

Iran to launch new satellites soon: defence minister

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Iranian Defence Minister Ahmad Vahidi said on Sunday that Tehran would soon launch into space a number of its newly designed satellites, Mehr news agency reported.

"Currently, we are building new satellites and soon, in the near future, some of them will be launched into space," Vahidi told the agency in the western city of Khoramabad.

Vahidi did not specify when the launches would take place.

Iran had planned a [launch](#) for its second home-made [satellite](#), Rasad 1 (Observation), in late August but it was postponed until the second half of the Iranian year to March 2011.

In February 2009, Iran launched its first home-built satellite Omid (Hope).

Vahidi also said Iran was designing its own S-300 missiles, after Moscow's refusal to deliver the air defence projectiles because of UN sanctions against Tehran over its nuclear ambitions.

"The production of the S-300 missile is now being pursued by domestic experts. The production is in the design process," he said.

His remarks came after Iran's English-language Press TV reported on Thursday that the country had "successfully" tested an upgraded version

of a S-200 system with the "same capability as the Russian-made S-300 system."

The S-300 is a surface-to-air missile in medium and high altitudes with a range of up to 150 kilometres (90 miles).

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