

Delhi pays \$60m to send first astronaut to ISS

The first Indian astronaut to visit the International Space Station was due to blast off this week as part of an effort by the world's most populous nation to catch up with the US, Russia and China in human space flight missions.

Shubhanshu Shukla, a 39-year-old air force fighter pilot, is part of four-person mission from the US with the private company Axiom Space, which is using a SpaceX capsule.

He will be the third astronaut of Indian origin to reach orbit, Delhi has paid more than \$60m for the mission, according to Indian media reports.