



# Blue Ghost Mission 1

[Source: TH](#)

A US company, **Firefly Aerospace**, successfully landed its **Blue Ghost Mission 1** on the Moon, marking the **2<sup>nd</sup> private lunar landing** and the **1st to land upright**.

- The mission is nicknamed “**Ghost Riders in the Sky**”, and was launched in **January, 2025**, aboard a **SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket**.
- It landed (lander name: **Golden**) near **Mons Latreille**, a volcanic formation on the Moon’s **northeastern near side**.
- It is part of NASA's collaboration with industry to **reduce costs and support the [Artemis Program](#)**, the mission to return **astronauts to the Moon**.
- **Upcoming Lunar Missions:**
  - **IM-2 mission:** Intuitive Machines’ IM-2 mission, featuring its lander **Athena**, will be launched in **March 2025**.
    - In February 2024, Intuitive Machines became the **first private company** to achieve a **soft lunar landing** and the first US landing since **[Apollo 17](#) in 1972**.
  - **NASA’s CLPS Program:** The US aims to establish **routine private lunar missions** through NASA’s USD **[Commercial Lunar Payload Services \(CLPS\) program](#)**.

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# CHANDRAYAAN 3

India's 3<sup>rd</sup> lunar mission; a successful attempt at achieving a soft landing on lunar south

## BRIEF HISTORY

Lunar Mission	Aim	Launch Vehicle	Success
Chandrayaan 1 (2008)	Create a 3D atlas of moon & Mineralogical mapping	PSLV – C11	Detection of water and hydroxyl on lunar surface
Chandrayaan 2 (2019)	Exploring lunar south pole	GSLV MkIII-M1	Lander and rover crashed but orbiter successfully collected data

## COMPONENTS

- Lander - **Vikram**; Rover - **Pragyan** (same as Chandrayaan 2)
  - ▶ Both designed to last for 14 days; not supposed to come back to the earth
- Spectro-polarimetry of Habitable Planet Earth (**SHAPE**)
  - ▶ An experimental payload in propulsion module
  - ▶ Study spectro-polarimetric signatures of Earth (near-infrared wavelength range)

## ASPECTS TO STUDY

- Lunar quakes
- Thermal properties of lunar surface
- Changes in plasma near the surface
- Accurately measuring distance b/w Earth and the moon

## MISSION LIFE

- 1 lunar day (~14 Earth days)

## LAUNCH VEHICLE

- LVM3 - M4

India became the 1<sup>st</sup> country to successfully land on Lunar south pole and 4<sup>th</sup> to achieve soft-landing on Lunar surface (after US, Russia and China)

## Why Chandrayaan 3 Succeeded?

- A "failure-based design", unlike the "success-based design" of Chandrayaan-2
  - ▶ Even if all the sensors failed and engines stopped, **Vikram was sure to make the landing**
  - ▶ Provision of **multiple attempts** for landing if attempt 1 failed
- Developed accordingly to **rule out the scenario of crash landing**
  - ▶ Expanded landing area for more flexibility to land safely
  - ▶ Equipped with more fuel to enable longer-distance travel

## Importance of Lunar South Pole

- Vastly different, more **challenging terrain** compared to lunar equatorial region
- Potential repositories of valuable **information about early Solar System**
- Impact **future deep space exploration** significantly
- **Water may be concentrated** in the moon's southern hemisphere



Read More: [Challenges in Lunar Landing Missions](#)