

**Don: M'sia ready for nuclear energy**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
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Malaysia is ready to operate its own nuclear power plant as it has enough qualified manpower, Malaysian Atomic Energy Licensing Board (AELB) chairperson Noramly Muslim said today.

Noramly, who is also with the Science and Technology Faculty, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), said the university had already produced about 900 graduates in nuclear science.

"This includes masters and PhD holders, 95 per cent of whom are in the country and have the expertise and experience to run a nuclear power plant," he told the UKM News Portal after a two-day workshop on nuclear energy which ended on Tuesday.

He said the start-up time needed for the operation of the plant was between 10 and 15 years, following the government's decision to have its first nuclear power plant in 2021.

Thirty-three nuclear experts from 14 countries attended the workshop jointly hosted by UKM and the University of Tokyo.

Malaysia is following in the footsteps of Indonesia, Vietnam and Bangladesh which will be operating their first nuclear power plant by 2020.

Noramly said that although Bangladesh was comparatively less industrialised than Malaysia, it nevertheless planned to have its nuclear power plant built by 2020.

"They can tap into the knowledge of thousands of experts and staff trained in nuclear science that are now working in advanced countries," he said.

He said even though the cost of building a nuclear power plant could run up to RM20 billion, its lifespan could go on for about 60 years, benefiting up to three generations.

On safety, Noramly said that it was an important consideration and would not be ignored.

"People talk about safety, but remember there have only been two accidents involving nuclear power plants, both due to human error and the lack of safety devices.

"Today's second and third generation nuclear power plants are safer and we will build our plants using these new safety measures and sophisticated technology," he said.

The news portal also quoted Tomohiko Kita, general manager of the Department of International Affairs of the Japan Atomic Industrial Forum Incorporation as saying that Japan understood such fears, having used nuclear energy for some 50 years.

"No doubt we were the victims of the misuse of nuclear weapons, but that was during the war.

"Today we teach our children while in school on the good use of nuclear power.

"I live in Hiroshima and we teach children from young about nuclear energy and power.

"You can learn from our experiences in educating the people to accept nuclear power," he said.

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