

Ukraine Denies Role in Explosion of U.S. Rocket

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Ukrainian space industry firms had no involvement in the refurbishment of the Russian rocket engine used by the U.S. Antares rocket that exploded this week, the country's space agency said Thursday.

In the wake of the rocket disaster early Wednesday morning Moscow time, a number of state-owned Russian media outlets began to characterize the Antares rocket as a Ukrainian-American rocket, after having characterized it as a Russian-American rocket after previous successful launches.

The rocket's engine has been the focus of early speculation on the cause of the accident.

"Ukrainian space industry companies did not participate in the production or modernization of the NK-33 rocket engines," the Ukrainian space agency was quoted as saying by news agency Interfax.

Components made at the Yuzhmash plant in Ukraine, were used inside the rocket's body but these had nothing to do with the 40-year-old refurbished Russian rocket engine, the space agency said.

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