



INDIA LAUNCHES MINI SHUTTLE IN RACE TO REPLACE NASA SPACECRAFT

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India launched a mini unmanned space shuttle on Monday to test the viability of reusable spacecraft.

The shuttle will head 43 miles into the atmosphere before dropping down into the sea, the BBC reports. It is not expected to survive in one piece, but will collect data on hypersonic speed and autonomous landing.

India has been investing significant rupees in space missions in recent years, launching its own Mars Orbiter Mission in 2013. The space shuttle program has been in the works for the past five years and cost 1 billion rupees (\$14 million) to develop.

The US retired its Space Shuttle program in 2011 and since then there has been significant competition to replace NASA's beloved craft. India is competing with Japan, Europe and Russia to

create a replacement, as well as private companies such as SpaceX and Blue Origin, owned by Tesla's Elon Musk and Amazon's Jeff Bezos respectively.

24 MAY 2016

SOURCE: CNET

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