
7th NTU satellite marks a S'pore first

Felicia Choo

The first Singapore satellite launch from the International Space Station took place successfully on Monday evening.

Aoba Velox-III is a joint project by Nanyang Technological University (NTU) and Japan's Kyushu Institute of Technology (Kyutech).

Orbiting at 400km above sea level, the satellite will conduct tests to evaluate the durability of commercial off-the-shelf microprocessors in space, including a micro-propulsion system, consumer-grade electronic components and a wireless communication system.

The 2kg nano-satellite has mi-

cro-thrusters, which will enable it to remain in space for six months – twice as long as normal.

Instead of being launched from a rocket, the satellite was shot into orbit around Earth by a Japanese astronaut at the space station, using a special launcher.

This is the seventh satellite that NTU has launched. Its last two were launched in December 2015.

“Building up the local satellite talent pool and developing disruptive technologies like the micro-thruster in the Aoba Velox-III are important for Singapore's budding space industry,” said Mr Lim Wee Seng, director of the NTU Satellite Research Centre.

“Riding on the success of the

Aoba Velox-III, we are now developing our second joint satellite with Kyutech, which could lead to small and manoeuvrable satellites being used as space probes in future.”

Professor Mengü Cho, director of Kyutech's spacecraft environment interaction engineering laboratory, said: “We are looking forward to another joint satellite that is under development and scheduled to be launched in 2018.

“The long-term goal of the Kyutech-NTU joint space programme is to do a lunar mission using the technologies demonstrated by these two satellites.”

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