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# Launch date set for UAE lunar mission

Blast-off on Dec 11, Mohammad Bin Rashid Space Centre announces

**DUBAI**

**BY SAJILA SASEENDRAN**
Senior Reporter

A new launch date has been announced for the UAE's moon mission on Rashid Rover.

The new launch date is set for the Emirates Lunar Mission on Sunday December 11, at 11.38am (UAE time), the Mohammad Bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC) announced on Twitter yesterday.

The launch site will be the Space Launch Complex 40 at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in the US.

The new target launch date was revealed after SpaceX announced a stand-down from the December 1 launch of the Falcon 9 rocket, carrying aboard the Rashid Rover. The delay was announced following inspections of the launch vehicle and data review.

## Initial plan

SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket was originally set to launch the spacecraft to the moon on November 30. The launch had then been pushed back by one day, to December 1, before the new postponement was announced.

The mission includes the world's first private lander to the moon, undertaken by Japanese firm ispace.

Until now, only the United States, Russia and China have managed to put a robot on the lunar surface.

**Once successful, the first Emirates Lunar Mission will make the UAE the first Arab country and among the first countries in the world to land a spacecraft on the moon, besides three other countries.**

Once successful, the first Emirates Lunar Mission (ELM) will make the UAE the first Arab country and among the first countries in the world to land a spacecraft on the moon, besides these three countries.

The Emirati-made Rashid Rover aims to study the characteristics of lunar soil, the petrography (composition and properties of lunar rocks) and geology of the moon. It will also take photos of the moon's dust movement, surface plasma conditions, and the lunar regolith (blanket of superficial deposits covering solid rocks).

Rashid Rover will help scientists better understand how lunar dust and rocks vary across the moon.

The ELM will also provide fresh data for the development of new technologies that can be used to unravel the origins of the earth and our solar system.