

Russia to Launch Private Iranian Satellites Into Orbit

By [AFP](#)

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Soyuz-2.1b rocket on the launch pad of the Vostochny Cosmodrome. **Ivan Timoshenko / Roscosmos**

A Russian rocket is set to launch two privately-built Iranian satellites into orbit early Tuesday, the Iranian Embassy in Moscow said, hailing close cooperation between Moscow and Tehran.

The two countries have deepened ties and trade amid Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and the conflict in the Middle East, with space launches just one aspect of their burgeoning partnership.

“In continuation of the development of Iran-Russia scientific and technological cooperation, two Iranian satellites — Koswar and Hodhod — will be launched into 500-kilometer orbit,” Iran's ambassador to Moscow, Kazem Jalali, said Monday on social media.

He said the launch would take place at 02:48 Tehran time (23:18 GMT on Monday) using a Russian Soyuz rocket.

The imaging and communications satellites were designed and built by Iran's Omid Faza Company, the statement said, and will support agriculture, environmental monitoring and communications in remote areas.

Russia has launched Iranian satellites before, but this is the first time it has been a private-sector initiative, Jalali said.

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“There is hope that with the launch of these two satellites, a firm and decisive first step will be taken towards the entry of the private sector of the Islamic Republic of Iran into the space sphere,” he said.

The West has raised concerns over Iran's fledgling space program, fearing the same technology could also be used to launch nuclear-equipped ballistic missiles.

Tehran says its space program is peaceful and complies with a UN Security Council resolution that aims to restrict Iran's ballistic missile program.

Moscow has been accused of using Iranian military hardware and technology, most notably Shahed drones, throughout its war in Ukraine.

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