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ENDS

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Chinese manufacturer ships domestic nuclear power equipment to France

A Chinese nuclear power equipment manufacturer Tuesday shipped a low pressure heater to French electricity group EDF.

The product, made by Dongfang Heavy Machinery under Dongfang Electricity Corporation (DEC), is the first independently designed and manufactured Chinese nuclear power equipment to enter the European market.

The heater, 13.85 meters long, can be used to improve efficiency on 900 MW power units.

Fabrice Fourcade, vice president of EDF, said that it was the first time the group had ordered equipment for French nuclear power plants from Chinese enterprises.

Ming Xiangjun, deputy general manager of DEC Heavy Machinery, said that the company had gained knowledge on European standards and procedures through cooperation, which laid a solid foundation for future projects.

EDF is one of the largest nuclear power operators in the world. In September 2016, the group teamed up with China General Nuclear Power Corporation on several nuclear power projects in Britain.

China mulls revision of maritime safety law

China is considering revisions to the 1984 Maritime Traffic Safety Law to prioritize searches for survivors over searches for property.

The Legislative Affairs Office of the State Council announced Tuesday it is soliciting public opinions on revisions.

The draft states that it is the right of the people in distress at sea to be rescued without charge, adding that life should come before the environment and assets.

Passengers have the right to be informed of developments during maritime accidents when vessels are in distress, and are obliged to obey the instructions of the captain, the draft reads.

The captain should organize evacuation and be the last to leave the vessel if it is to be abandoned.

The State Council and local governments should set up maritime search and rescue centers, if needed, to organize, coordinate and command rescue operations.

In addition to professional maritime rescue teams established by the government, civilian groups are also encouraged to set up rescue teams and participate in operations.

Crews of vessels and maritime facilities are forbidden from concealing, delaying or falsifying reports on maritime accidents.

According to the white paper "Development of China's Transport," an efficient safety regime and maritime emergency aid system has been established in China.

The white paper, released in December, said the nation has improved its maritime search and rescue capability and increased the number of volunteers.

[Demand for urgent Holyrood statement on business rates](#)

- [Home](#)
- [All News](#)
- Demand for urgent Holyrood statement on business rates

14 Feb 2017



The Scottish Conservatives have demanded finance secretary Derek Mackay addresses Holyrood over the country's business rates crisis.

Increasing numbers of organisations are protesting at the revaluation scheme, which has seen some pay more than double their current taxation.

Now the SNP has been urged to take action and explain what it intends to do to solve the problem.

Two newspapers are campaigning on behalf of businesses, many of whom say they face closure as a result of the hikes.

A formal request has gone into Scottish Parliament authorities from the Scottish Conservatives for Mr Mackay to give a statement when MSPs return next week.

When challenged on the issue previously, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon merely said there would be an opportunity to appeal for individual businesses.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:

"This revaluation could see businesses across the country going under, it's as simple as that.

"If that's not cause for the SNP government to act, I don't know what is.

"While Nicola Sturgeon obsesses with Brexit and independence, Scottish companies large and small are staring down the barrel of a gun.

"This revaluation is threatening jobs and the wider economy, and needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency."

Scottish Conservative shadow finance secretary Murdo Fraser said:

"This is fast becoming a crisis for businesses the length and breadth of the country.

"Many say they face closure, while others are being forced to hike their

prices to cover these increased costs.

“This is not an acceptable state of affairs, and we need to know what Scotland’s finance secretary intends to do about this.

“It’s time for the SNP to prove it’s not an anti-business government and take some meaningful action to help these businesses which are the lifeblood of our economy.”

The Scottish Conservatives have raised the issue of business rates on a number of occasions since the revaluation:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/2017/02/ruth-calls-for-immediate-review-of-revaluation-of-business-rates/>

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/2016/09/leading-businesses-appeal-to-snp-over-unfair-rates-hike/>

The Herald launched a campaign today on the issue:

http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15089947.Can_t_pay_won_t_pay_Licensed_trade_to_fight_new_Poll_Tax_following_closure_fears/