

Russia launches navigation satellite

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A Proton-M rocket, carrying the Russian Glonass-M satellites, blasts off from the Russian-leased Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan in 2010. Russia on Monday successfully launched a satellite for its Glonass global navigation system the country's space agency said.

Russia on Monday successfully launched a satellite for its Glonass global navigation system from its Plesetsk cosmodrome, the country's space agency said.

"The Glonass-M spacecraft separated normally from the booster rocket at 15:57 Moscow time (1157 GMT) and was taken under control," the Roskosmos space agency said in a statement.

The satellite on a Soyuz 2.1B booster rocket blasted off from the northern cosmodrome at 12:25 Moscow time (0825 GMT).

The launch means there are now 23 functioning Glonass satellites in

orbit, Roskosmos said. The [Glonass system](#) aims to rival the United States' GPS system. In a surprising coup, it is used alongside GPS on the latest iPhone.

Launches of [Glonass satellites](#) are being closely followed after three of the craft, which would have completed the system, failed to reach orbit and crashed into the Pacific Ocean in December 2010 because of a problem with the booster rocket.

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