

Japan launches new spy satellite

February 1 2015

Japan on Sunday successfully launched a back-up spy satellite, its aerospace agency said, after cancelling an earlier lift-off due to bad weather.

Tokyo put spy satellites into operation in the early 2000s after its erratic neighbour North Korea fired a mid-range ballistic missile over the Japanese mainland and into the western Pacific in 1998.

The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries delayed Thursday's planned launch of the H-2A rocket from Tanegashima Space Center in southwestern Japan, due to the possibility of lightning during lift-off.

The launch at 10:21 am (0121 GMT) on Sunday was successful, JAXA and Mitsubishi Heavy said, adding: "We confirmed the rocket launched normally."

Four Japanese intelligence satellites are currently in orbit—two optical satellites and two radar satellites.

The backup satellite will supplement the two radar satellites, a government official said earlier.

© 2015 AFP

Citation: Japan launches new spy satellite (2015, February 1) retrieved 20 March 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2015-02-japan-spy-satellite.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.