

Russia plans unmanned moon mission in 2015

January 15 2013

The Russian Space Agency says it will send an unmanned spacecraft to the moon in 2015 from a new launch pad in the country's Far East.

Roscosmos head Vladimir Popovkin told Russian news agencies on Tuesday that the rocket booster would deliver a 500-kilogram (1,100-pound) space exploration vehicle with up to 25 kilograms (55 pounds) of scientific equipment that would search for water and take soil samples.

Popovkin said the moon-bound spacecraft would be launched from Russia's new Vostochny cosmodrome. President Vladimir Putin has vowed to invest \$1 billion in building this launch pad in the Amur Region not far from the Chinese border.

Russia's last and only moon mission was accomplished in 1973.

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