KERATAN SURAT KHABAR

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Singapore to import up to 4GW of electricity by 2035

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Plans include two trials to source 200MW of power from Malaysia, Indonesia

SINGAPORE: Singapore plans to import up to 4 gigawatts (GW) of low-carbon electricity by 2035, or about 30% of its total supply, Trade and Industry Minister Gan Kim Yong said yesterday, to diversify supply and boost energy security.

The Asian city-state will start with trials to resolve technical and regulatory issues over cross-border power trading, he said, such as plans to import 100 megawatts (MW) of electricity from Malaysia and 100MW of solar-generated electricity from Pulau Bulan in Indonesia.

Utility YTL PowerSeraya said yesterday it has been appointed as the electricity importer for a two-year trial to import 100MW of electricity from Malaysia through existing interconnectors.

"These trials allow us to learn and improve our system and processes as we increase our imports," Gan said in a speech at the Singapore International Energy Week event.

"We will also import different types of low-carbon energy from different parts of the world to diversify our sources and enhance energy security."

Singapore will issue two request for proposals for the 4GW of low-carbon electricity imports in its effort, which is similar to a current approach of diversifying natural gas sources. The first proposal will be launched in November while the second is expected in the second quarter of next year.

Singapore will deploy some of its retiring combined-cycle natural gas turbines as backups in case of longer-term disruptions to energy supply, Gan said.

About 95% of Singapore's electricity is generated from natural gas, though it plans to ramp up sources of renewable energy.

The transition to renewable energy, including imported electricity, may not mean cheaper electricity as the costs of transmission, backup and grid enhancements will swell costs, Gan added.

Singapore is also preparing legislation to empower its energy regulator the Energy Market Authority (EMA) to levy emission standards on power generation companies, he said, without giving details.

Apart from electricity imports, Singapore is exploring new energy solutions to meet long-term needs and cut emissions. It is awarding S$55 million (RM169.8 million) to fund research to improve the technical and economic feasibility of low-carbon technologies, such as hydrogen and carbon capture, utilisation and storage, Gan said.

The EMA and JTC Corporation will launch a US$6 million (RM24.9 million) request for proposal to test renewable energy, energy storage systems and low carbon solutions on Singapore's Jurong Island, Manpower Minister Tan See Leng said in a separate speech yesterday.

The EMA is working with industry to explore trying out Hydrogen Enriched Natural Gas to fuel existing power plants, as well as imports of low-carbon hydrogen.

Meanwhile, members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations are working to implement a regional power grid, Tan said, adding that the first 100MW of electrons under a Laos-Thailand-Malaysia-Singapore power integration project is expected to flow next year. – Reuters