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KASA pledges supports for industrial ecosystem

Korea aims for annual Nuri launches by 2032

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Oh Tae-seog, administrator of the Korea AeroSpace Administration, pledged government support Wednesday to nurture an industrial ecosystem aligned with the new space era and prevent Korea from falling behind in the intensifying global space race.

During a press conference in Seoul, Oh, who took office as KASA's second administrator on Feb. 3, said the new space era is led by the private sector and driven by commercial viability, making it essential for Korea to move quickly to secure a foothold in the market.

"The country's efforts to build an industrial ecosystem matching the New Space era are still insufficient," he said. "In the past, the focus was on research and development, but now speed is also critical. We need to move quickly. To foster the industry, we must also ensure price competitiveness. It is important to actively communicate with companies on the ground, identify their challenges and address them."

President Lee Jae Myung said in December last year that Korea needs to launch its homegrown Nuri space rocket at least once a year by 2032 to meet the growing launch demands.

Oh noted that the number of Nuri launches should be expanded to two to three times per year or more in order to commercialize the sector and secure a foothold in the market.

"To launch more frequently, we need to absorb not only domestic but also overseas satellite demand into Nuri launches," he said. "This



Oh Tae-seog, administrator of the Korea AeroSpace Administration (KASA), speaks during a press conference in Seoul, Wednesday. Courtesy of KASA

requires more than just engine capabilities — the entire ecosystem, including launch sites, testing and certification systems and operations, needs to be upgraded."

Oh said KASA will set up a road map to upgrade the country's Naro Space Center in South Jeolla Province. Since the upgrade project was selected for the government's preliminary feasibility study in March, the plan is expected to be materialized in the near future, with Oh saying KASA plans to include measures to support the timely production of next-generation launch vehicles and a lunar lander.

To support private companies developing small launch vehicles, KASA also plans to open a dedicated commercial launchpad within the Naro Space Center starting in 2027.

He added that the agency will also draw up a plan by November this year to establish a second space center, in preparation for the widespread adoption of reusable launch vehicles after 2035.

To strengthen space collaboration with the United States, Oh will attend the 41st Annual Space Symposium,

scheduled for Saturday to Monday (local time) in Colorado. There, he will meet with officials from the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to review and advance various cooperation projects that have been discussed at the working level between the two countries.

Regarding the recent communication failure with the K-RadCube satellite, Korea's domestically developed radiation-measuring satellite that was on board the Space Launch System rocket for the Artemis II mission, the administrator said the case still holds significance as the first instance of Korea placing a satellite on a crewed space mission.

"The K-RadCube is Korea's first cube satellite to travel beyond

geostationary orbit," Oh said.

"Although it was unable to establish meaningful communication, the experience of a private company

leading the development of a deep-space exploration satellite and carrying out the entire mission independently is an invaluable asset that cannot be replaced."

The development process of the K-RadCube was led by the Korea Astronomy and Space Science Institute, while the satellite system was developed by Nara Space Technology.

The Nuri rocket lifts off from the Naro Space Center in Goheung County, South Jeolla Province, Nov. 27, 2025.

Courtesy of Korea Aerospace Research Institute



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