

Coal power for National Grid

by Rashomi Silva

Another 110 Mw will be added to the national grid with the setting up of a Metallurgical Coal Power Plant, in Trincomalee.

An agreement has already been signed between the Board of Investment and the Venkatesh Industries of India.

The Rs. 21 billion joint venture between Venkatesh Industries India, Argleton Ltd UK, Belship Norway and Thyssen Germany will also produce 750,000 Mt of low sulphur coking ash per year, according to the Ministry of Industries which will supervise the project.

The proposed power plant combines a jetty for cargo handling with a desalination plant to handle the water requirements of the plant and for the use of residents.

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The project will bring an annual revenue of Rs 6.65 billion and total of Rs.133 billion over 20 years. During the construction stage over 3,000 jobs will be provided and over 1000 families will directly benefit, Industries Minister Rohitha Bogollagama told a press conference.

The minister said the project was one of the biggest foreign investment projects inked since the UNF government came to power last year. "This technology based on cleaner productions will be a land mark in the country," he said.

Ravi Agrawal, Managing Director of the

Venkatesh Industries said "We hope to start production within 24 months while it hopes to reach the rated capacity within 33 months".

This is an environmentally friendly project, a spokesperson for the ministry said, dismissing allegations that the project will have adverse effects on the environment.

"The sulphur emissions are far below the hazardous levels. We have got environmental clearance from the authorities. We have also got the clearance of the Army and the Navy. There will be no interference with the Air Force flight path," he added.