

India to start work on stalled nuclear plant

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Tamil Nadu's chief minister Jayalalithaa (pictured) has announced the green light for work to start on a massive nuclear power station stalled for months amid protests over safety concerns, a report says.

The southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu on Monday gave the green light for work to start on a massive nuclear power station stalled for months amid protests over safety concerns, a report said.

Tamil Nadu's chief minister announced the decision to begin work on two 1000-megawatt nuclear reactors in Koodankulam with Russian help following an approval by the state cabinet, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said.

"In accordance with the cabinet decision, immediate steps will be taken (to start the commissioning) of the plant," PTI quoted Chief Minister Jayalalithaa, who uses only one name, as saying in a statement.

Work on the project was stalled last September following mass protests by villagers and activists over safety concerns.

Jayalithaa urged political parties and protesters not to disrupt the project, which will tackle the state's severe power shortages.

Russian Ambassador to India Alexander Kadakin last month voiced his country's frustration over the delays.

"We cannot allow our scientists to remain idle endlessly. For months together, they are without work," Kadakin said.

Other protests have also thrown into disarray plans to build a power plant in the western state of Maharashtra.

India last month froze the assets of three non-profit groups it alleged were diverting foreign aid funds to fuel the anti-nuclear protests.

Nuclear energy has been a priority for India since 2008 when then US president George W. Bush signed into law a deal with New Delhi that ended a three-decade ban on US nuclear trade with the country.

Since then, France, Russia and private US and Japanese firms have been locked in fierce competition to sell new reactors to [India](#).

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