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Prosecutor's office sends materials of new case against former Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko to court. Former Interior Minister Yuriy Lutsenko's appeal to be considered in May 2012

A court will start to consider a new case launched against former Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko in the nearest future.

On 29 March 2012, Kharkiv Region's prosecutor **Hennadiy Tyurin** said that the prosecutor's office had submitted to the Kharkiv Kiev district court materials of the criminal case against Tymoshenko over alleged fraudulent activity of the United Energy Systems of Ukraine (UESU) company.

Tyurin added that the prosecutor's office considered Tymoshenko's guilt to be proven on five accounts. She may face from five to 12 years behind bars under various articles.

Earlier, on 28 March 2012, the deputy prosecutor-general, **Yevhen Blazhyvskyy**, said that the prosecutor's office had demanded a reimbursement of losses worth 2.44m dollars. He clarified that the matter had to do with the embezzlement of budget funds and tax evasion.

On 28 March 2012, Tymoshenko and her lawyers finished to familiarize themselves with the case materials.

Tymoshenko's lawyer, MP of the opposition Yuliya Tymoshenko Bloc (YTB) **Serhiy Vlasenko**, said that the defence could not properly read the materials of the UESU case. At the same time, he added that Tymoshenko's verdict in the UESU case might be handed down before a court begins to consider an appeal against the gas case ruling during a hearing slated for 15 May 2012.

We would like to recall that on 15 May 2012, Kiev's court of appeals will begin to consider former Interior Minister **Yuriy Lutsenko's** appeal against the verdict handed down by the Kiev Pecherskyy district court, which sentenced him to four years in prison.

On 23 April 2012, the Kiev Pecherskyy district court scheduled a hearing in the criminal case against Lutsenko who is accused of the illegal organization of spying during an investigation of former President **Viktor Yushchenko's** poisoning.

On 28 March 2012, a protest rally was held near the presidential administration. The protestors demanded that the government put an end to torturing Tymoshenko and provide her with appropriate treatment in accordance with a ruling of the European Court of Human Rights.

US court holds initial hearing of case submitted by former Ukrainian premier on repression and corruption. Court dismisses case submitted by former Ukrainian interior minister

A US court has started to debate the case launched against the RosUkrEnergo company.

On 30 March 2012, the New York federal court held an initial hearing of the case submitted by former Prime Minister **Yuliya Tymoshenko** who accused the RosUkrEnergo company and its owner **Dmytro Firtash** and a number of other individuals of corruption, fraud and violation of human rights, a correspondent of the Ria Novosti news agency reported from the court chamber.

Judge **Alison Nathan** said that the Supreme Court might determine whether the case should be considered in the USA.

One of the defendant's lawyers immediately submitted a request to dismiss the case due to the jurisdiction issue. "Everything described in the case has nothing to do with the USA," the lawyer said.

For his part, Tymoshenko's representative from the McCallion&Associates law firm told the court that 10 Ukrainian nationals and six US citizens were defendants in the case. In particular, a US consultant for Ukrainian President **Viktor Yanukovich**, **Paul Manafort**, was among those involved in the case.

We shall remind you that Tymoshenko's lawyers said on multiple occasions that they had a summons for Firtash to the US court had and that only the complications with handing it to him slowed down the case.

The Ukrainian analytical weekly Dzerkalo Tyzhnya reported that in early March the lawyers used the option of passing the summons to Firtash under the Hague convention. However, this procedure may last for a few months. At the same time, the lawyers did not use the opportunity to present Firtash with the summons during several public events in which he took place in March, the weekly added.

On 23 February 2012, the Colombia district court dismissed the case submitted by former Ukrainian Interior Minister **Yuriy Lutsenko** in which he accused Ukrainian Prosecutor-General **Viktor Pshonka**, his deputy **Renat Kuzmin** and an investigator of the Prosecutor-General's Office, **Serhiy Voychenko**, of an illegal arrest and an unjustifiably long detention.

Lutsenko was represented by lawyers of the McCallion & Associates LLP firm.

