

A perfect 13th successful launch for PSLV

The launch of Chandrayaan-1, India's first mission to probe the moon, from here Wednesday morning marked the 13th consecutive successful score for the India-built polar satellite launch vehicle (PSLV) which had failed in its very first attempt.

The 320-tonne PSLV-C11, which roared into skies at 6.22 a.m. from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) with the 1,380-kg Chandrayaan, is a modified version of PSLV, described by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) as its 'trusted workhorse'.

PSLV-C11 used strap-on motors (PSOM-XL) to achieve higher payload capability. PSOM-XL needed 12 tonnes of solid propellants instead of nine tonnes used in the earlier configuration of the launch vehicle.

It is a four-stage launch vehicle employing both solid and liquid propulsion stages.

Between 1993 and 2008, PSLV had 14 launches, including Wednesday's, with 13 consecutive successes.

'The PSLV has repeatedly proved its reliability and versatility by launching 30 spacecraft, 14 Indian and 16 for international, into a variety of orbits so far,' ISRO said.

The Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) in Kerala capital Thiruvananthapuram designed and developed the PSLV. the ISRO Inertial Systems Unit (IISU) at Thiruvananthapuram developed the inertial systems. The Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC), also at Thiruvananthapuram, developed the liquid propulsion stages for the second and fourth stages of PSLV as well as reaction control systems.

The SDSC at Sriharikota processed the solid propellant motors and carried out the launch operations. The ISRO Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC) provided telemetry, tracking and command support for the Chandrayaan launch.

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