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Reason key to assessing the nuclear power issue

In a 2018 referendum, voters said no to phasing out nuclear energy. So why are they being asked the same question again? Is this truly about public interest or simply repeating the vote until the result aligns with an agenda?

I am not blindly pro-nuclear. I am pro-reason. If we want a greener future, I support that.

However, replacing nuclear power before we have stable alternatives is reckless.

Taiwan' s electricity demand is rising. With electric vehicles, semiconductor expansion and growing digital dependence, we need more energy, not less. So what happens when nuclear generators are shut down? We turn to coal.

Taiwan has limited land, inconsistent wind patterns and seasonal sunlight. Even with rapid investment, renewables cannot yet provide round-the-clock stability. Battery technology is not mature enough. Natural gas is cleaner than coal, but we import nearly all of it at volatile prices, vulnerable to geopolitical shocks.

Are we ready to bet our energy future on that?

People complain about rising electricity prices, but have we asked why? Nuclear power generation is low-cost and stable. Removing it increases our dependence on expensive imports and intermittent renewables, driving prices higher. Burning more coal leads to more asthma, heart disease and premature deaths. Yet somehow, we treat it as the “less risky” option.

Globally, we see a different picture. In 2022, the EU labeled nuclear energy a green investment. France generates about 70 percent of its electricity from nuclear and is not turning back.

Even Japan, after the Fukushima Dai-ichi disaster, is restarting reactors. Tokyo understands the price of energy insecurity.

If countries that have suffered from nuclear accidents are choosing to return, what does that say about the balance of risk?

Critics argue that nuclear power is dangerous, citing waste and accidents.

However, modern reactor designs are significantly safer and the volume of nuclear waste is tiny compared with the pollutants from fossil fuels. Nuclear waste is contained and monitored; coal waste is invisible and inhaled.

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We should demand better safety protocols, not surrender to fear.

Why the urgency? Why abandon nuclear power before a viable replacement exists? If this is truly about the environment, then decisions should be based on data, not dogma.

It seems that politics is driving policy. Environmental decisions have become political branding. Green symbolism has taken precedence over energy realism.

We also have to reflect: Are we, the people, making informed choices? Or are we being nudged by fear-based messaging and selective framing? Supporting a policy because it aligns with our political side — without fully understanding the trade-offs — is not democratic maturity, it is passive tribalism.

If this were truly about sustainability, we would be improving nuclear safety, managing waste responsibly and transitioning only when ready. Instead, we are rushing into a future powered by gas and coal, and calling it clean.

I do not hold a rigid position. I care about what is true. If someone can present a convincing, evidence-based case for phasing out nuclear power that addresses stability, affordability and health, I will listen — and even change my mind. I want to be proven wrong, because that means I have learned something.

However, so far most arguments feel political, emotional or incomplete. That is why I am asking these questions — not to provoke, but to understand: Are we truly prepared? Is this what's best for Taiwan? Or are we just following slogans?

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