

India, U.S. sign space agreement

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U.S. and Indian officials have signed an agreement for cooperation in space exploration.

The signing ceremony took place Friday at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration said. NASA Administrator Michael Griffin and Indian Space Research Organization Chairman G. Madhavan Nair signed the framework agreement, which replaces a 1997 agreement for research in Earth and atmospheric science.

The two countries already have a joint project. NASA has supplied two of the 11 instruments carried by Chandrayaan-1, India's first lunar probe. The Chandrayaan is to be launched this year.

"This agreement will allow us to cooperate effectively on a wide range of programs of mutual interest," Griffin said. "India has extensive space-related experience, capabilities and infrastructure, and will continue to be a welcome partner in NASA's future space exploration activities."

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