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## Hungary govt to propose doubling nuclear power

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BUDAPEST, Feb 16 (Reuters) - Hungary's government will this spring formally propose doubling the country's nuclear power generating capacity at its Paks nuclear power plant, Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsany told Parliament on Monday.

The expansion of the existing capacity is conditional upon approval by parliament.

"We will ask Parliament to approve the construction of additional units at the Paks nuclear plant, doubling its capacity," Gyurcsany said.

The existing nuclear plant, about 120 kms south of Budapest by the Danube river, currently generates about 2000 MW of electricity in four Russian-made reactors, providing the country 32 percent of its power needs according to the Hungarian Energy Office.

Much of the rest comes from gas-fired power plants, which produce 34 percent, and coal, which adds 18 percent. Imports cover eight percent, while renewable sources supply seven percent.

The Energy Office's data show that gas-fired plants represent most of the planned new power capacity in the country, including at least one very large project, a 2400 MW project in the works in eastern Hungary by Ukrainian-owned Emfesz Kft, according to news reports.

Hungary, like most other countries in the region, relies on Russian gas for 80 percent of its needs.

(Reporting by Marton Dunai; Editing by Keiron Henderson)

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