

Putin Guns for Big Deals On Fighter Jets in India

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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President Vladimir Putin hopes to conclude deals next week on the sale of fighter jets and aircraft engines to India that could be worth more than \$7.5 billion, defense industry sources said Wednesday.

Putin, who will visit India on Monday, has his sights set on selling 42 Su-30MKI fighters and supplying 970 warplane engines in the long term, one source said.

The source did not put a value on the deals because, he said, the size of the orders had not yet been approved.

“There is no total figure for the volume of engine contracts. It depends on what they order,” he said.

But another industry insider said the contracts could bring in at least \$7.5 billion for Russia,

one of the world's largest arms exporters.

“The deals are expected to be announced during Putin’s trip to India,” said Ruslan Pukhov, director of the defense think tank CAST. “The price for everything together will be between \$7.5 billion and \$8 billion.”

The Defense Ministry and the Kremlin declined comment.

If concluded, the deals would boost a Russian industry whose export market has shrunk since last year’s Arab uprisings.

India, cautiously watching regional rival China’s growing military might, has been the top importer of Russian weapons.

The Russian arms industry, nurtured under Putin’s first presidency, from 2000 to 2008, has sold weapons to post-Soviet states and Cold War allies for decades on the strength of Soviet-era technology.

But the industry has largely stagnated due to a lack of funding since the collapse of the Soviet Union, leaving weapons manufacturers dependent on outdated designs.

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