

Iran nuclear plant appropriate, U.S. says

by UPI

BUSHEHR, Iran - The trial start-up of the Bushehr nuclear plant in Iran is in the realm of peaceful use of nuclear energy, a U.S. State Department spokesman said Wednesday

Iran and Russia have an agreement for fuel supply and spent fuel return, State Department spokesman Robert Wood said during media briefing.

Final preparations were being made Wednesday for the trial run start-up of Iran's new nuclear power plant in the Persian Gulf port of Bushehr, officials said. Russia supplied nuclear fuel for the plant under control of the International Atomic Energy Agency in January 2008 and Iran has agreed to return spent nuclear fuel to Russia, the Russian news agency RIA Novosti reported.

The plant and the Iran-Russia arrangement demonstrates that the Middle Eastern country "doesn't need to develop its own nuclear capacity," Wood said. "We think what the Russians are doing with regard to the fuel supply and spent fuel arrangements are an appropriate mechanism."

The 1,000-megawatt power plant will start its test operation using virtual fuel packages, officials said.

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