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Briefs



Technology Developments

*China Negotiating
Satellite Launch
Contract With Indonesia*

China may have offered to launch a telecommunications satellite for Indonesia during President Soeharto's visit to Beijing last month, [redacted]

[redacted] China offered a launch price \$17 million below a competing US firm's bid; however, [redacted]

[redacted] Chinese Ministry of Aerospace Industry officials deny that a firm offer was made. Jakarta—which is hoping to launch the satellite in early 1992—has also discussed launch services with the European consortium Arianspace; Paris may have offered a soft-loan package to Indonesia in support of Arianspace's launch bid. Beijing probably believes its low launch prices, combined with

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warming political ties—Beijing and Jakarta restored diplomatic relations in August—and the offer of a larger commercial cooperation agreement will give China the edge over Arianespace to launch the satellite. Arianespace, meanwhile, which fears losing another launch contract to the Chinese—in January Arianespace lost the launch of an Arab consortium's communications satellite—may compel Paris to offer Jakarta broader economic and commercial incentives, such as trade or arms packages, that China will not be able to match.

