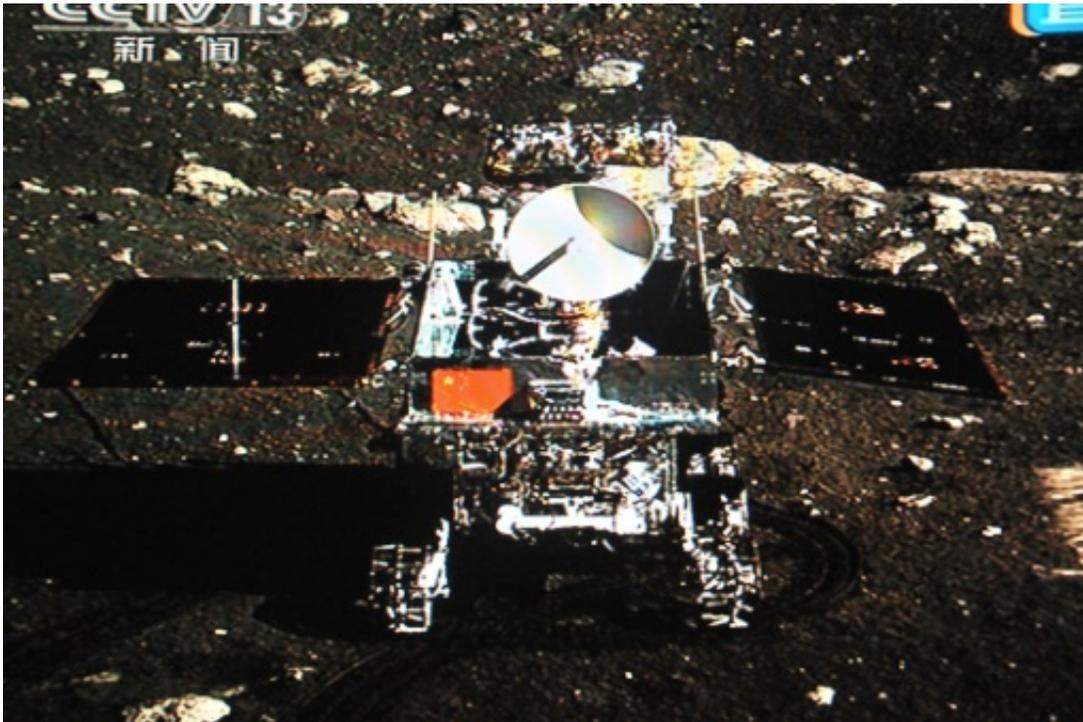


# China's Jade Rabbit lunar rover dies in blaze of online glory (Update)

August 3 2016

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China's Jade Rabbit lunar rover has spent 31 months surveying the moon's surface

China's troubled but beloved Jade Rabbit lunar rover has whirred its last, state media said Wednesday, after it bid humanity farewell on social media.

The device, designed for a lifespan of a mere three months, surveyed the

moon's surface for 31 months, the official Xinhua new service said, overcoming numerous technical problems and design flaws to become a national icon.

But the machine has stopped operations, Xinhua cited the State Administration for Science, Technology and Industry for National Defense as saying Wednesday.

The rover was part of the Chang'e-3 lunar mission. Millions of Internet users took part in an online contest to select its name, which comes from the pet of a moon goddess in Chinese mythology.

It began its adventure on December 2013, sending back photographs of the lunar surface and gaining huge popularity with Internet users along the way.

Not long after landing its legend grew after a "mechanical control abnormality" forced it offline, prompting anxiety from its many supporters.

The rover later turned dormant and stopped sending signals during the lunar night, which lasts for two weeks and sees temperatures plummet.

But it made a dramatic recovery, to the delight of its admirers.

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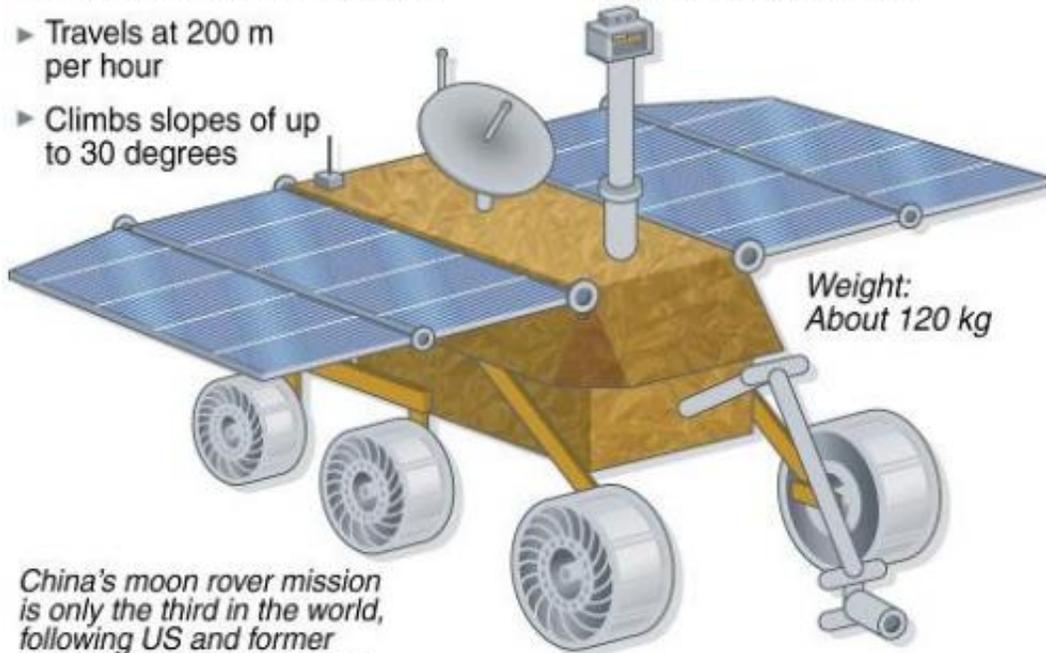
# China's lunar rover mission

## Jade Rabbit moon rover "Yutu"

Mission:  
To explore the moon's surface  
and look for natural resources

Launched:  
December 2 from the Xichang  
Satellite Launch Center

- ▶ Travels at 200 m per hour
- ▶ Climbs slopes of up to 30 degrees



Weight:  
About 120 kg

*China's moon rover mission is only the third in the world, following US and former Soviet Union decades ago*

Source: State media/Shanghai Aerospace Systems Engineering Research Institute



A graphic on China's lunar rover vehicle the Yutu, or Jade Rabbit

It was not clear on which day the device finally "retired".

An official media account carried a post written as a first-person message from the plucky rover to its fans on Sunday saying: "This time it really is goodnight.

"There are still many questions I would like answers too, but I'm the rabbit that has seen the most stars!" it added. "The moon says it has prepared a long, long dream for me."

The post also contained a link to "Universal Traveler", a song by French electronica band Air.

It has received nearly 100,000 shares, likes and comments, with one poster promising it "countless carrot pies" according to Xinhua.

Another said: "I don't know why I am so heartbroken. It's just a machine after all."

The Chang'e-3 probe's landing was the third such soft-landing in history, and the first of its kind since a Soviet mission nearly four decades ago. It has been a source of national pride.

China sees the space programme as a symbol of its rising global stature and technological advancement, as well as of the Communist Party's success in reversing the fortunes of the once-impoverished nation.

By 2018 the country aims to land its Chang'e-4 probe—named for the moon goddess in Chinese mythology—on the far side of the moon.

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