
Iran to announce a tender for new nuclear power plants soon

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IRAN, December 23 (RIA Novosti) - Iran will soon announce a tender for the construction of new nuclear power plants in the Islamic Republic, a senior Iranian lawmaker said on Sunday.

"An international tender will be announced soon for the creation of 19 nuclear power plants with a capacity of 1,000 MW each," said Kazem Jalali, a spokesman for Iran's parliamentary committee on national security and foreign policy.

Jalali said these plans corresponded to the Iranian parliament's resolution on the generation of 20,000 MW of electricity required for the Islamic state.

Gholam Hossein Elham, a spokesman for the Islamic Republic's government, said on Saturday that Iran's first nuclear power plant being built by Russia will start generating electricity before March 2009.

"In line with a timetable of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, electricity to be generated by the Bushehr nuclear power plant will flow into the country's power grid next year," he said. A new year in Iran begins on March 21 and finishes on March 20.

The \$1 billion project has been at the center of an international dispute, with Western countries who suspect Iran of developing nuclear weapons protesting against Russia's nuclear cooperation with the Islamic Republic. The project has been implemented under the supervision of the United Nations nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency.
