
Alpha Block 2 Launches This Summer as Falcon Sets Landing Record

Description

The Falcon 9 team has been recognised for its significant contributions to humanity, according to Dan Dumbacher, chair of the Neil Armstrong Space Prize selection committee. He emphasised that the team's work has had a clear and visible impact.

Meanwhile, Chinese commercial launch startup Nayuta Space is working on an innovative rocket called the Xuanniao-R. The company has completed multiple Pre-A financing rounds to support this project. The Xuanniao-R is a two-stage rocket, 70 metres long and 3.8 metres in diameter. It aims to use an aerodynamic deceleration method for landing, rather than traditional engines. Nayuta Space plans to conduct a test flight in the first half of 2027.

However, challenges remain. The new aerodynamic approach could increase the rocket's weight and complexity, making the planned timeline ambitious. With its size and the unproven technology, some experts doubt it will meet the 2027 target.

On another front, SpaceX has set a new record for safe booster landings. On Tuesday, it launched a routine Falcon 9 mission from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California, successfully putting more Starlink v2-mini satellites into orbit. This mission marked SpaceX's 611th successful recovery and established a record of 268 consecutive booster landings.

Additionally, SpaceX is preparing for the 12th flight of its Starship vehicle. On Thursday, the company conducted a successful 15-second test firing of the Super Heavy booster stage, a vital step towards the launch of the newest Starship version, V3. Although no launch date has been set, mid-May is being considered as a possibility.

Vocabulary List:

1. **aerodynamic** //,ɛrəʊdaɪ'næmɪk// (adjective): shaped to move easily through air
2. **deceleration** //diː'selə'reɪʃən// (noun): slowing down of motion or speed
3. **financing** //ˈfaɪnænsɪŋ// (noun): money provided for a project or business
4. **booster** //ˈbuːstə// (noun): part of a rocket that gives extra power
5. **consecutive** //kən'sekjətɪv// (adjective): happening one after another without interruption
6. **complexity** //kəm'pleksɪti// (noun): many parts or details that make it difficult

Comprehension Questions



Multiple Choice

1. Who is the chair of the Neil Armstrong Space Prize selection committee?
Option: Elon Musk
Option: Dan Dumbacher
Option: Jeff Bezos
Option: Richard Branson
2. What is the length of the Xuanniao-R rocket?
Option: 60 metres
Option: 70 metres
Option: 80 metres
Option: 90 metres
3. How many successful booster landings has SpaceX achieved?
Option: 611
Option: 500
Option: 450
Option: 400
4. What is the diameter of the Xuanniao-R rocket?
Option: 2.5 metres
Option: 3.8 metres
Option: 4.0 metres
Option: 3.0 metres
5. When is Nayuta Space planning to conduct a test flight for the Xuanniao-R?
Option: 2025
Option: 2026
Option: 2027
Option: 2028
6. What significant achievement did SpaceX accomplish during its Falcon 9 mission?
Option: First launch to Mars
Option: New record for safe booster landings
Option: First launch of Starship V3
Option: Completion of Starlink v1



True-False

7. The Xuanniao-R rocket uses traditional engines for landing.
8. Dan Dumbacher emphasized that the Falcon 9 team's work has had an unclear impact.
9. Nayuta Space has completed multiple Pre-A financing rounds for the Xuanniao-R project.
10. SpaceX's Falcon 9 mission successfully launched Starlink v2-mini satellites.
11. The Super Heavy booster stage has not been tested yet.
12. The challenges faced by Nayuta Space are related to the rocket's size and unproven technology.

Gap-Fill

13. The Xuanniao-R is a two-stage rocket, _____ metres long.
14. Nayuta Space is working on an innovative rocket called the _____.
15. SpaceX's 611th successful recovery established a record of _____ consecutive booster landings.
16. A successful _____ test firing of the Super Heavy booster stage was conducted by SpaceX.
17. The mission marked SpaceX's _____ successful recovery.
18. The company's rocket aims to use an aerodynamic _____ method for landing.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Dan Dumbacher 2. 70 metres 3. 611 4. 3.8 metres 5. 2027 6. New record for safe booster landings

True-False: 7. False 8. False 9. True 10. True 11. False 12. True

Gap-Fill: 13. 70 14. Xuanniao-R 15. 268 16. 15-second 17. 611th 18. deceleration



Vocabulary quizzes

Multiple Choice (Select the Correct answer for each question.)

1. Which of the following is a major environmental concern impacting air quality?
Option: Deforestation
Option: Pollution
Option: Urbanization
Option: Agriculture
2. Who studies celestial objects and phenomena?
Option: Biologists
Option: Chemists
Option: Astronomers
Option: Geologists
3. What do we call vast systems of stars, gas, dust, and dark matter?
Option: Planets
Option: Asteroids
Option: Galaxies
Option: Comets
4. Which term describes the process where the universe is growing larger over time?
Option: Contracting
Option: Collapsing
Option: Expanding
Option: Constricting
5. What is a comparison between two different things called?
Option: Metaphor
Option: Simile
Option: Analogy
Option: Hyperbole
6. What term describes the ability to adjust to new conditions?
Option: Static
Option: Adaptable
Option: Rigid
Option: Predictable
7. What term refers to the accuracy of a measurement?



- Option: Ambiguity
- Option: Clarity
- Option: Precision
- Option: Vagueness

8. What do we call the reduction in speed or rate of an object's movement?

- Option: Acceleration
- Option: Deceleration
- Option: Stabilization
- Option: Momentum

9. Which instrument is used to measure small distances and changes in light?

- Option: Spectrometer
- Option: Interferometer
- Option: Telescope
- Option: Microscope

10. What term refers to the qualities or features that enable something to perform a function?

- Option: Limitations
- Option: Capabilities
- Option: Failures
- Option: Difficulties

Gap-Fill (Fill in the blanks with the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

11. The museum had a _____ collection of ancient artifacts.
12. She was _____ in planning the details of the event.
13. From his _____, the project was a great success.
14. The documentary was so _____ that I couldn't look away.
15. The old TV had a lot of _____ on the screen before the channel was clear.
16. The rocket's _____ engines provided the necessary thrust for launch.
17. He won the award for three _____ years.
18. The _____ of the instructions made it difficult to follow.



19. The news of the concert will surely _____ the fans.
20. The audio recording had a slight _____, making it hard to hear the words.

Matching Sentences (Match each definition to the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

21. Her persistence in pursuing her goals eventually paid off.
22. The scientist made an unprecedented discovery that changed the field.
23. The engine produced a powerful thrust that propelled the vehicle forward.
24. The deployment of the satellite was successful and monitored closely.
25. The constellation in the night sky was beautifully visible from the observatory.
26. The car's aerodynamic design improved its performance on the track.
27. The company secured financing to support its next project.
28. The launch vehicle had multiple boosters for additional support during takeoff.
29. An interferometer is crucial for precise measurements in astronomical research.
30. Einstein's theory of relativity altered our understanding of space and time.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Pollution 2. Astronomers 3. Galaxies 4. Expanding 5. Analogy 6. Adaptive 7. Precision 8. Deceleration 9. Interferometer 10. Capabilities

Gap-Fill: 11. curated 12. meticulous 13. perspective 14. captivating 15. static 16. booster 17. consecutive 18. complexity 19. excite 20. distortion

Matching sentence: 1. persistence 2. unprecedented 3. thrust 4. deployment 5. constellation 6. aerodynamic 7. financing 8. boosters 9. interferometer 10. relativity

CATEGORY

- 1. Sci/Tech - LEVEL4

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- 1. alpha block 2



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Author

aimeeyoung99

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