

China says it will launch its next lunar explorer in the first half of this year

January 10 2024



In this photoreleased by Xinhua News Agency, the Chang'e 4 lunar probe launches from the the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in southwestern China's Sichuan province, on Dec. 8, 2018. China's space agency said Wednesday, Jan. 10, 2024 that its latest lunar explorer had arrived at the launch site in preparation

for a mission to the moon in the first half of this year. Credit: Jiang Hongjing/Xinhua via AP, File

China's space agency said Wednesday that its latest lunar explorer had arrived at the launch site in preparation for a mission to the moon in the first half of this year.

State broadcaster CCTV posted photos on its website of the unit under wraps as it was unloaded from a large cargo airplane earlier this week and then transported by flatbed truck to the Wenchang launch site on southern China's Hainan island.

The announcement came a day after a U.S. company [abandoned a lunar landing](#) planned for Feb. 23 because of a fuel leak that started soon after takeoff on Monday.

China and the U.S. are both pursuing plans to land astronauts on the moon in what has become a growing rivalry in space. The U.S. plans to do so [in 2026](#), and China's target date is before 2030.

The China National Space Administration said that pre-launch tests would be carried out on its Chang'e-6 probe. The [mission's](#) goals include bringing back samples from the far side of the moon.

Another U.S. moon lander from a Houston company is due to launch next month.

Four [countries](#)—the U.S., Russia, China and India—have [landed spacecraft on the moon](#). Only the United States has previously put astronauts on the moon.

© 2024 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed without permission.

Citation: China says it will launch its next lunar explorer in the first half of this year (2024, January 10) retrieved 28 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2024-01-china-lunar-explorer-year.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.