

{Sunday}

# Hindustan Times

FIRST VOICE. LAST WORD.

## PM hails Isro heroes: Aug 23 declared National Space Day

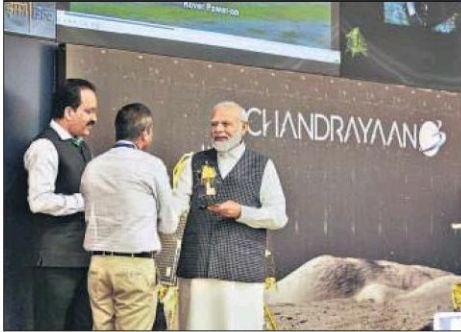
Soumya Pillai  
letters@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** The day India's lunar lander touched down on the Moon, August 23, will be celebrated as National Space Day from now on, Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared on Saturday, as he showered effusive praise on Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) scientists and staff for their historic success — appreciation that he underscored by taking a detour to visit them while returning from his trips to South Africa and Greece.

Modi, who was visibly over-joyed with emotion while expressing his admiration for the scientists, said as is customary, the Chandrayaan-3's landing site will be named Shiv Shakti point — India became the first country to successfully land near the lunar south pole — and the place where its predecessor Chandrayaan-2 crashed as Tiranga point.

"Chandrayaan-3's success is not India's alone, but it is the achievement of the entire humanity. This mission will not only help us understand the secrets of the moon but also contribute to overcoming the challenges on earth," Modi said, while interacting with scientists at the Isro Telemetry Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC), which thinks new and thinks in novel ways, which goes to the dark and spreads the rays of light. India of 21st century has the capacity to solve major problems of the world".

continued on 31



Modi with Isro chairman S. Somnath (l) and Chandrayaan-3 project director P. Veeramuthuvel. ANI

### Ahead and left: Rover makes more moves, likely to send data shortly

**NEW DELHI:** The Pragyan rover from Chandrayaan-3 is moving around on the Moon's surface in "pursuit of lunar secrets at the south pole", the Indian Space Research Organisation said on Saturday, declaring that the rover had moved 12m till Saturday morning, and had successfully executed a turn.

All experiments on-board the rover, Vikram, and the rover are now functional and data sets are

expected soon, the agency said. "Chandrayaan-3 Mission: What's new here? Pragyan rover roams around Shiv Shakti Point in pursuit of lunar secrets at the South Pole," Isro said in a post on X, formerly Twitter, as it released more videos of the rover on the Moon.

Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi named the spot where Vikram landed "Shiv Shakti".

Both the lander and the rover are in good health, and the mission is progressing according to schedule, Isro said. S. Unnikrishnan Nair, director of the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, said the Journey of India's Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft has been phenomenal since its launch on July 14. "Further experiments with the lander and rover payloads are going on," Nair said.

### AT ISRO, A SENSE OF RECOGNITION, ENCOURAGEMENT FOR SCIENTISTS

Soumya Pillai  
letters@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** Scientists at the Indian Space Research Organisation on Saturday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's decision to name the landing spot of Chandrayaan-3's lander "Shiv Shakti" is a message for inclusivity and gender equality.

Welcoming his presence at Isro's Telemetry Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC) in Bengaluru, the scientists responsible for the success of the country's third lunar mission said that the PM's speech will encourage them to do better in the future. "His presence and his speech have encouraged our team to do better in all our future missions," Isro chief S. Somnath said.

Brinda V, a senior scientist from Isro, said, "Today is a celebration of 'nari shakti' and the women scientists of Isro today, as our honourable Prime Minister has named the site as Shiv Shakti, which has recognised and encouraged women across the country."

### PM HAILS ISRO

He recounted the moments when he had joined the large control centre live during the landing. "Some memories become immortal. That moment has become immortal, that moment is one of the most inspirational moments of this century. Every Indian felt that victory was his own. I felt it myself," Modi said, after acknowledging to the gathering that he was impatient to meet them in person.

"Sometimes I feel like I do injustice, my impatience turned into a problem that all of you had to come here so early. But I wanted to see you as soon as possible. I wanted to salute you, your hard work, your patience, your passion, and your spirit. Because your success is not ordinary, it is the sounding of India's scientific vigour that now reverberates in the infinite of space," he added.

On the choice of the names for the landing spot, the Prime Minister said: "In Shiv, there is resolution for the welfare of humanity and Shakti gives us strength to fulfil those resolutions. This Shiv Shakti point of the moon also gives a sense of connection with Himalayas to Kanyakumari."

On the Tricolour — or "tiranga" — name for the Chandrayaan-3 landing point, the Prime Minister said the name is meant to inspire a sense of perseverance among Indians. "The Tricolour point will make us learn that no failure is the last, if there is strong will, then success remains together," he said.

At ISTRAC, Modi said the 21st century will be marked by India taking the lead in science and technology. "Today, the name of Chandrayaan-3 is resonating among children of India. Every child is seeing his or her future in the scientists."

The Prime Minister requested Isro to organise national hackathons on "Space Technology in Governance" in collaboration with various departments of centre and state governments. "I am confident that this National Hackathon will make our governance more effective and provide modern solutions to the countrymen," he said.

He also urged students across the country to take part in a quiz competition on Chandrayaan-3 mission being organised by Government of India portal MyGov from September 1.

Isro chairman S. Somnath briefed Modi about the mission and its progress in the moments prior. "We were very excited to have him here. He was actually emotional that India had achieved such a historic milestone by being the first country to soft land on the lunar south pole region. His presence and his speech have encouraged our team to do better in all our future missions," Somnath told IITs later.

