

Implats Zimbabwe unit plans 185MW solar power plants

Impala Platinum Holdings Zimbabwe unit Zimplats plans to build two solar power plants with generation capacity of 185MW to power its operations, the country's energy regulator said.



A worker drives a vehicle at Zimplats' Ngwarati Mine in Mhondoro-Ngezi, file. Reuters/Philimon Bulawayo

The Zimbabwe Energy Regulatory Authority said Zimplats, the biggest platinum group metals producer in Zimbabwe applied to build a 105MW plant at Ngezi, southwest of Harare, where it has mines and two concentrators, and 85MW at nearby Selous where there is a smelter and concentrator.

Zimplats, which also jointly owns smaller platinum miner Mimosa Mining Company with Sibanye Stillwater, imports its power from Mozambique's Hydro Cahora Bassa.

Zimbabwe has experienced acute power cuts in the past, the latest in 2019 that lasted up to 18 hours a day, which affected the mining sector, the country's biggest earner of foreign currency.

On Monday, the country was producing 1,227MW, below its peak demand of 1,400MW.

The government expects 100MW of electricity to come from new renewable energy projects by the end of this year and other mining companies are also planning to produce power from solar energy.

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