

Ukraine to select site for nuclear waste storage facility

Ukraine nuclear news in China is news in itself.

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Ukraine will build its own storage facility for nuclear waste and is selecting a suitable site, Prime Minister Yuri Yekhanurov said on Thursday.

Quoted by Ukraine's Interfax news agency, he said it was vital the country finds a solution, as it will have to take responsibility for its spent nuclear fuel from 2008, when it will no longer be able to send waste to Russia.

Russia has been the main provider of nuclear fuel for Ukraine's power plants, charging some 100 million U.S. dollars annually for storage and reprocessing of returned waste.

However, a Russian law requires any country it supplies with nuclear fuel to store the waste on its own soil starting from 2008.

Even nuclear waste already stored in Russia will be returned to Ukraine as from 2011. This has prompted the government to plan the construction of nuclear fuel recycling facilities, Yekhanurov said, adding that the former Soviet republic would not be engaged in uranium enrichment activities,

Ukraine has five nuclear power plants, but one has been shut down. About half of the country's electricity needs have been met by nuclear power.