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Putin Congratulates India on Moon Landing After Own Probe Crashed

By AFP

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Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday hailed an "impressive" achievement from India, which was the first nation to land a spacecraft on the Moon's south pole, days after Moscow's own mission crashed.

Putin sent his "heartfelt congratulations" to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi according to the Kremlin's website.

"This is a big step forward in space exploration and, of course, a testament to the impressive progress made by India in the field of science and technology," the Kremlin statement read.

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Over the weekend, Russia's own Moon lander — the first in almost 50 years — had crashed after an incident during pre-landing maneuvers.

Russian space agency Roscosmos has vowed to stay in the lunar race, amid a renewed push for exploration that has drawn in both the world's top space powers and new players.

"Roscosmos congratulates Indian colleagues on the successful landing of the Chandrayaan-3," Roscosmos said on Wednesday.

"Exploration of the Moon is important for the whole of humanity, in the future it may become a platform for the deeper mastering of space."

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