The Dzerkalo Tyzhnya weekly reported that the reason for the dismissal was the failure of Lutsenko's lawyers to submit to the court on time the information on the circumstances of receiving the summons by the defendants. At the same time, MPs **Yuriy Hrymchak** and **Volodymyr Aryev** claimed that on 16 February 2012 all the information was submitted to the US court upon its verification in the US embassy's consular section. The deadline for submitting this information to the court was 22 February, although the McCallion & Associates law firm delayed the submission of the documents for unknown reasons.

PACE rapporteurs visit Ukraine

On 27-29 March 2012, representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) visited Ukraine.

The main objective of the visit was to evaluate how Ukraine implements the PACE resolution on the functioning of democratic institutes.

During the visit, the PACE representatives met the convicted former interior minister, **Yuriy Lutsenko**, and also requested a meeting in May 2012 with former Prime Minister **Yuliya Tymoshenko**.

Additionally, the PACE rapporteurs held a meeting with Ukrainian Foreign Minister **Kostyantyn Hryshchenko**. After the meeting, they said that they did not see the ministry's readiness to implement the PACE resolution on Ukraine. At the same time, PACE rapporteur **Marietta de Purba-Lundin** expressed hope that Hryshchenko's opinion diverged from that of the government in general.

In his turn, Hryshchenko expressed surprise by such an interpretation of his words. "Over many years in diplomacy, I have discussed various complicated topics with many people. However, this is the first time that one attributes to me the words which I have not said," the minister stressed.

Overall, the PACE rapporteurs provided a rather critical evaluation of the PACE resolution's implementation by Ukraine.

We would like to note that the results of a survey conducted by the Gorshenin Institute suggest that over a half of the Ukrainian MPs (56.5 percent) who participated in the poll believe that Ukraine has to implement the PACE resolution of 26 January 2012 in the part which concerns a release of former top-ranking government officials and to ensure their participation in elections. You can find more details on page 14.

Ukrainian president's press service fails to disclose all information about conversation with US President Barack Obama

On 27 March 2012, Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich met with his US counterpart Barack Obama during a nuclear security summit in Seoul.

The press service of the Ukrainian president said that the two heads of state discussed the issues of nuclear security in the world during the meeting. Later, Yanukovich said that trust between him and the US president had been boosted after the meeting.

At the same time, a statement issued by Obama's administration said that in addition to nuclear security, the presidents focused on the problem of respecting democracy in Ukraine. "The [US] president stressed that it was important for Ukraine to demonstrate the vitality of Ukrainian democracy by means of holding a free, fair and transparent parliamentary election in October," the statement said. Additionally, Obama expressed concern over relatively selective persecution of the political opposition in Ukraine, the statement noted.

We shall remind you that during the summit in Seoul on 27 March 2012, Yanukovich also met the president of the European Council, **Herman Van Rompuy**, and the president of the European Commission, **Jose Manuel Barroso**.

Freedom House points out deterioration of situation in Ukraine

On 29 March 2012, the international human rights organization Freedom House publicized the report "Freedom in the World 2012".

The Ukrainian news and analysis website Lb.ua reported that the document contained a number of critical remarks on Ukraine.

Freedom House experts pointed out that in 2011 "Ukrainian President **Viktor Yanukovich** initiated a systematic campaign to exclude any vital opposition to the Party of Regions before a parliamentary election scheduled for 2012". Freedom House also noted that law enforcers had quashed street protests against the persecution of former Prime Minister **Yuliya Tymoshenko** and other ex-officials and arrested their organizers.

In general, Freedom House downgraded Ukraine by one position – from three to four – in the rating of political rights.

MP of the pro-government Party of Regions **Olena Bondarenko** challenged the truthfulness of the information which Freedom House experts used to draw up the report. She pointed out that the report did not take into consideration the information of the Ukrainian Interior Ministry that the majority of lawmakers who had been accused of graft in 2010-12 are from the Party of Regions.

Additionally, Bondarenko said that the Freedom House report admitted the non-viability of the Ukrainian opposition.

**Italian law enforcers
detain head of Kharkiv
regional branch of
opposition Fatherland
party**

On 25 March 2012, the head of Kharkiv's regional branch of the opposition Fatherland party, former Kharkiv governor Arsen Avakov was detained in Italy.

