

China probe prepares way for lunar landing

Chang'e-2 is China's second lunar orbiter and the country's latest step towards achieving its goal of a manned moon mission by 2025

▶ *Chang'e-2* is second phase of China's lunar exploration programme which began with *Chang'e-1* in 2007

▶ Latest probe due to reach lunar orbit in seven days, quicker than 14-day journey of its predecessor

▶ *Chang'e-2* will fly as close as 15km above moon to test soft-landing techniques and capture high resolution images of landing sites

▶ Research will be used by future missions, including China's first unmanned moon landing by *Chang'e-3*, slated for 2013

