



Cultural appeal

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Probe underway into failure of rocket launch

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The maiden flight of the TL 3, a new heavy-lift model of liquid-propellant carrier rocket, built by Beijing-based private rocket maker Space Pioneer, was unsuccessful on Friday afternoon.

The rocket blasted off at 12:17 pm from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwestern China.

While the initial liftoff was successful, the vehicle's flight became abnormal before it could reach its preset orbital altitude and deploy the payload. Engineers have begun

a comprehensive investigation into the cause of the failure, according to a statement from the company.

Industry insiders said the maiden flight was intended to test the reliability of the rocket's core systems — including its overall design, propulsion system, control system and structural strength — under real flight conditions.

According to Space Pioneer, the TL 3 stands 72 meters tall with a diameter of 3.8 meters, making it the largest and most powerful liquid-propellant rocket developed by China's private space sector. Its dimensions and capabilities are fre-

quently benchmarked against global peers like the Falcon 9, a rocket made by United States-based private spaceflight company SpaceX.

Established in 2015, Space Pioneer is one of the leading players in China's private space sector.

In April 2023, it made history when its TL 2 became the first privately developed liquid-fuel rocket in the world to reach orbit in its first attempt.

Despite Friday's setback, the company remains a key player in China's efforts to lower the cost of space access through reusable rocket technology.