On 29 March 2012, the press service of the Ukrainian Prosecutor-General's Office said that Avakov's trial had begun in Rome and that a decision had been made to keep the former governor under arrest for 40 days.

At the same time, MP of the Yuliya Tymoshenko Bloc **Serhiy Pashynskyy** said that the Italian court did not rule to arrest Avakov but only held a preliminary hearing. The lawmaker also noted that the next court hearing to decide on a preventive measure is scheduled for 10 April 2012.

Later, on 30 March 2012, the Interpol bureau in Rome confirmed that the former governor was arrested for extradition.

We shall remind you that on 26 January 2012, a prosecutor's office launched a criminal case against Avakov on suspicion of an illegal alienation of state-owned land in 2009 by means of exceeding his authority.

**Opposition Fatherland,
People's Self-Defence
parties merge**

The Ukrainian opposition has started to unite.

On 30 March 2012, the Fatherland party headed by former Ukrainian Prime Minister **Yuliya Tymoshenko** officially merged with former Interior Minister **Yuriy Lutsenko's** People's Self-Defence party.

A statement on the merger was made after a congress of the Fatherland party which had been held in Kiev on the same day.

At the same time, the Front for Change party has not merged with the Fatherland party yet., The head of the Front for Change party, **Arseniy Yatsenyuk**, said during an address delivered at the congress that the negotiations with Fatherland were nearing their end.

For his part, the deputy head of the Fatherland Party, **Oleksandr Turchynov**, said that the opposition forces should agree on a single list of candidates for parliamentary seats by the beginning of May 2012.

The editor-in-chief of the Ukrainian news and analysis website Lb.ua, **Sonya Koshkina**, wrote that during the party congress, the opposition forces initially planned to sign a joint declaration of Tymoshenko's and Yatsenyuk's intentions but that the former prime minister amended the document prior to the summit.

It is worth mentioning that Vitaliy Klitschko, who heads the UDAR party, did not take part in the congress. Later, he said that his party would take part in the parliamentary election independently of other opposition forces.

In the opinion of the scientific director of the School of Political Analytics, **Oleksiy Haran**, if the opposition does not come up with a single electoral list for single-seat constituencies, it will be defeated in the upcoming parliamentary election.

**Ukrainian Tax Service
cancels checks on
mass media during
electoral campaign**

All the tax checks of the mass media have been cancelled during a parliamentary election campaign.

This order was signed by the Ukrainian Tax Service head **Oleksandr Klymenko** in accordance with parliamentary recommendations on how to ensure an unhindered activity of the mass media during the 2012 election campaign.

On 9 February 2012, parliament recommended the Tax Service to cancel any mass media checks during the parliamentary election campaign.

**Venice Commission
commences work on
Ukrainian draft law on
prosecution.
Presidential
administration
drawing up alternative
document**

The Venice Commission has begun to work on the Ukrainian draft law "On the prosecution".

The commission's secretary, **Thomas Markert**, said that the draft law had been drawn up by the National Commission for Strengthening Democracy and Rule of Law. The document was authored by the commission's deputy head, MP of the pro-government Party of Regions **Serhiy Holovatyy**.

It is expected that the Venice Commission will draw a conclusion about the draft law on 15-16 June 2012.

The Kommersant Ukrayina newspaper cited the document text as saying that the draft law envisioned a considerable restriction of powers of prosecutor's offices. It is proposed to allow prosecutor's offices to only support state accusations in court and to monitor the legality of the agencies which conduct search activities, inquiries, investigation and the enforcement of verdicts in the sector of criminal justice. It is also planned to reduce the number of employees.

The draft law also proposes amendments to the procedure of appointing the prosecutor-general. If the draft law is passed, to sign an order for dismissing the prosecutor-general, the president will have to accuse him of breaking the oath and to prove this fact to a disciplinary commission. These steps are not required at present. At the same time, the draft law endows parliament with the right to dismiss the prosecutor-general without the argumentation.

