

Russia launches rocket three months after crash

September 30 2013

Russia on Monday successfully launched a Proton-M rocket with a European communication satellite on board, marking a return of its most important unmanned space vehicle three months after one exploded on takeoff.

The launch from the Baikonur [space](#) centre that Russia leases from the neighbouring Central Asian nation of Kazakhstan had been originally scheduled for July 21.

But one of the rockets exploded on takeoff on July 2, spewing toxic fumes into the atmosphere and dealing another blow to Russia's once-proud space programme.

The Proton-M [rocket](#) is Russia's most popular for commercial satellite launches.

The latest failure came after a string of botched unmanned launches in the last two years seriously tarnished the reputation of the country's space programme.

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