

Russia Delays Landmark Rocket Launch Again

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Russia put off the maiden launch of its first new space rocket design since Soviet times for a second day on Saturday, RIA news agency said, a fresh blow to the country's once-pioneering industry.

The debut launch of the Angara rocket was first called off on Friday after the vehicle's booster cut out during a final countdown watched by President Vladimir Putin via video link at the Kremlin.

Angara, built by the Khrunichev space centre, is a key test of Russia's ability remake a troubled space industry which is struggling to recover from brain drain and years of budget curbs.

"The rocket will be removed from the launchpad and transferred to a technical stand

for comprehensive analysis," RIA quoted the Khrunichev centre as saying, adding the new launch time would only be decided after the checks.

More than two decades in the making, the new generation rocket is a centerpiece of Putin's plan to reform Russia's space industry and a drive to launch satellites from its own soil, breaking dependence on other ex-Soviet republics.

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