We would like to note that presidential advisor **Andriy Portnov** said that Ukraine "has not officially sent the draft law 'On prosecution'" to the Venice Commission and that "we have informed the commission about this in written form". Such documents are sent only after they are signed by the head of the presidential administration, he added. At the same time, Portnov noted that the draft law "On the prosecution" would be ready after the adoption of the Ukrainian Criminal Procedure Code. "If we take into consideration the fact that the law on the prosecution has to be adopted under a tight deadline after the passing of the Ukrainian Criminal Procedure Code, the presidential administration will have no time to submit it to the Venice Commission," he concluded.

**President's office:
draft law on peaceful
rallies may be ready in
two months**

Ukrainian president's advisor Maryna Stavniychuk has said that the draft law On Peaceful Rallies may be developed within two months.

"The working group has just started its work," Stavniychuk said.

A reminder that activists of the Otpor (Rebuff) movement held a rally on the central square in Kiev on 27 March protesting against parliament's approval of the draft law on peaceful rallies. Activists say the draft law may be put on parliament's agenda as early as on 12 April 2012.

Three detained in anti-president rally in eastern Ukraine

The police detained three participants of the all-Ukrainian youth rally in Donetsk on 27 March 2012.

The young people were detained for distributing anti-presidential leaflets. The police made a protocol charging the detainees in petty hooliganisms, after this they were released.

Similar protests took place in another 18 regions of Ukraine.

Another Ukrainian seeks political asylum in Europe

A participant in protests against approval of the new Tax Code, Serhiy Kostakov, applied for political asylum in Europe.

Correspondent **Yehor Sobolyev** has said in his web blog that criminal proceedings were launched against Kostakov for damaging a car during the protests in winter 2010 in central Kiev. Kostakov believes that the car damage was staged by the police and that the case against him was launched illegally.

According to Sobolyev, at the moment Kostakov stays at one of the European countries where he applied for political asylum.

Recently Ukrainian journalist **Anatoliy Shariy** has asked for political asylum in Lithuania.

Co-founder of website critical of road police attacked in Kiev

The co-founder of the Dorozhnyy Kontrol (Road Control) website, Rostyslav Shaposhnikov, was kidnapped and beaten severely by a group of unidentified attackers on 24 March 2012.

Shaposhnikov believes the attack on him is linked to his professional activity.

The Dorozhnyy Kontrol website posts information related to the protection of rights of drivers and posts photo and video materials demonstrating violations of the law by traffic policemen.

Ukraine, EU initial association agreement. Sides expected to make changes to document

On 30 March 2012, Ukraine and the European Union initialed the Association Agreement.

"The heads of the negotiating delegations of Ukraine and the European Union have initialed the Association Agreement, including the part on creating a deep and comprehensive free trade area," the press service of the Foreign Ministry of Ukraine said in a statement.

On the same day, Ukrainian Foreign Minister **Kostyantyn Hryshchenko** noted that some technical and linguistic changes might be introduced to the part of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU regarding the establishment of a free trade area.

According to **Roman Shpek**, member of the Council of the National Bank of Ukraine, at the earliest the agreement can be signed during a summit in December 2012.

Ukraine still hopes for successful completion of gas talks with Russia

President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich admits that the gas negotiations with Russia, which have been lasting for more than two years, have yielded no results as yet.

"But we are still hoping that the talks with Russia will lead to good results," he said.

On 27 March 2012, during his visit to Seoul, Yanukovich also said that the

Ukrainian-Russian intergovernmental commission will hold its meeting in May 2012.

According to the president, the sides will discuss the issue of creating a gas transport consortium after valuation of the gas transport system of Ukraine.

According to the news and analysis website Lb.ua, on 28 March 2012 Baker Tilly Ukraine, which is part of Baker Tilly International, won a tender for the valuation of assets that belong to the Ukrainian gas transport system. The valuation should be finished by 1 August 2012. The tender bid value totaled 4.1m hryvnias.

It is worth mentioning that on 29 March 2012, the Newsletter of Public Procurement reported that Naftohaz Ukrayiny, a state-run energy company, decided to take a loan worth 2bn dollars from Russian Gazprombank. The loan is provided for a period of 2012-2019. The expected cost of loan servicing, as stated in the bill of acceptance, will make 1.53bn dollars.

According to the Kommersant Ukraina business newspaper, the raised funds will be used for accumulation of Russian gas in underground gas storage facilities. The Ukrainian government is taking such steps as it expects a rise in the price of Russian gas from 416 to 430 dollars per 1,000 cubic meters in the second quarter of 2012.

