

China to launch Long March-5 Y2 in early July

China has set the window to launch its Long March-5 Y2 carrier rocket between July 2 and 5, according to the State Administration of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defense.

Carrying Shijian-18 communication satellite, the rocket was vertically transferred to the launch area at Wenchang Space Launch Center in south China's Hainan Province on Monday.

Shijian-18 will test processes for the new Dongfanghong-5 satellites and carry out in-orbit experiments.

After arriving at the launch base on May 5, the rocket has undergone assembly and testing. This will be the second launch mission for the Long March-5, which debuted in Wenchang in November 2016.

During the mission, the rocket will further test its core technology, accumulate data and provide support ahead of the launch of the Chang'e-5 lunar probe in the second half of this year.

Fuelled by liquid hydrogen, kerosene and liquid oxygen, the Long March-5 can carry a payload of 25 tonnes into low Earth orbit and 14 tonnes in geostationary orbit, over 2.5 times the capacity of current Long March carrier rockets.