The team of over 1,000 scientists from all Isro centres, which also comprises women scientists, expressed their gratitude to the PM for choosing the name Shiv Shakti for the point on the moon where Chandrayaan-3 landed.

Scientists said that the name gave out a message of inclusivity and gender equality, which is needed to promote education and progress of women in India. Brinda V, a senior scientist from Isro, said, "Today is a celebration of 'nari shakti' and the women scientists of Isro today, as our honourable Prime Minister has named the site as Shiv Shakti, which has recognised and encouraged women across the country."

On Wednesday, at 6:03pm, the space agency made a successful landing and for the next fortnight, a series of experiments will be undertaken on the lunar surface by the craft's lander (Vikram) and rover (Pragyan). After the landing, the rover both the lander and the rover has moved a total 12 metres and its on-board equipment, two cameras and cameras, will analyse the zone near the south pole of the lunar surface.

On Saturday, the agency said that Chandrayaan-3's lander and the rover are in good health, and all experiments on-board the two are now functional. The mission is progressing according to schedule and new data sets are expected soon, the agency said.

Meanwhile, a controversy erupted about the PM's visit to Bengaluru, with the Congress accusing him of "ignoring" protocols for the PM's reception at the airport.

While deputy chief minister DK Shivakumar said that there was no controversy, a statement from the Prime Minister's Office that he, the Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot and chief minister Siddaramaiah should not come to receive him, the PM said that he requested the three leaders

not to take the trouble of coming to receive him as he did not know what time he would reach.

## Pragyan roving on lunar surface, all experiments functional: Isro

Soumya Pillai  
letters@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** Pragyan rover from Chandrayaan-3 is moving around on Moon's surface in "pursuit of lunar secrets at the south pole", the Indian Space Research Organisation said on Saturday, declaring that the rover had moved 12m till Saturday morning, and had successfully executed a turn.

All experiments on-board the lander, Vikram, and the rover are now functional and data sets are expected soon, the agency said. "Chandrayaan-3 Mission: What's new here? Pragyan rover roams around Shiv Shakti Point in pursuit of lunar secrets at the South Pole," Isro said in a post on X, formerly Twitter, as it released more videos of the rover on the Moon.

Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi named the spot where Vikram landed "Shiv Shakti". Both the lander and the rover are in good health, and the mission is progressing according to schedule, Isro said.

S. Unnikrishnan Nair, director of the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, said the Journey of India's Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft has been phenomenal since its launch on July 14. "Further experiments with the lander and rover payloads are going on," Nair said at a media interaction at Isro's Telemetry Tracking and Command Network.

"We have landed very close to where we intended, so the mission overall was a huge success." The mission aims to achieve three objectives — to demonstrate a safe and soft landing on the moon surface, to demonstrate roving abilities on the surface of moon, and to conduct in-situ scientific experiments. The agency, on Saturday, said two of these three objectives were met.

Chandrayaan-3's lander made a successful soft landing near the south pole of the moon on August 23. On Friday, Pragyan rover rolled out of the lander's belly over a two-segment ramp. Over the next fortnight, the lander and the rover will conduct a series of experiments on the lunar surface, where it will analyse the chemical and mineral composition of materials — dust and rock — on the surface.



PM Narendra Modi meets Isro's women scientists who worked on the Chandrayaan-3 mission, in Bengaluru on Saturday. ANI/PTI

## Naming landing point 'Shiv Shakti' sends a message for gender equality: Scientists

Soumya Pillai  
letters@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** Scientists at the Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) on Saturday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's decision to name the landing spot of Chandrayaan-3's lander "Shiv Shakti" is a message for inclusivity and gender equality.

Welcoming his presence at Isro's Telemetry Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC) in Bengaluru, the scientists responsible for the success of the country's third lunar mission said that the PM's speech will encourage them to do better in the future. "His presence and his speech have encouraged our team to do better in all our future missions," Isro chief S. Somnath said after the PM's address earlier in the day.

During his address, the PM said that the spot where the lander, Vikram, made a soft landing on August 23 will be known as "Shiv Shakti", and the spot where Chandrayaan-3's lander crashed landed in 2019 will be known as "Tiranga Point". The PM's move, scientists said, has recognised the contribution of women across the country. "Today is a celebration of 'nari shakti' and the women scientists of Isro today, as our honourable Prime Minister has named the site as Shiv Shakti, which has recognised and encouraged women across the country," Brinda V, a senior scientist from



Pragyan rover roams around 'Shiv Shakti' — the spot where Vikram lander made a soft landing on August 23. ISRO/PTI

Isro, said. Muthu Selvi, a senior scientist from the propulsion team of the space agency, said that "Shiv" — the masculine energy — and "Shakti" — the feminine energy — both need to come together for the universe to function in a balance. "Modi ji has inspired us today. We are empowered but we want that other women in the country should also be empowered and share their dreams."

A team of nearly 1,000 scientists was present at the Isro com-

mand centre on Saturday, as the PM returned from his two-nation tour to congratulate them on the success of Chandrayaan-3.

The scientists said that being part of the historic mission was a matter of pride. Nithi Forwal, a senior scientist from the UfR Rao Satellite Centre, who was also present in the Bengaluru, said that while scientists worked tirelessly to ensure the mission's success, the moment when the lander touched the lunar surface felt like "magic". Reema Ghosh, a senior scientist and a team member of the Pragyan module, said, "It was wonderful. PM Modi visited us. He supported us and told us that the sky is not the limit... On future plans, Ghosh said, "We are very excited as the Aditya-L1 (solar mission) will be launched soon. We will embrace more challenging missions."

The Vikram lander made a successful landing near the south pole of the moon at 6:03pm on August 23. Over the next fortnight, the lander and rover, Pragyan, will conduct a series of experiments.