway. EPS environmental investments will bring about 90 per cent reduction in sulphur dioxide emissions by 2025, 45 per cent nitrogen oxides and 95 per cent of dust compared to 2008-2012.

The fact that Obrenovac, during the recent high pollution in Serbia, had good air quality, despite the fact that this municipality has the largest thermal power plant in our country, is not just empty words. All standards have to be respected, and the construction of thermal power plants is inevitable, because Serbia cannot neglect the fact that it has its own large coal deposits, which account for 70 per cent of the total electricity generation.

Three pipelines planned

Parallel to the relocation of Peštan, the access road Baroševac-Medoševac-Vreoci is being developed, while the length of the altered route is about five kilometres, according to EPS. It

was completed about three kilometres from Baroševac to the Zeoke bridge, while this section was commissioned early this year. The remaining two kilometres are planned to be completed this year. It is also envisaged to build three potable water pipelines, about five kilometres in length, a technical water pipeline of some 2.2 kilometres, and raw water pipeline, approximately 1.4 kilometres long.