

S. Korea satellite rocket launch Jan 30-Feb 8

January 16 2013



A man watches at a railway station in Seoul on November 29, 2012 live footage of South Korea's attempt to put a satellite in orbit. South Korea will make another bid at the end of this month and gain entry to an elite global space club that includes Asian powers China, India and Japan.

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The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology announced Wednesday a January 30-February 8 window for launching the

140-tonne Korea [Space Launch](#) Vehicle-1 (KSLV-1) from the Naro [Space Centre](#) on the south coast.

"By the end of this week, first and second stages will be connected and next week, rehearsals will take place," a ministry official told AFP.

Following failed attempts in 2009 and 2010, a successful launch is considered crucial to South Korea's commercial space ambitions.

The current attempt has already been postponed twice for technical reasons after launch dates were set in October and then November.

The KSLV-1 has a first stage manufactured by Russia, with a solid-fuel second stage built in South Korea.

In 2009, the carrier achieved orbit, but faulty release mechanisms on its second stage prevented proper deployment of the satellite.

A 2010 effort saw the carrier explode two minutes into its flight, with both Russia and South Korea blaming each other.

Last month, North Korea successfully launched its own long-range rocket, which Pyongyang was a purely scientific mission to place a satellite in orbit.

Most of the world saw it as a disguised [ballistic missile](#) test that violated UN resolutions imposed after the North's [nuclear tests](#) in 2006 and 2009.

Seoul's space ambitions were restricted for many years by its main military ally the United States, which feared that a robust missile or rocket programme would accelerate a regional arms race, especially with North Korea.

Japan and China both achieved their first satellite launches back in 1970, and India made its breakthrough in 1980. But the lack of US support contributed to South Korea, Asia's fourth largest economy, lagging behind.

Soon after joining the Missile Technology Control Regime in 2001, [South Korea](#) made Russia its go-to space partner.

The KSLV-1 will deploy a small satellite that will mainly collect data on space radiation.

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