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Taiwan transforming energy mix to deliver reliable energy supplies

Premier Lai Ching-te on Tuesday called the 13th inter-ministerial meeting on initiatives boosting investment in Taiwan, this time focusing on safe and reliable energy supplies. Thanks to a raft of supply-increasing measures, Taiwan is expected to achieve a 15 percent reserve margin and 10 percent operating reserve by 2019, he said.

Efforts to stabilize power supplies have produced encouraging results so far, the premier said. The Taiwan Power Co. (Taipower), for instance, is diversifying its energy portfolio by replacing aging power generation units with combined-cycle natural gas generators and high-efficiency ultra-supercritical coal-fired generators. Several new units have been built at the Datan, Dalin and Tongxiao power plants, while additional units at Dalin, Tongxiao and Linkou are already or will soon be connected to the grid to produce energy.

In energy conservation efforts, the nation improved its energy usage efficiency in 2017 by 0.48 percent year-on-year, the equivalent of 1.248 billion kilowatt-hours (kWh) saved. Some 4,800 large energy customers have also cut usage by an average 1.6 percent a year since the Ministry of Economic Affairs (MOEA) put out guidelines in 2015 on lowering annual power use by 1 percent. In the government sector, energy consumption has been declining for 10 consecutive years to the tune of 36 million kWh saved by 7,924 government units (or 1.57 percent of the nation's energy customers).

As for small hydropower generation, the MOEA has mapped out short and medium to long-term strategies to work with Taipower and the private sector in developing environmentally friendly sources of hydroelectricity. Taiwan is also exploring geothermal

power generation, with plans for developing shallow and deep geothermal technologies and installing 200 megawatts of geothermal power capacity by 2025.