

# Elon Musk's Starship Spins Out of Control AGAIN in Brutal Metaphor

Story by Josephine Harvey

Elon Musk's SpaceX Starship tumbled out of control during a test flight on Tuesday as the world's richest man continues to grapple with a wider professional tailspin.

Musk has almost disappeared from the spotlight following an intense beginning working with Trump's second administration. After weeks of appearing alongside the president, the 53-year-old has [stepped back](#) from government amid [plummeting](#) Tesla sales and sinking [popularity ratings](#).

The latest disappointment came from SpaceX Tuesday when a rocket launched from its Texas facility hit a snag about 30 minutes after liftoff, after initially reaching space intact. When the spacecraft attempted to release its payload into orbit, the door would not fully open, and the vessel started to spin out of control.

Footage streamed by SpaceX showed an intense light show as the spinning ship vented its propellant.

"We are in a little bit of a spin. We did spring a leak in some of the fuel tank systems inside of Starship, which a lot of those are used for your attitude control," Dan Huot, a SpaceX communications manager, said on the company's [livestream](#) of the ninth Starship test flight.

SpaceX later [confirmed on X](#) that the ship underwent a "rapid unscheduled disassembly," suggesting the vessel had broken apart. The same terminology was used in January and March when SpaceX test flights ended in explosions.

The debris will likely scatter in the Indian Ocean.

The latest fail follows a string of stumbles across Musk's empire. His electric car company, Tesla, has reported sales slumps in several major markets. Tesla registrations in Europe halved year-on-year last month amid political backlash over

his ties to President Donald Trump and rising sales for competitors. Musk's popularity, meanwhile, plummeted to a net favorability -13.8 percent in April.

Musk later took to X to sell the SpaceX flight as a “[great achievement](#).” The ninth test flight got further than the company's last two attempts, which both resulted in explosions shortly after liftoff, but did not achieve its primary objectives.

“Starship made it to the scheduled ship engine cutoff, so big improvement over last flight!,” the billionaire added.

SpaceX ran with a different tone: “With a test like this, success comes from what we learn, and today's test will help us improve Starship's reliability as SpaceX seeks to make life multiplanetary.”

Musk announced his decision last month to step back from Washington to focus on his jobs as leader of SpaceX, Tesla and X, after a deeply polarizing stint at the forefront of the Trump administration and its dubiously-named Department of Government Efficiency.

Donald Trump viewed the sixth SpaceX Starship test flight from Texas in November. / Brandon Bell / Getty Images

Musk's leadership in DOGE played a formative role in the early months of the administration, implementing sweeping cuts to government agencies and igniting significant controversy over the scope and legality of his authority.

His reputation has [tanked](#) in the polls since the start of the year, and Trump insiders had [reportedly](#) begun to view him as a political liability.

Representatives of Musk and SpaceX did not immediately return requests for comment.

In an interview before the SpaceX launch on Tuesday, Musk was asked by [Ars Technica](#) if he felt he'd harmed or slowed down SpaceX with his focus on politics over the past year.

“I think I probably did spend a bit too much time on politics,” he said, adding, however, that “it's less than people would think.”

“It was just relative time allocation that probably was a little too high on the government side, and I’ve reduced that significantly in recent weeks,” he said.

Musk has also [bashed](#) Trump’s “One Big Beautiful Bill Act,” which passed the House last week, putting him on a collision course with the president.

Musk said in an interview with CBS, set to air Sunday, that he was “disappointed to see the massive spending bill, frankly, which increases the budget deficit, not just decreases it, and undermines the work that the DOGE team is doing.”

