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Japanese-mexican Partnership To Build Gasoline Additive Plant At Pemex Refinery

by Carlos Navarro
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The state-run oil company PEMEX has hired a Japanese-Mexican partnership to build two plants at its Miguel Hidalgo refinery in Tula (Hidalgo state) for production of additives used in unleaded gasoline. The plants, which will manufacture methylterbutyl-ether (MTBE) and termatyl-methyl-ether (TAME), are scheduled to begin operations at the end of 1994. The partnership building the plants is comprised of Japan’s Toyo Engineering, Mexico’s Grupo Protexa, and the Mexican Petroleum Institute (Instituto Mexicano del Petroleo, IMP). A Toyo Engineering spokesperson in Tokyo told reporters construction of the plants is expected to cost an estimated US$30 million, 75% of which will be funded by a loan from Japan’s Export-Import Bank. The loan is provided as part of the Japanese bank’s program to support anti-pollution projects worldwide. The plants at the Miguel Hidalgo refinery are two of five planned by PEMEX to start operations by the end of 1994. In December 1992, PEMEX awarded the South Korean company Sun-Kyong contracts to build two 30,000 metric ton capacity plants at the Antonio Dovali Jaime refinery in Salina Cruz (Oaxaca state) and a 60,000 MT facility at Hector Lara Soza refinery in Cadereyta Jimenez (Nuevo Leon state). PEMEX is targeting production of additives at 400,000 MT per year by the beginning of 1995. At present, the company produces 43,000 MT of MTBE and no TAME. The increased MTBE and TAME production is part of an effort to reduce reliance on imports of unleaded gasoline, which currently total about 70,000 barrels per day. (Sources: Agence France-Presse, 02/24/93, Notimex, 02/28/93, El Financiero International, 03/08/93)

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