

India, Russia strike nuclear deal

By [Global Research](#)

Global Research, December 05, 2008

[Press TV](#) 5 December 2008

Region: [Asia](#)

Theme: [Oil and Energy](#)

New Delhi and Moscow have signed an agreement on civil nuclear cooperation, which provides grounds for Russia to build more reactors in India.

“The signing of the agreement on civil nuclear cooperation with Russia marks a new milestone in the history of our cooperation with Russia in the field of nuclear energy,” India’s Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said Friday at a joint press conference with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev.

The deal will allow Russia to build more reactors at the Kudankulam nuclear power plant in Tamil Nadu and plants elsewhere in country.

The deal comes after India earlier this year signed a nuclear pact with the United States, giving New Delhi access to civilian nuclear fuel and technology on the international market for the first time in three decades.

“The cooperation in the energy sector remains a priority for us. We are very interested in developing cooperation in the nuclear sector. It is especially important now that various energy sectors are being developed,” said Medvedev, who is on a three-day visit to India.

Meanwhile, head of Russia’s space agency Roskosmos, Anatoly Perminov announced that the two states have also signed a deal to cooperate on future manned space flights, and on building an astronaut training center.

“An Indian cosmonaut is expected to fly on the Soyuz rocket in 2013,” Perminov said.

India launched its first unmanned moon mission Chandrayaan-1 on October 22, joining the Asian space race in the footsteps of rival China.

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