

Tuesday English News Report

*India's Mars **satellite** successfully enters **orbit**, bringing country into space **elite***

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India has become the first nation to send a satellite into orbit around Mars on its first attempt, and the first Asian nation to do so.

Mission control in the southern Indian city of Bangalore received confirmation of the success at 7.41am Wednesday, local time. The satellite Mangalyaan had entered the orbit of the red planet 12 minutes earlier, but the message needed to **traverse** the 400m miles (650m km) to Earth.

India now joins an elite club of nations who have successfully carried out inter-planetary space missions, and has scored a significant point in its **rivalry** with China.

The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, who won power in May in a **landslide** victory, was in Bangalore with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) watching the operation.

“We have gone beyond the boundaries of human enterprise and **innovation**,” Modi said, as scientists celebrated.

“We have navigated our **craft** through a route known to very few,” Modi said, congratulating the ISRO team and “all my fellow Indians on this historic occasion”.

Modi, who travels to the US to address the United Nations later this week, called for further efforts “for challenging, the next frontier”.

The mission has led TV bulletins and filled front pages. It has been mentioned in the prayers of temple priests and even on special emails sent out to parents of **exclusive** nursery schools in Delhi. Tens of millions of people across the country followed the progress of the craft live.

There was a significant chance of failure. Of 51 previous attempts to reach Mars, more than half failed.

“Just getting there is a big, bold statement. Succeeding would be a giant one for India’s place in the region and in the world,” said Pallava Bagla, a high-profile science commentator, on Tuesday.

Some have questioned the \$70m (HKD 539m) price tag for a country still dealing with widespread hunger and poverty. But India defended the Mars mission by noting its importance in providing hi-tech jobs for scientists and engineers and practical applications in solving problems on Earth.

