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भारत सरकार
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
परमाणु ऊर्जा नियामक परिषद
ATOMIC ENERGY REGULATORY BOARD

सचिव, पऊनिप
एवं
निदेशक, औद्योगिक संयंत्र संरक्षा प्रभाग
एवं
निदेशक, सूचना एवं तकनीकी सेवाएं प्रभाग

SECRETARY, AERB
&
Director, Industrial Plants Safety Division
&
Director, Information & Technical Services Division

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PRESS RELEASE

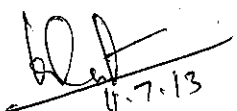
AERB grants Clearance for First Approach to Criticality for the first Pressurized Water Reactor in the country

Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) has granted Clearance for 'First Approach to Criticality' (FAC) of Unit-1 of Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project (KK-NPP) as the next major stage of its Commissioning. In general terms, FAC is the commencement of the controlled nuclear fission process for the first time, and is a step towards the subsequent beginning of power production in a nuclear reactor.

Unit-1 is the first of two units of VVER (Russian) reactors located at Kudankulam, Tamilnadu with installed electric generating capacity of 1000 MWe each. It is the first commercial Pressurized Water Reactor (PWR) based nuclear power plant in the country.

AERB had earlier granted the final permission for 'Initial Fuel Loading' (IFL) in Unit-1 of KK-NPP in September, 2012. Subsequent to this, further review was carried out by the Specialist Groups and the Advisory Committee for Project Safety Review of AERB. The Clearance given for FAC is the culmination of in-depth review of all associated safety aspects, commissioning results, corrective measures of the identified non-conformances and submissions regarding fulfillment of various regulatory requirements. The reviews have included checks to ensure that quality assurance norms have been followed and the commissioned systems meet the acceptance criteria for safe operation. While granting the clearance, it has been ensured that the directives of Honourable Supreme Court vide its judgement of 6 May 2013 are fully complied with.

Following FAC, several number of low power tests will be carried out in order to verify the conformance of reactor characteristics to the design objectives before granting clearance for the next commissioning stage which is the phase-wise increase in reactor power level.


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(R. Bhattacharya)