

UAE Mars mission liftoff on Japan rocket reset for Monday

July 17 2020, by Mari Yamaguchi

The liftoff of a United Arab Emirates' Mars orbiter, postponed due to bad weather at the launch site in southern Japan, is now set for Monday.

The orbiter named Amal, or Hope, is the Arab world's first interplanetary mission. The launch, initially scheduled for Wednesday from the Tanegashima Space Center, has been reset for 6:58 a.m. Monday (2158 GMT Sunday), Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, the provider of the H-IIA rocket, said Friday.

Mitsubishi, however, said there is a slight chance of further postponement depending on the weather. The company has set a launch window through Aug. 13. A final decision is expected Sunday.

Hope is to reach Mars in February 2021, the year the UAE celebrates 50 years since its formation. A successful Hope mission would be a major step for the oil-dependent economy seeking a future in space.

Two other Mars missions are planned in coming days by the U.S. and China. Japan has its own Martian moon mission planned in 2024.

Hope carries three instruments to study the upper atmosphere and monitor climate change and is scheduled to circle the red planet for at least two years. The UAE says it will provide a complete view of the Martian atmosphere during different seasons for the first time.

"I'm looking forward to a successful launch," Japanese Foreign Minister

Toshimitsu Motegi said. He said the scheduled launch of a Japanese rocket carrying UAE's Hope probe "is a symbol of our firm relations between Japan and UAE."

Resource-poor Japan has traditionally kept friendly ties with Middle Eastern countries. In recent years, Japan has increasingly stepped up trade and defense ties with the UAE, and now seeks to expand its space business. Motegi said Japan hopes to further promote comprehensive and strategic partnership with UAE.

© 2020 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed without permission.

Citation: UAE Mars mission liftoff on Japan rocket reset for Monday (2020, July 17) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2020-07-uae-mars-mission-liftoff-japan.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.