



A giant leap: The Pragyan rover's touchdown on the lunar surface, as observed by the Lander Imager Camera, on Wednesday. PTI

Pragyan traverses 8 metres on moon

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Giving a much-awaited glimpse of Pragyan, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on Friday said the rover successfully traversed a distance of around eight metres on the lunar surface.

The ISRO released two videos of Pragyan, two days after the Vikram lander of Chandrayaan-3 made a historic soft-landing near the South Pole of the moon. The first video shows the rover rolling out

of the lander onto the lunar surface. The video was captured by the Lander Imager Camera on Wednesday. The second video shows the deployment of the ramp from the lander and the deployment of the solar panel of the rover. "A two-segment ramp facilitated the roll-down of the rover. A solar panel enabled the rover to generate power," the ISRO said on X (formerly Twitter).

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NEAR SIDE OF THE MOON
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Pragyan traverses 8 metres on moon

The ISRO said Pragyan payloads had been "turned on". "All planned Rover movements have been verified... The Rover payloads Laser Induced Breakdown Spectroscope (LIBS) and Alpha Particle X-ray Spectrometer (APXS) are turned on," it said. The objective of the two payloads is to derive the elemental composition in the vicinity of the landing site.

The lander has four payloads to study thermal conductivity, temperature, seismicity, and other characteristics of lunar surface. Of them, three payloads – ILSA, RAMBHA and ChaSTE – have been turned on.

CM launches expansion of breakfast scheme

N. Sai Charan
NAGAPATTINAM

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Friday expanded the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme across the State. It will benefit 17 lakh students of Classes 1 to 5 at 31,008 government schools and cost the exchequer ₹404.41 crore.

Speaking at the event, he said he took immense pride in launching the expansion of the flagship scheme at Thirukkuvalai Panchayat Union Middle School in Nagapattinam, where his father and former Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi studied.

He said a survey done among 10 lakh children aged less than six in urban areas showed that nearly 92,000 of them were malnourished.

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CM launches expansion of breakfast scheme



Chief Minister M.K. Stalin having breakfast with students at Thirukkuvalai in Nagapattinam district on Friday. (PI)

The government provided nutrient supplements to them; as a result, 62,000 children recovered from malnutrition.

Mr. Stalin said the breakfast scheme was aimed at eradicating hunger by enhancing the nutritional status and reducing malnutrition among children. It would also help to ease the burden on working mothers and increase the attendance and retention of children in schools.

Quoting the verses 'Undi kodathor uyir kaduthorey' (those who give nourishment to living beings in this world give precious life itself) from *Manimegalai*, one of the five Tamil epics, he said, "Though the government has been implementing many flagship schemes, such as free bus travel for women and *Pudhumai Penn*, the breakfast scheme is close to my heart and gives me immense satisfaction as it aimed at eradicating hunger, malnutrition, and anaemia among school children."

The Chief Minister urged officials to ensure the effective implementation of the scheme and appealed to the students to study well and enhance their skills. "Those who achieved success through struggles found a place in history. The government will continue to execute welfare measures following the principles of social justice and [following in the footsteps of] the leaders of the Dravidian movement."

CM slams NEET, NEP

"Once teachers were like *Dronacharya*, who had asked for the thumb of his student *Ekalavya* as *Guru Dakshina*. In the present day, *Dhruva Acharyas* have been imposing barriers on students through the National Education Policy (NEP) and the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET)," he said.

After launching the scheme, the Chief Minister had breakfast with the students. He also inspected the kitchen and interacted with women's self-help group members who prepared the food.

P. Senthil Kumar, Principal Secretary, Department of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj; Shunchoingam Jatak Chitra, Secretary, Department of Social Welfare and Women Empowerment; Nagapattinam MP M. Seharasu; Collector Johnny Tom Varghese; Kilvelur MLA V.P. Nagai Malli; N. Govthaman, chairman, Tamil Nadu Fisheries Development Corporation; and U. Mathivanan, chairman, Tahdco, participated at the event.

Mr. Stalin launched the Breakfast Scheme on September 15, 2022, the birth anniversary of DMK founder and former Chief Minister C.N. Annadurai, at the Corporation Primary School Aathimoolan II, Simmukal, Madurai. Initially, it was meant to provide nutritious breakfast to 1,34,095 students of Classes 1 to 5 at 1,545 government schools.

