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education
politics

Call for university level
enrollment in nuclear specialties

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by Lionel martin

havana, dec 15, reuter -- cuba's ministry of education, granma reported, has sent out a call for enrollment by the island's best students in university level +nuclear specialties+, as construction of the island's first nuclear generating plant is about to begin.

the plant, to be built on the shore of the bay of cienfuegos in south central cuba, is being constructed with aid from the soviet union. in its first stage an atomic reactor will provide steam for two turbogenerators with an output of 220 megawatts each. according to cuban officials, the completed plant, scheduled to be in operation during the second half of the present decade, will produce a total output of 880 megawatts.

cuba has been preparing a cadre in nuclear engineering and associated specialties for the past eight years, both within cuba and in the soviet union, a cuban official said.

the new call by the ministry of education is part of a plan to bolster the number of nuclear specialists with an eye to running the cienfuegos plant and the construction of other atomic power plants, he said.

he added that projects are being studied to build other plants in both the eastern and western parts of the island.

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last year more than 300 cuban engineers, technicians, foremen and workers were sent to the soviet union to study construction of atomic energy plants. according to the official, about 3 000 workers will be needed to build the cienfuegos plant.

in may, 1981, 1 800 young construction workers from cuba's densely-populated eastern region were sent to cienfuegos to help build the nuclear power plant and an oil refinery.

a small village for the power station's construction workers has been completed, replete with a shopping centre, clinic, open-air theater, recreational areas and piers.

not far away, on la vigia hill, stands a new polytechnical nuclear high school which will train middle-level technicians for the plant. the school was inaugurated last september with 600 students who will take two and four year courses in maintenance, installation and repair of steam generators and nuclear reactors, instrumentation and automatic control, electrical power systems, welding, turbines and boilers.

the construction in cuba of the soviet-designed plant was approved by the international atomic energy agency in 1980. the united states' representative at the agency said at the time he was +satisfied+ with the decision.

--reuter lem/syl