

Russia launches navigation satellites

November 4 2011



A Russian Proton-M rocket carrying a Russian "GLONASS" global positioning systems satellite blasts off from the Baikonur cosmodrome in 2010. Russia on Friday successfully launched three satellites for its global navigation system Glonass on a Proton-M rocket from its Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan, the Russian space agency said.

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The launch took place at 4:51 pm Moscow time (1251 GMT) and the satellites, part of a system aimed at rivalling the US GPS, were due to go into their fixed orbits later in the evening.

Successful deployment of the satellites is vital for Russia after three [Glonass satellites](#) were lost in December 2010 when they plunged into the ocean after a problem with the rocket.

There have been questions over the reliability of the Russian space programme after a Progress supply ship bound for the [International Space Station](#) plunged back into Siberia in August after a technical failure.

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