According to **Oleksandr Pecherytsyn**, the head of the financial markets analysis department at ING Bank Ukraine, Naftohaz Ukrayiny is borrowing the funds at "quite acceptable" terms as the company has very large debts and only Ukrainian banks issue loans to it now. However, **Dmytro Marunych**, director of the Energy Research Institute, believes that the gas purchase scheme is rather risky. "This scheme is justified only if the price of oil and gas grow by the year's end. Currently, some analysts predict a drop in oil prices in the second half-year from 120 to 90 dollars per barrel, which will bring gas prices lower," he said.

On 30 March 2012, Gazprom's official representative **Sergey Kupriyanov** said that the Russian monopoly will continue switching gas transit from Ukraine to other routes, particularly through Belarus and new offshore pipelines.

On the same day, deputy head of Naftohaz Ukrayiny **Vadym Chuprun** said that the volume of Russian gas transit through Ukraine to Europe dropped by half.

**Cost of LNG terminal
in Ukraine to reach
846m euros**

On 30 March 2012, the State Investment Agency presented a feasibility study for building a liquefied natural gas terminal in Ukraine.

During the presentation, agency chairman **Vladyslav Kaskiv** said that the cost of the facility construction will total 846m euros.

As he noted, the best place for the construction of the terminal, according to the feasibility study, would be near the maritime oil terminal Pivdenny (Odessa). The target capacity of the terminal will be 10bn cubic meters. The construction period is 49 months. The launch of the terminal is planned after 30 months, which is in 2016.

According to Kaskiv, a consortium of investors will finance 30% of the terminal construction cost, with investment from the government's side reaching 55m

euros. The remaining 70% (513m euros) will be drawn via sale of bonds or credit lines.

Ukraine plans to adapt its technical standards to norms of Customs Union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan

On 29 March 2012, the Economics Ministry of Ukraine held consultations on removing technical barriers in trading with the member states of the Customs Union.

As the Kommersant Ukraina business daily reported, Ukraine intends to determine the condition under which it will be possible to accept the technical regulations of the Customs Union. The ministry plans to finalize the terms of joining the technical regulations within one month.

Meanwhile, 27 through 28 March 2012, a commission of Russia's Federal Service for Consumer Rights Protection (Rospotrebnadzor) conducted an inspection at a Ukrainian cheese factory Hadyachsy.

Following the inspection, on 29 March 2012, First Deputy Minister of Agrarian Policy of Ukraine **Mykola Bezuhlyy** said that the Russian specialists revealed no technical violations. However, later Rospotrebnadzor said that the factory makes its products with violation of the technological process.

According to the head of the sociological service the Ukrainian Barometer, **Viktor Nebozhenko**, the Ukrainian authorities cannot find an adequate response to the "cheese war" started by Moscow.

Focus magazine names richest Ukrainians

On 30 March 2012, the magazine Focus published its annual ranking of the wealthiest Ukrainians.

The first place is traditionally taken by owner of SCM Group, MP **Rinat Akhmetov** of the Party of Regions. Last year his fortune increased by 3bn dollars and totaled about 7bn dollars.

The second place in the ranking is occupied by Ahmetov's business partner, owner of Smart Holding and co-owner of Metinvest, Russian citizen **Vadim Novinskiy**. The magazine valued his standing at 4bn dollars.

The owner of Group DF, co-owner of the company RosUkrEnerg **Dmytro Firtash** last year doubled his fortune, which is now estimated at 2.8bn dollars. He is at the fifth place.

MP of the Yuliya Tymoshenko Bloc **Kostyantyn Zhevaho**, co-owner of Ferrexpo, last year lost 400m dollars, and now occupies the sixth position in the ranking with 2.26bn dollars.

Businessman **Viktor Pinchuk** in 2011 became 1bn dollars poorer, and now is the eighth richest man in Ukraine with 1.8bn dollars, according to the magazine's estimates.

The magazine named MP of the Party of Regions **Yuriy Ivanyushchenko** the breakthrough of the year. Ivanyushchenko is a co-owner of Azovmash and the 7th Kilometer market in Odessa. The businessman increased his fortune seven-fold to 756m dollars.

