

Moscow, Seoul To Cooperate In Space Exploration

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A bilateral agreement between Russia and South Korea was signed Tuesday authorizing the building of a space center in South Korea and the training of a Korean astronaut for a mission at the International Space Station, reports RIA Novosti.

An inter-governmental commission outlined the two projects in a protocol that was signed in Moscow by Russian Transportation Minister Igor Levitin and South Korean Deputy Prime Minister and Finance and Economy Minister Han Duk-soo.

A main aim of cooperation is to certify the South Korean space industry to use Russian technology, according to RIA Novosti.

A series of agreements, including one on cooperation in the peaceful research and use of outer space, were signed when President Roh Moo-hyun visited Russia on September 21, 2004.

Moscow and Seoul have signed an agreement to develop Korea's civilian space launch system and are pursuing programs to train the country's first ever astronaut by 2007.

Korean newspapers said the space center was being built on the South Korean island of Wenuro in the straits that separate Korea from Japan. Korea's KSLV-1 rocket will launch a satellite weighing up to 100kg (220lbs) into orbit. South Korea will continue research to build updated models KSLV-2 and KSLV-3.

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