

University of Nairobi to launch the First Kenya Satellite into Space.

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The University of Nairobi will be first Kenya University and institution to launch a satellite into space on Friday, May, 11, 2018.

This is historical indeed since Kenya will be the first sub-Saharan African country to launch a nano-satellite into space.

Speaking during the media briefing event, the University of Nairobi Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi, explained that the 10-by-10 by 10 cube satellite will have several benefits for Kenya which include weather forecasting, earth mapping, climate change, environmental and wildlife observation and will also be used in assisting the multimedia sector in the country. The Vice-Chancellor, also took the opportunity to invite students who are interested in space science to apply for the program. The initial satellite is used as a base to help space engineers develop their capacity in developing satellites. Developed countries which developed satellites before us, have since ventured into other areas like electronics, engineering and manufacturing sector. With Governments agenda 4 program, the country is looking into creating thousands of jobs through manufacturing and the University of Nairobi is looking at plugging into it by developing the much needed human capital.

The satellite is a collaborative effort between the University of Nairobi, Japanese Space Agency (JAXA) and United Nations Office for Outerspace Affairs (UNOOSA).

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Prof. Jackson Mbutia, Dean, School of Engineering, observed that the satellite weighs about 1.2kgs and will be about 4,000kms from earth. The satellite has been assembled at a cost of approximately Sh100 million and has an estimated lifespan of between 12 to 18 months upon which it will disintegrate and into debris.

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