

## Endeavour's final space sojourn

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It was an overwhelmingly emotional moment for the half a million viewers who watched from the ground as the space shuttle Endeavour blasted off from Kennedy Space Centre at Cape Canaveral, Florida, on its 25th and final journey into space. When U.S. Navy Captain Mark Kelly and his five crew blasted off from the space station there were tears, cheers and chants of 'Go Endeavour'. Among the viewers, many dignitaries like the Arizona congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, were present.

Endeavour is carrying her most expensive payload ever that included a \$2 billion particle physics experiment known as the Alpha Magnetic Spectrometer (AMS) designed to probe the unknown reaches of space that is likely to unlock the secrets of the universe. The machine that weighs around 7 tonnes was built through a collaboration of 16 nations. During its final mission, it will carry out a comprehensive survey of cosmic rays as it studies the universe in detail than is possible from earth. Endeavour is currently on a 16-day mission to the International Space Station before it will be displayed in a museum.