

Work set to start on Africa's largest fertilizer plant

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Work on Africa's largest fertilizer plant will get underway in the near future, with ammonia and urea from the Nigerian naira (N) 300bn (\$1.9bn) project to be exported across Africa, the industrialist behind the project confirmed this week. Situated in southern Edo State, the massive Dangote Fertilizer facility will produce up to 2,200 tonnes per day of ammonia and 7,700 tonnes per day of granulated urea, according to business conglomerate and project owner Dangote Group. Owned by Africa's richest man – Alhaji Dangote – the group expects workers from engineering firm Saipem Nigeria to start initial groundwork in the next 10 weeks. The plant will feature two urea trains and a single ammonia train and is scheduled to start production in 2015/16. According to the Lagos-headquartered company, Africa's next largest fertilizer plant produces 1,000 tonnes of ammonia and 1,500 tonnes of urea per day. "In the next three years, Edo State will be exporting fertilizer from here to other parts of Africa," Alhaji Aliko Dangote confirmed during a high-level regional government reception held in the Edo State capital, Benin City, earlier this week. A special ceremony to celebrate the start of the project will be held next month or in late January at the latest, he said, adding the plant will create around 10,000 jobs and reduce Nigeria's reliance on fertilizer imports, which are reported to have totalled around \$4.2bn last year.