

LARGE-SCALE POWER PLANT TO BEGIN OPERATIONS ON RYESONG RIVER

North Korea is planning to begin operations in a power plant situated on the Ryesong River in North Hwanghae Province as the country focuses its efforts on overcoming power shortages.

In an effort to allow North Hwanghae Province to generate its own electrical power, the first large-scale electrical plant in the province will be situated on the Ryesong River and is slated to hold six generators. The work on the first generator began in April 1999, with the second and third currently under construction.

The Ryesong power plant was the location of Kim Jong Il's first on-site visit of the new year. During the visit, Kim declared the, "Measure on Resolving Issues Such as Ensuring Cement on a National Level."

Because the Ryesong plant is in North Hwanghae Province, it is recognized as a lifeline, with the first generator scheduled to go online within the first half of this year, and construction on the second generator to be completed by year's end.

With no large-scale power plant in North Hwanghae Province, electricity has had to be provided from Pyongyang and other regions, with small- and medium-sized generators providing power to local regional areas, according to the Choson Sinbo. A current official in North Korea reported, "When the first and second generators are complete, North Hwanghae Province's energy problems will basically be eased...in the future, once all six are complete, electrical problems can be said to be 'completely resolved.'"