



The Final Frontier Flash



Artist Rendition

4 Sep 2020: China launched some kind of reusable spacecraft into space – possibly a spaceplane – a mysterious vehicle that is drawing comparisons to the US's classified X-37B

- Long March 2F launch vehicle delivered the spacecraft into orbit following launch at an unspecified time.

- Based on observations from independent observers, the vehicle reached an altitude of about 350 kilometers. It was initially launched at an orbital inclination of about 45 degrees, but then performed a "dogleg maneuver" to change its inclination to 50 degrees shortly after launching.

- Chinese state media (Xinhua News Agency) says the country safely landed a reusable spacecraft on September 6th after spending two days in orbit.



H-6K w/ Suspected Spacecraft

- On December 11, 2007, the Chinese media published an image of a winged spacecraft mounted on a wing of an H-6K bomber. This was the first public acknowledgment that China was developing a reusable winged space system very similar to the X-37.

- China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp. (CASC)

is believed to be the lead developer.

- The China Aerospace Science and Industry Corp. (CASIC), another giant state-owned enterprise, is working on its own spaceplane, named Tengyun.

After an inaugural flight around 2020, several flights will be conducted to verify rapid re-launch and repeated use capabilities. The stated aim of the project is to reduce the cost of access to space...some vehicles would have the characteristics of both aircraft and spacecraft.

--2017 statement from Chen Hongbo, from CASC's China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology (CALT)

FLASHBACK 27 March 2019: India Direct Ascent ASAT Kinetic Intercept



PDV Mark -II

- On 29 March 2019 the Indian Prime Minister Modi announced that they had successfully conducted Mission Shakti

- A PDV Mark II launched from the Kalam Island & successfully intercepted Microsat-R at an altitude of about 300 km.

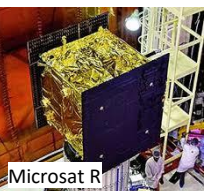
- Indian Government Fact Sheet: "The test was done to verify that India has the capability to safeguard our space assets."

- Anonymous U.S. government sources stated that they had detected an earlier failed ASAT test in February 2019 where the PDV failed thirty seconds into flight.

- Microsat-R was similar in mass to the FY-1C satellite but was at a much lower altitude when destroyed, 300 km versus 800 km

- The U.S. tracked roughly 125 pieces of debris from this test; as of February 2020, there were still 10 pieces being tracked

The missile reportedly hit the satellite with an accuracy of less than 10 cm. A prime motivation for the test was likely to ensure India would be grandfathered into any future ban on DA-ASAT testing.



Microsat R