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Russia's Proton Rocket Launches Successfully After May Failure

By The Moscow Times

August 28, 2015

Russia's Proton carrier rockets resumed flight on Friday with the successful launch from Kazakhstan of one transporting a satellite for British company Inmarsat after the failure of a mission in May.

The lift off and the separation of three stages of Proton boosters in the early phases of the flight went according to plan, according to mission control commentary.

Inmarsat's launch slot from the Baikonur Cosmodrome was delayed by the failure of an identical Russian-built Proton rocket carrying a Mexican satellite in May.

The early stages of a flight are the most risky, but nonetheless Inmarsat said it would not declare the launch a success until later stages were completed, some 15 hours after lift off.

Shares in Inmarsat, which supplies communications to shipping, aircraft and remote locations worldwide, jumped after the successful lift off on Friday afternoon.

They were trading up 4.2 percent at 1422 GMT, at 974.5 pence, topping Britain's FTSE 100 index.

The satellite — Inmarsat-5 F3 — will allow the British company to deploy faster broadband services globally by the end of the year. It is the company's third Global Xpress satellite.

Chief Executive Rupert Pearce told Reuters on Thursday that the company had worked hard to control any launch risks by performing its own rigorous checks.

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