

## PRESS RELEASE

### AIPSN Statement on Chandrayaan-3

The All India Peoples Science Network ([AIPSN](#)) salutes the scientists, engineers, technical staff and all others at ISRO, its affiliated Institutions, and all associated PSUs, other companies and contractors for the grand success of the [Chandrayaan-3](#) Mission's [soft landing](#) on the moon by the [Vikram Lander](#) and the [Pragyaan Rover](#). The precision, with which the Mission was executed from launch to lunar orbit, and especially the autonomous powered descent of the Lander to the lunar surface, was indeed remarkable. In particular, AIPSN congratulates the ISRO team and associated experts for their collective, transparent and goal-oriented analysis of the factors leading to the crash of the Lander during Chandrayaan-2, and the subsequent corrective measures taken with respect to testing, hardware and software. This process and the visible success of Chandrayaan-3 has been a commendable example of the scientific method, evidence-based reasoning and peer review, which should be widely communicated to students, media and the public at large. The success of the Chandrayaan-3 Mission is a tribute to the vision and leadership during the first few decades after Independence and the paths charted towards self-reliance in science and technology.

AIPSN views the Chandrayaan-3 Mission as an important milestone towards future missions, both robotic and crewed, to the moon and other extra-terrestrial bodies. AIPSN notes that this demonstration of India's capabilities in space technologies puts India in the vaunted company of a very few nations with such capabilities, and brings with it many opportunities and challenges. The success of the Chandrayaan-3 mission comes at a time of increased international interest in [exploration of the Moon](#), including possible establishment of permanent or long-term crewed stations on the Moon or in orbit around it, which may later even be used as a [gateway](#) to exploration beyond our Moon. Such future activities carry with them great responsibilities and India, as one of the nations that would be participating in them, should prepare itself to shoulder these responsibilities on behalf of all humankind.

The Moon, our solar system, and outer space beyond it, are all a common good, knowledge about which belong to humanity as a whole, as the Prime Minister noted when he addressed the nation after the successful landing of the Vikram Lander. The Treaty on Principles [Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space](#), including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (1967), notes that "*exploration and use ... shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries and shall be the province of all mankind.*" It further declared that "*outer space...is not subject to national appropriation by claim of sovereignty, by means of use or occupation, or by any other means.*" AIPSN notes with concern that many countries, companies and others are speaking about exploiting their advanced space technology for commercial or strategic benefit. The [US-led Artemis Mission](#) explicitly accepts this possibility and, unfortunately, so does [India's new Space Policy](#) which has not been placed or discussed in Parliament as such Policies should be. AIPSN calls upon the Government to clearly declare that it regards the Moon and other extra-terrestrial bodies as a common good of all humanity, and that it is opposed to national or corporate exploitation of any resources found in such bodies. India should also press for revitalization of the [Outer Space Treaty](#) and setting up of an international regulatory system under the United Nations to ensure that space remains a common good of all humankind.

The Government **also needs to reconsider** its naming of the Chandrayaan-3 landing site as "Shiv Shakti Point," since this appears to run counter to the [naming convention](#) of the International Astronomical Union. The [IAU requires that features of the moon](#) be named after astronauts or scientists including physicists, mathematicians etc who have contributed to this field, e.g. [Aryabhata](#) and [Homi Bhabha](#), which have been accepted by IAU in the past. The **Government should propose such a name as would conform to IAU norms and therefore gain international acceptance.**

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