

Ethiopia's mega dam to start producing 700MW electricity next year - official

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Ethiopia expects its Grand Renaissance Dam to start producing 700 megawatts of electricity next year, a senior government official said on Thursday, 11 November, boosting the country's installed power generating capacity by 14%.



Water flows through Ethiopia's Grand Renaissance Dam as it undergoes construction work on the river Nile in Guba Woreda, Benishangul Gumuz Region, Ethiopia. Picture taken 26 September 2019. Reuters/Tiksa Negeri

The country has been in years of intense negotiations over the \$4bn dam with Sudan and Egypt, which lie downstream, and which have expressed concerns over water shortages and safety. They have yet to come to an agreement.

A US State Department spokesperson said in July, Ethiopia's filling of the dam has the potential to raise tensions, as it urged all parties to refrain from unilateral actions on the facility.

Ethiopia sees the dam as key to its aim of increasing its power generation capacity and development, and says it is taking the interests of both downstream countries into account in its workings.



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"Ethiopia is undertaking various projects on electronic power, chief among them the Grand Renaissance Dam, which will start producing 700MW of electricity as of 2022," Huria Ali Mahdi, state minister for National ICT and Digital Economy, told the online Africa Tech Festival conference.

In October 2020, Ethiopia's president had said the dam had been expected to start producing power within 12 months, but gave no indication of the capacity.

At present, Ethiopia has a total installed power-generating capacity of about 4,967MW.

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