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# Ukraine's biggest nuclear plant at Zaporozhe hit by shelling, fire



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## HIGHLIGHTS

**Fighting around nuclear plant must cease: US energy secretary**

**Russian convoy passed through nearby town, fighting spread**

**No threat to public: American Nuclear Society**

Ukraine's largest nuclear power plant, Zaporozhe, has been hit by direct shelling by advancing Russian forces, leading to the outbreak of a fire in an administrative building, and the units are now being shut as a precaution, Ukrainian and US officials said late March 3.

A live video feed coming from a surveillance camera outside of the 6-GW Zaporozhe plant showed fire and smoke coming from a power equipment site. The video feed, posted on state-owned plant operator Energoatom's telegram channel, showed that shelling continues.

"A threat to world safety!" Dmytro Orlov, the mayor of the nearby town of Enerhodar, and state-owned plant operator Energoatom posted on the messaging platform, Telegram, March 4 at 01:40 Kyiv time (2340 GMT). "As a result of the uninterrupted shelling by the enemy, the block of the largest nuclear power plant in Europe fell," Orlov said.

"They are shooting back-to-back," Energoatom wrote on its telegram channel at 02:09 Kyiv time. "The unit-1 is hit."

Energoatom later posted that the fire affected a training building, and not a reactor building.

Firefighters were initially unable to reach the spot to put out the fire due to continuous shelling of the facility, but reached the building later, Energoatom said.

US Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm said in a tweet March 3 there were no elevated radiation readings at the plant and the reactors that had been operating at the six-unit site were being shut for safety. The Department of Energy activated a nuclear incident response team, she said. The reactors are protected by robust containment structures, Granholm added.

Russian military operations in the area are "reckless and must cease," Granholm said.

The American Nuclear Society said in a statement late March 3: "Currently, there are no indications that any damage caused by the attack poses an additional threat to the public. The latest radiation level readings remain within natural background levels." ANS condemned the attack.

The International Atomic Energy Agency said Russian tanks and infantry broke through a barrier in a nearby town and were heading toward the plant earlier March 3. IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi in the statement called for an end to the assault on the town adjacent to Zaporozhe.

Zaporozhe, with six 1,000-MW reactors, is the largest nuclear power plant by capacity in Europe, according to its website.

Energoatom posted a video on its telegram channel addressing the Russian forces demanding that they stop the shelling of Zaporozhe nuclear power plant.

This comes as the Russian forces have been trying for almost 24 hours to break through to the Zaporozhe, with national guard forces inside the plant fighting off the attack.

A convoy of 100 Russian armored vehicles on March 3 breached the checkpoint at Enerhodar, a city that is home to the Zaporozhe, after firing at civilian protesters, according to Orlov and Energoatom. The checkpoint is about 4 km away from the Zaporozhe nuclear power plant.

The city and plant are located in Ukraine's south on the Dnieper River.