

**CHANDRAYAAN-2**  
launched from Sriharikota

**48-DAY JOURNEY**  
begins, landing September 7

**PRESIDENT, PM**  
lead nation in hailing ISRO

# Off to the moon

Destination is lunar south pole, ISRO says it's just the beginning

**AMITABH SINHA**  
SRIHARIKOTA, JULY 22

CARRYING "A billion dreams" in India's quest to land its first spacecraft on the moon, Chandrayaan-2, riding the powerful GSLV Mk-III rocket, was successfully launched at 2:43 pm Monday from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota.

It was a textbook launch and initial anxiety evaporated 16 minutes 23 seconds later when scientists at mission control broke into applause, signalling that Chandrayaan-2 was now on its own. It had been deposited in an earth orbit by the 640-tonne GSLV Mk-III which, after burning its successive stages, had separated itself completely from the spacecraft. The orbit at its nearest was 170 km from earth, and 39,120 km at the furthest.

The mission will see the Vikram lander and Pragyan rover modules of the spacecraft make a soft-landing near the unexplored south pole of the lunar surface 48 days from now — on September 7. Both will be "alive" there for 14 days, during which they will carry out various experiments and collect data.

The mission also has an orbiter module that will go around the moon for the next one year in an orbit of 100 km from the lunar surface. During this time, instruments on board the orbiter will study the moon's surface, its atmosphere, prepare three-dimensional maps, and also search for further evidence of water, including the possibility of ice trapped in the south pole craters.

The launch Monday went off without any hitch, a week after it was aborted 56 minutes before liftoff due to a technical snag. Chandrayaan-2 will spend the next 23 days circling around the earth, incrementally raising its orbit, before embarking on a seven-day journey to enter an orbit around the moon.

The celebration in mission control was held back till the

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The GSLV Mk III carrying Chandrayaan-2 lifts off from Sriharikota, Monday. ISRO

RELATED REPORT, PAGE 10

**IMRAN ASKS HIM TO PUSH FOR INDIA TALKS**

## Delhi denies Trump claim PM asked him to mediate on Kashmir

**SHUBHAJIT ROY**  
NEW DELHI, JULY 22

IN REMARKS that angered New Delhi and were quickly denied, US President Donald Trump Monday said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had asked him to play the role of a mediator on Kashmir, and "if I can help, I would love to be the mediator" between India and Pakistan.

Trump made the remarks in the presence of visiting Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan at the White House ahead of their bilateral meeting. Within an hour, the Ministry of External Affairs contradicted the US President's remarks saying "no such request has been made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi".

"We have seen @POTUS's remarks to the press that he is



Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan, US President Donald Trump in Washington on Monday. Reuters

REPORT, PAGE 16

ready to mediate, if requested by India & Pakistan, on Kashmir issue. No such request has been made by PM @narendramodi to US President. It has been India's consistent position that all outstanding issues with Pakistan are

discussed only bilaterally. Any engagement with Pakistan would require an end to cross border terrorism. The Shimla Agreement & the Lahore Declaration provide the basis to

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

## Karnataka: Trust vote spills over again, new deadline 6 pm today

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
BENGALURU, NEW DELHI, JULY 22

THE FUTURE of the JD(S)-Congress coalition government in Karnataka continued to hang in the balance with a trust vote sought by Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy not reaching its culmination despite over 10 hours of debate in the Assembly Monday.

Nearing midnight, with the stalemate still in place, Speaker K R Ramesh Kumar adjourned the House till 10 am Tuesday, with a deadline of 6 pm to complete the floor test.

While the Opposition BJP has 105 MLAs in the House and the support of two Independents, the ruling coalition has 101 MLAs on its side on paper. On Monday,



H D Kumaraswamy in the House on Monday. PTI

however, as many as 20 coalition MLAs were absent from the House, suggesting that their numbers could be down to 98.

