

Philippines looks to nuclear energy

DISCUSSIONS ARE UNDER WAY WITH A SOUTH KOREAN COMPANY OVER A PROPOSAL FOR A PLANT IN CAGAYAN PROVINCE

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THE Philippines' Department of Energy is working with a South Korean firm to look into the possibility of putting up a 100-megawatt nuclear power plant in Cagayan province.

The department said in an advisory that Energy Secretary Alfonso Cusi, Energy Undersecretary Donato Marcos and Assistant Secretary Gerardo Erguiza discussed the matter with officials of Korea

Hydro and Nuclear Power (KHNP) on Tuesday.

"During the discussions, (the) DOE and KHNP explored energy cooperation endeavours, including the possibility of conducting a feasibility study on the establishment of a small, 100-MW modular reactor in the Cagayan Economic Zone Authority," the agency said.

This comes amid ongoing cooperation with Russian nuclear energy experts on how to tap this technology for the Philippines' electricity needs.

In November 2017, the depart-

ment signed with Russian state firm Rosatom State Atomic Energy Corp a memorandum of cooperation (MOC), which the department said "will enable the country to come up with national policies for the development of safe and secure power generation practices through nuclear energy".

The ministry also covered the "audit and assessment of the [Bataan Nuclear Power Plant or BNPP's] technical condition, including the option of its rehabilitation."

Last month, Rosatom unveiled the world's first nuclear power barge,

with more in the pipeline amid "great interest" for movable power resources in archipelagic countries like the Philippines.

In a statement, Rosatom said the floating nuclear power generator—dubbed Akademik Lomonosov after an 18th-century scientist—was equipped with two reactors that each can generate 35 MW of electricity.

The Lomonosov—which is cued to be the northernmost nuclear installation in the world—was bound for the arctic town of Pevek in the administrative region of Chukotka, where it will replace an old nuclear

power plant as well as a coal-fired power plant that provide electricity to at least 50,000 people in the area.

Alexey Likhachev, director general of Rosatom, described the Lomonosov as "a first-of-a-kind, reference project for mobile medium-capacity-range nuclear power units, a product we expect to be in growing demand in the coming years."

"For instance, we see great interest from all island nations where it is difficult, for various reasons, to set up a developed centralised power transmission infrastructure," Likhachev said