

A photograph of the Space Shuttle Columbia being launched. The shuttle is ascending vertically, leaving a massive, bright orange and white plume of fire and smoke behind it. The launch is taking place against a clear blue sky. In the foreground, there are dark silhouettes of trees and a body of water.

Today in History

November 12, 1981

▲ The space shuttle Columbia was launched for the second time, becoming the first space vehicle to be used more than once. The shuttle programme ended in 2011

1931: Abbey Road Studios, immortalised by the Beatles album of the same name, was officially opened

2008: The EU scrapped rules banning bent bananas and curved cucumbers

2011: Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi resigned over the country's deepening economic crisis

2014: China and the U.S. unveiled a landmark agreement on greenhouse gas emissions