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**Gongyi, China** - A Chinese rocket, Tianlong-3, experienced a crash on Sunday following an accidental launch during a ground test in Gongyi, central China. Space Pioneer, the rocket's manufacturing company, reported that the incident occurred when the first stage of the rocket detached from its launch pad due to a structural failure.

According to Space Pioneer, also known as Beijing Tianbing Technology, the launch pad issue led to the rocket's first stage separating prematurely during a hot test. The rocket then landed in a hilly area approximately 1.5 kilometers southwest of the test platform. The company's statement confirmed that no injuries were reported as local residents were evacuated in advance of the test.

The Tianlong-3, a large liquid carrier rocket, is intended to support the construction of China’s satellite internet network. The company's previous successful launch of the Tianlong-2 in April 2023 made it the first Chinese commercial company to send a liquid carrier rocket into orbit. The performance of the Tianlong-3 is touted to be comparable to SpaceX's Falcon 9, with plans for over 30 launches per year once fully operational.

Local authorities, including the Gongyi Emergency Management Bureau, confirmed that debris from the rocket caused a local fire, which was quickly extinguished with no injuries reported. The rocket's first stage had successfully ignited but detached due to the structural failure before crashing.