

# CHINA COMPLETES LANDER TEST FOR FIRST MARS MISSION IN 2020

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A lander is hanged for a hovering-and-obstacle avoidance test for China's Mars mission at a test facility in Huailai, Hebei province, China on November 14, 2019. | Photo Credit: [REUTERS](#)

China on Thursday successfully completed a lander test in northern Hebei province ahead of an unmanned exploration mission to Mars next year.

China is on track to launch its Mars mission in 2020, Zhang Kejian, head of the China National Space Administration, said on Thursday. Mr. Zhang was speaking ahead of the hovering-and-obstacle avoidance test for the lander.

The journey through space will take about seven months, while landing will take seven minutes, said Zhang Rongqiao, chief architect of the Mars exploration programme.

The test was conducted at a sprawling landing test site in Huailai, northwest of Beijing.

China has developed the powerful long March 5 rocket to transport the probe to Mars in 2020.

China to send probe, rover to Mars in 2020

The same rocket is meant to deliver the Chang'e-5 probe to the moon by the end of 2019 or early next year to bring back samples of lunar rocks.

The Chang'e-4 probe successfully touched down on the far side of the moon in January this year, a historic first and major achievement for China's space programme.

China's Chang'e-4 lunar rover lands on moon's far side, sends back images

China made its first lunar landing in 2013.

China expects to complete a modular space station around 2022, around the time when NASA is said to start building a new space station laboratory to orbit the moon, as a pit stop for missions to other parts of the solar system.

In 2003, China became the third nation to put a man in space with its own rocket after the former Soviet Union and the United States.

Since then, it has been racing to catch up with Russia and the United States and become a major space power by 2030.

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