

German School Ship Calls at Cuba



Havana, February 5 (RHC) -- A German ship carrying 30 students has dropped anchor off the coast of Cuba's western province Pinar del Rio, one of the destinations on its multinational itinerary.

The ship Thor Heyerdahl -- a training ship known as a "classroom under sail" -- docked in the Corrientes inlet in the Guanahacabibes Peninsula near the Maria La Gorda International Diving Center, where the students, teachers and crew were welcomed by officials from the Cuban Institute of Friendship with Nations (ICAP).

As part of their program, the students will visit today the community of Villa Bolivar, created to shelter families affected by the 2002 hurricanes Isidore and Lili. There they will also pay tribute to late Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez, who inaugurated the settlement of houses built with his country's aid.

On Thursday, the students will visit the Frederick Engels Vocational School of Exact Sciences in the capital of Pinar del Rio to participate in sports competitions and artistic shows, as well as taking part in lessons in history, Spanish, biology, geography and traditional Cuban popular dancing.

The ship was built in 1930 and for more than two decades has served as a floating educational venue, hosting some 20,000 students interested in learning about foreign countries and different cultures. It has

made stops in Cuba for the past decade.

The ship was named in honor of Norwegian explorer Thor Heyerdahl, famous for his 1947 Kon-Tiki expedition which set off from South America and sailed 8,000 kilometers across the Pacific Ocean in a handmade raft.

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