

Indian-French satellite put into orbit

October 12 2011



A scale model of the Megha-Tropiques satellite is seen as Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) officials attend a news conference in Bangalore. The Indian-French satellite that will study monsoon patterns and global warming was launched from a space centre in southern India.

An Indian-French satellite that will study monsoon patterns and global warming was launched on Wednesday from a space centre in southern India.

The satellite was one of four successfully released into orbit from the [Indian Space Research](#) Organisation (ISRO) centre in Andhra Pradesh in a boost to India's ambitious space exploration programme.

The Megha-Tropiques satellite, a joint project between the ISRO and the French government space agency CNES, will examine climatic and atmospheric changes in tropical regions.

Three other smaller satellites were also released from the rocket, 867

kilometres (539 miles) above Earth.

"The launch of the Polar Satellite [Launch Vehicle](#) has been a grand success," ISRO chairman K. Radhakrishnan said. "All the four satellites were injected into their orbits very precisely as planned."

G. Raju, co-leader of the Megha-Tropiques project, said the satellite would start to transmit data in two or three weeks and would be in orbit for five years.

India's space programme suffered a major setback in December last year when a satellite launch vehicle blew up and fell into the [Bay of Bengal](#) after veering from its intended flight path.

India, which aims to send its first manned flight into space in 2016, first staked a claim for a share of the lucrative commercial satellite-launch market by sending up an Italian orbiter in 2007.

The country sees its space exploration programme as an achievement that underlines its emergence as a major world economy.

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