The main newcomer in the rating is **Oleksandr Yanukovych**, the eldest son of

President **Viktor Yanukovich** (No.103 in the ranking). His standing is estimated at 100m dollars.

Interior Ministry says most corrupt officials in Party of Regions

In his blog, Interior Minister Vitaliy Zakharchenko has revealed statistics on criminal cases against officials for corruption.

Specifically, according to the published data, the majority of all-level people's deputies who were prosecuted for corruption in 2010-2012 are members of the pro-presidential Party of Regions.

In such a way, the minister points out that law-enforcement agencies do not take into account political affiliation of any of the uncovered corrupt officials, and act in accordance with legislation.

After this information was widely published in the media, Zakharchenko said in an open letter that such statistics is due to the quantitative representation of the Party of Regions in power.

Association of Ukrainian Banks slams national bank policies

On 27 March 2012, the Association of Ukrainian Banks (AUB) addressed President Viktor Yanukovich demanding that the top-level officials at the National Bank of Ukraine, including its head Serhiy Arbuzov, step down.

Particularly, AUB Chairman **Oleksandr Suhonyako** said that the current NBU management are restraining loan activity in the national economy and keeping risks with regards to the balance of payments. In addition, he said that the situation is aggravated due to the lack of proper dialogue with the banking community. At the same time, according to the AUB's head, the National Bank is sending distorted information to the president of Ukraine, which is leading to the decrease in the public and businesses' confidence in the head of state. Suhonyako also noted that the present policy of artificially preserving the exchange rate of hryvnya has led to significant losses in foreign exchange reserves, stimulation of imports and dampening of exports. The association is also criticizing the NBU for its support of the government's decision to issue government bonds in foreign currency since it reduces confidence in the national currency.

The next day after the release of the AUB letter, Bank Khreshchatyk and Eurogasbank announced their withdrawal from the association. Later, on 30 March 2012, VAB Bank also decided to terminate its membership in the AUB. The bankers say the reason behind such decisions is the disagreement with the stance of the AUB's head.

Businesses to get new patten for work with tax service

The Party of Regions intends to amend the tax code.

On 26 March 2012, MP of the Party of Regions **Ihor Savchenko** registered a bill, introducing amendments to the Tax Code. According to the document, Ukrainian businesses are expected to submit auditors' reports (on a voluntary basis) to the tax authorities, simultaneously with their tax declarations. Their reports shall be prepared by one of the auditing firms that are included in a special register of the State Tax Service as recommended by the Audit Chamber. When planning documentary checks, the tax officials will be able to review reports provided by tax payers, and may decide not to conduct the check. The exception may include companies which are put on the schedule of inspections based on assessment of

tax payers belonging to a high-risk category.

According to Board Chairman of the Council of Independent Accountants and Auditors **Olena Makeyeva**, the proposed mechanism will not be applied widely. Foreign companies that work with foreign auditors are unlikely to use services of the companies accredited by the State Tax Service.

Parliament to limit size of leased land plots

Mps of the Party of Regions registered draft law On Land Market on 27 March 2012.

The draft law suggests that the total area of leased land plots in one district should be limited to 5,500 hectares (10% of the arable lands in a certain district) and to 50,000 hectares for the country in general. The limitation should be applicable to all lands leased by a company and its affiliated structures.

Landholders will have to adjust sizes of their leased land plots to meet the limit provided by the law before 1 January 2013, the draft law reads.

Cabinet expands first deputy premier's powers

The draft law on the amendments to the law On Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine was registered in parliament on 27 March 2012.

According to the draft law, the first deputy prime minister and other deputies of the prime minister, if they do not chair any ministry, shall be entitled with the right to bring to consideration drafts of the cabinet's resolutions.

As of today, the only person of this level in the government is First Deputy Prime Minister Valeriy Khoroshkovskyy, who does not chair any ministry.

First deputy economics minister sacked

First staff changes have taken place in the Economics Ministry after the appointment of a new minister.

President **Viktor Yanukovich** dismissed **Vadym Kopylov** from the post of the first deputy minister of economic development and trade on 30 March 2012.

