

Kazakhstan to launch telecom satellites

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Kazakhstan will launch its first two telecommunications satellites later this year.

The head of the Kazakh Federal Space Agency told a conference Thursday that the KazSat would be launched before June 20 while KazSat 2 spacecraft would be in orbit before the end of the year, the Itar-Tass news agency reported.

Alexander Martynov said the agency was actively looking at ways to compress the time frame as Kazakhstan develops plans to eventually have four communications satellites in orbit along with four smaller imaging satellites that will be developed in cooperation with Russia and will be used to explore for energy and monitor oil pipelines.

KazSat is equipped with 10 Ku-band transponders for television, data and other communications transmissions covering central Asia, Ukraine and the greater Moscow area. It had been scheduled for liftoff last month, but the launch was delayed.

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