Encouraged by the increase in the attendance of students after the scheme was launched, the government decided to expand it. Under the scheme, 50 grams of cereals, 15 grams of dal, and locally available vegetables are given to a child a day, along with 150 grams-200 grams of cooked food and 60 grams of sambar with vegetables.

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28-ft Nataraja sculpture from T.N. to adorn G-20 venue

B. Kolappan
CHENNAI

A 28-foot Nataraja statue, meant to be placed at the venue of the G-20 Leaders' Summit to be held next month in New Delhi, was sent by road on Friday from Swamimalai, a small town in Tamil Nadu's Thanjavur district, known for its bronze sculptures.

The statue, weighing 19 tonnes, and made of eight metals: gold, silver, lead, copper, tin, mercury, iron and zinc (Ashtadhatu), is believed to be the world's tallest Nataraja sculpture.

The statue is on its way to the Bharat Mandapam, Pragati Maidan, where the summit is scheduled to be



Off to Capital: The 28-ft Nataraja statue being despatched to New Delhi from Swamimalai in Thanjavur district of Tamil Nadu. At right is the wax model of the sculpture. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

held on September 9 and 10. "Today we sent the unpolished statue to Delhi. The pedestal of the statue will be sent separately. Polishing and final touches to the statue will be done in Delhi," said Srikanta St-

pathi of Swamimalai, who along with his brothers Radhakrishna Stapathi and Swaminatha Stapathi, made the statue.

The three are the sons of renowned sculptor Devasenapathy Stapathi.



The statue is 22 feet in height, and the pedestal is six feet, making the entire structure 28 feet tall. "We have followed the model of Chidambaram, Konerirajapuram and other Natarajas of the Chola period in

making this statue," said Mr. Srikanta Stapathi. Sculptors Sadasivam, Gowrisankar, Santosh Kumar and Raghavan were also involved in the project.

Sculptors follow the 'lost-wax' casting method to make such statues. Sculptors first make a wax model and encase it in clay. "The clay, known as alluvial soil, is available on a stretch of the Cauvery river that runs through Swamimalai," Mr. Srikanta Stapathi said.

After the clay dries, the whole mass is heated to drain the melted wax. "The space left by the melted wax is filled with molten bronze. After allowing it to cool, we break the mould

and chisel the statue to perfection," he said.

Six-month effort

The order for the statue was placed by Union Culture Ministry this February and it took six months to complete the work. "We could have completed it earlier, but for the rain," he said. The cost of the statue is around ₹10 crore.

The statue was handed over to Achal Pandya, professor and HoD (Conservation), the Indra Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, who will accompany it to New Delhi.

Sources said Prime Minister Narendra Modi was keen on a Nataraja statue at the G-20 venue.

Indian women bag free pistol gold

Tiyana, Sakshi and Kirandeep do the country proud as it finishes second on the medals' table behind China while USA ends up third

SHOOTING WORLDS

Sports Bureau

The women's free pistol team helped India sign off from the World shooting championship on a golden note in Baku, Azerbaijan, on Friday. India wound up second on the medals' table with six gold and eight bronze medals.

China was on top with 15 gold, seven silver and six bronze. USA was third with five gold, two silver and a bronze.

Tiyana Phogat, Sakshi Suryavanshi and Kirandeep Kaur won the 50-metre free pistol team gold with a total of 1573, six points ahead of China. Tiyana also won the indi-



On top: Tiyana Phogat, Sakshi Suryavanshi and Kirandeep Kaur with the free pistol gold. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

dual bronze with 533 as she missed silver by one point.

The results: 25m centre fire pistol: Men: Team: 1. Germany 1743; 2. Korea 1731; 3. India

(Rajendra, Akshay, Gaurav) 1718. **50m free pistol: Men:** 1. Xi Yu (Chn) 558; 2. Lauris Strautmanis

(Lat) 557; 3. Ravinder Singh 556; 11. Kamaljeet 547; 18. Vikram Shinde 543.

Team: 1. China 1655; 2. Korea 1654; 3. India 1646 (Ravinder, Kamaljeet, Vikram).

Women: Team: 1. India (Tiyana, Sakshi, Kirandeep) 1573; 2. China 1567; 3. Mongolia 1566.

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