Petro Poroshenko was appointed economics minister on 23 March 2012.

New confinement, spent fuel storage facility to be built for Chernobyl

Ukrainian officials voice prospects for the Chernobyl nuclear power plant.

Ukrainian President **Viktor Yanukovich** said on 27 March 2012 at the Nuclear Safety Summit in Seoul that the construction of the new confinement over the destroyed reactor 4 at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant will start in a month, on 26 April.

Later, on 28 March 2012, the Chernobyl NPP deputy director-general for strategic planning and development, **Valeriy Seyda**, said that before the end of 2013 all intact fuel from the Chernobyl reactor units will be moved to a wet interim storage facility No.1.

The president of the national nuclear energy company Enerhoatom, **Yuriy Nedashkovskyy**, has said that negotiations with US-based company Holtec regarding the start of the second stage of construction of the central storage facility for spent nuclear fuel in the Chernobyl exclusion zone may be finalized in April 2012.

According to an opinion poll held by the Gorshenin Institute in April 2011, 78.3% of Ukrainians consider the Chernobyl nuclear power plant hazardous..

Energy ministry unveils plans for building new nuclear power plant in Ukraine

New nuclear power plant may be built in Ukraine.

The director of the nuclear energy directorate of the Ukrainian Energy Ministry, **Mykyta Konstantynov**, told journalists on 27 March 2012 that to satisfy electricity demands, Ukraine would have to build a brand new nuclear power plant with the capacity of 2,000 MW before 2030.

Konstantynov also said that the updated draft of the country's energy strategy provides for construction of two more reactor units at the Khmelnytsky nuclear power plant with total installed capacity 2,000 MW. He added that it is also planned to build new nuclear power units to replace decommissioned reactors in 2022.

On the same day, 27 March 2012, it became known that the Ukrainian Emergencies Ministry sent a written notification to the Energy Ministry alerting that the fire protection measures have not been implemented at the Ukrainian nuclear power plants to full extend.

The public opinion poll conducted by the Gorshenin Institute in spring 2011 showed that the majority of Ukrainians (66.3%) believe that no new nuclear power plants or new nuclear reactors at existing nuclear power plants should be built in Ukraine. Also, 70.2% of those polled are concerned with a possibility of a serious incident at Ukrainian nuclear power plants.

Nuclear fuel plant to be built in Ukraine by 2015

First stage of the Ukrainian-Russian joint venture to make fuel for nuclear power plants to be commissioned in 2015.

“Now work on the feasibility study is under way. Next stage will be the allocation of a land plot for the construction in Kirovohrad Region, near an operating uranium mine,” the director of the nuclear energy directorate of the Ukrainian Energy Ministry, **Mykyta Konstantynov**, said on 27 March 2012.

According to Konstantynov, the annual production capacity of the new joint venture will be 400t of uranium. “We plan to commission the first stage of the plant in 2015,” Konstantynov added.

Ukraine's share in the joint venture is 50%+1 share while Russia holds 50%-1 share.

On 13-16 March 2012, the Gorshenin Institute polled Ukrainian lawmakers.

The sample was devised taking into account the number of MPs in the factions of the Ukrainian parliament. As many as 152 lawmakers participated in the poll. The survey method is a questionnaire. The margin of error is $\pm 6,6\%$.

Are you familiar with the text of the agreement on a free trade area with the CIS which was signed by [Prime Minister Mykola] Azarov in St Petersburg in October 2011?

Yes, fully – 22.4%
Yes, partially – 27.0%
No, not familiar – 50.6%

Do you personally support the ratification of the agreement on a free trade area with the CIS which was signed by Azarov in St Petersburg in October 2011?

Definitely yes – 21.1%
Probably yes – 11.2%
Probably no – 10.5%
Definitely no – 34.9%
No answer – 22.3%

Do you believe that Ukraine should implement the section of the PACE resolution of 26 January 2011 which deals with releasing former government officials from jail and granting them permission to run for seats in the upcoming parliamentary election?

Definitely yes – 49.3%
Probably yes – 7.2%
Probably no – 14.5%
Definitely no – 17.8%
No answer – 11.2%

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