

# Japan signs nuclear energy deal with Jordan

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Japan agreed to provide Jordan with support for its nuclear energy programme as the Middle East state plans to launch its first atomic power plant in 2017, officials said.

The five-year accord was signed in Tokyo as Jordan's King Abdullah II was making a three-day trip to the Japanese capital, said an official of Japan's energy agency.

Under the deal, which can be extended for another five years, Japan would help Jordan draft a development programme for construction of nuclear power plants and help develop necessary infrastructure, the official said.

Japan would also help Jordan train nuclear power plant workers and introduce safety measures and regulations, he said.

Japan, Asia's industrial powerhouse but poor in energy resources, is one of the world's leading users of atomic energy with more than 50 nuclear power reactors.

Earlier in the day, King Abdullah had lunch with Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko at the Imperial Palace in Central Tokyo.

The king was later scheduled to hold talks with Prime Minister Taro Aso.

King Abdullah, who arrived here on Sunday, met Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone on Monday and urged Japan to play a role in stalled talks over the Middle East peace process.

This is his sixth trip to Japan since becoming King in 1999, following a visit in December 2001.