In Delhi, meanwhile, the Supreme Court decided to take up Tuesday a plea by the two Independents seeking a direction to "forthwith" hold the floor test. The two MLAs, R Shankar and H Nagesh, had earlier

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## 2 electrocuted in Delhi rain, one died trying to save other

**JIGNASA SINHA**  
NEW DELHI, JULY 22

AFTER HAVING lunch at his Chhatarpur home, Saleem Saifi (29) left for a quick carpentry job around 2:30 pm Sunday. The only earning member, he was to return home by 7 pm, his wife Ruksana (26) said. Around 5 pm, she received a call that Saifi, a father of three, including an eight-month-old boy, was dead in the middle of a street in Fatehpur Beri, electrocuted when an overhead wire fell on him on a waterlogged road.

Around the same time, the phone rang at the home of Sandeep Rawat (22). His father, Hoshier Singh (54), was dead — trying to save Saifi. Employed at a timber factory, Singh was

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## 15 complex manoeuvres before critical descent on September 7

**AMITABH SINHA**  
SRIHARIKOTA, JULY 22

THE CHANDRAYAAN-2 mission has to clear several complicated procedures before starting its work. ISRO chairman K Sivan said the spacecraft has to undergo at least 15 complex manoeuvres over the next one-and-a-half months before the final, and most critical of all — the landing of the Vikram lander and Pragyan rover on the lunar surface on September 7.

Most manoeuvres will be performed in the first 25 days when the spacecraft will incre-



A TV grab of Team ISRO at mission control on Monday. PTI

mentally raise its orbit around the earth, and gain strength for the journey to the moon.

These are the crucial phases

of the mission: **JULY 22 TO AUGUST 13:** On Monday, Chandrayaan-2 was in

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

## Explained: For signs of water

THE SEARCH for water on the moon is one of the main objectives of Chandrayaan-2. At least three of 14 instruments on board will look for additional evidence and signs of water. Two camera-based instruments and one synthetic aperture radar will prepare different kinds of high-resolution lunar maps. At least four instruments will study the composition of the lunar surface, and try to detect the different minerals and elements present there.

## Business as Usual



## The Editorial Page

**NEW MOON, NEW CHALLENGE**  
BY AJEY LELE  
PAGE 14

## New offshore records reveal several Indian firms tapped Mauritius route to save on taxes

**PAGE 1 ANCHOR**

**RITU SARIN, P VAIDYANATHAN IYER, JAY MAZOOMDAR & SANDEEP SINGH**  
NEW DELHI, JULY 22

AFTER SWISS Leaks, Panama Papers and Paradise Papers, come documents from Mauritius — over 200,000 emails, contracts and bank statements that show how the island

nation was used by a long list of corporates to facilitate their partnerships with multinationals and, without paying any capital gains tax, remit profits as Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to India.

At the heart of the 18-country collaborative investigation by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) and The Indian Express is data from Conyers Dill & Pearman, an offshore specialist firm which started operations way back in 1928 from Bahamas and in 2009 from Mauritius to cater to investments being routed to



**ICIJ THE INDIAN EXPRESS INVESTIGATION**

Africa and Asia. The Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) was signed between India and

Mauritius in 1982. Under this, any entity could apply for tax residency and pay zero capital gains tax. This became the principal reason why Mauritius emerged as a top channel for investments being routed into India. However, after 33 years in which there were several allegations of round-tripping and treaty abuse, Indian tax authorities amended the DTAA on May 10, 2016 and, for one, imposed capital gains tax, in a phased manner for two years, and fully applicable from April 2019 on. That changed the game for

companies like Conyers. Also, companies shifted their plans to invest via Mauritius and it lost its supremacy for being the country which brought in the highest FDI inflows. The figures reflected the shift and in the year 2018-2019, there was a 44% fall in FDI inflows into India from Mauritius in comparison to the previous year.

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**RELIGARE MOVED FUNDS TO OFFSHORE FIRM** PAGE 17

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