



JET MAKER HOPES IT'S THIRD TIME LUCKY FOR NEW JAPANESE PLANE

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Mitsubishi Aircraft, the builder of Japan's first home-made passenger jet in decades, said a test aircraft took off on its third attempt to fly to the United States on Monday after aborting flights last month due to problems with air-conditioning sensors.

The Mitsubishi Regionla Jet, or MRJ, left Nagoya airport at 1:28pm local time today, said Kenichi Takemori, a Nagoya-based spokesman for Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, the parent of Mitsubishi Aircraft. He declined to say what route the plane would take.

Success with the latest attempt may provide a boost to the programme that is crucial for Japan's efforts to break the regional-jet duopoly of Brazil's Embraer and Canada's Bombardier. The company had to take the plane, which can seat as many as 92 people, back to the hangar following two aborted test flights in as many days in late August.

The aircraft, which made its first flight in November last year, will fly to Moses Lake, Washington in the US for testing. The company plans to fly four test aircraft to the US this year.

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