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## Korea to unveil lunar lander plan following orbiter success

*Danuri expected to enter lunar orbit in mid-December*

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A "space economy roadmap" including the development of a next-generation space vehicle and a lunar lander will be unveiled within this year, the presidential office said Sunday.

"To make a leap forward as a space powerhouse, we plan to set up more powerful and detailed space development strategies and execute the plan immediately," Cho Seong-kyung, presidential secretary in charge of science and technology affairs, told



SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket, carrying the Danuri lunar orbiter, is launched into space from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida, Aug. 5 (KST).

Joint Press Corps

reporters.

The roadmap that includes developing a next-generation space vehicle as well as a moon lander follows

Korea's successful launch of the domestically-developed lunar orbiter, Danuri.

The Danuri began its journey Friday to reach lunar orbit as it was successfully launched into space, according to the Ministry of Science and ICT.

The ministry said the lunar orbiter, carried by SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket, lifted off from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida at 8:08 a.m., Friday (KST) and confirmed it successfully entered Earth-moon transfer orbit as of 2 p.m.

As the launch process went off without a hitch, the Danuri will cruise through space for about four-and-a-half months before settling into lunar orbit in mid-December. It will then remain about 100 kilome-

ters above the moon and conduct scientific missions for almost a year from January 2023, the science ministry said.

If the orbiter succeeds in carrying out its operations, Korea will become the seventh nation to undertake a lunar exploration.

"The Danuri was disconnected from SpaceX's Falcon 9 projectile at an altitude of about 703 kilometers at around 8:48 a.m. and made its first communication with the ground station at about 9:40 a.m., about 92 minutes after launch," the ministry said.

"The Korea Aerospace Research Institute analyzed the information given from SpaceX and confirmed that the Danuri separated as expected from the projectile and entered the target orbit," the ministry added.