Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) approves First Approach to Criticality of RAPP Unit-8

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Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB), India's nuclear safety regulator, has granted permission for the First Approach to Criticality (FAC) of Rajasthan Atomic Power Project Unit-8 (RAPP-8) on November 19, 2026, following satisfactory completion of the requisite safety reviews.

AERB's permission follows a comprehensive safety review of the reactor's design, construction, commissioning test results and operational preparedness. The regulatory review process included detailed assessments by AERB and its safety review committees, complemented by regulatory inspections, and deliberations by the Board of AERB.

FAC marks an important stage in the commissioning of RAPP-8, paving the way for subsequent commissioning phases leading towards commercial electricity generation, subject to satisfactory completion of the prescribed tests and requisite regulatory permissions.

AERB will continue its regulatory oversight of the subsequent commissioning activities through safety reviews and regulatory inspections, including monitoring by its resident site observer team.

RAPP-8 is the fourth unit of India's indigenously designed and constructed 700 MWe Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR) series. The other three units of this design are Kakrapar Atomic Power Station Units 3 and 4 in Gujarat and RAPP Unit-7 in Rajasthan.

RAPP-8 is located at Rawatbhata Nuclear Power Plant site in Chittorgarh district of Rajasthan. This site currently has eight NPP units.

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