CURRENT EVENTS 14 October 2026

# NASA Launches Lunar Grounding Challenge with $150,000 Prize

NASA launched a crowdsourced initiative offering up to $150,000 to solve static electricity accumulation on spacesuits for future lunar missions.

An international crowdsourcing engineering competition by NASA to find solutions for mitigating tribocharging and plasma charging risks on lunar spacesuits.

## KEY EXAM POINTS

- **NASA** announced the 'Lunar Grounding Challenge' with a total prize pool of up to **$150,000**.
- The challenge seeks innovative engineering solutions to prevent dangerous static electricity buildup on astronaut spacesuits on the **Moon**.
- The primary risks addressed are '**tribocharging**' from walking on the lunar surface and 'plasma charging' from ambient plasma.
- The static electricity hazard is severely compounded in Permanently Shadowed Regions (PSRs) at the **lunar South Pole**.
- The United States and NASA aim to land an American astronaut at the lunar South Pole by **2028** during the **Artemis 4** or Artemis 5 missions.

## DID YOU KNOW..!?

NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) was established on **July 5, 1958**, and is headquartered in **Washington, D.C.**

The **Artemis program** is NASA's ongoing lunar exploration program aimed at returning humans to the **Moon**, including the first woman and person of color.

**ISRO**'s corresponding human spaceflight mission for India is **Gaganyaan**, which aims to demonstrate human spaceflight capability.

**Tribocharging** is a type of contact electrification in which certain materials become electrically charged after they come into contact with another different material.

**Permanently Shadowed Regions** (PSRs) on the lunar poles contain trapped water ice resources and are major targets for future planetary exploration.

India's **Chandrayaan-3** successfully landed near the lunar South Pole on **August 23, 2023**, making India the first country to land near the south pole.

**REVISION FLASHCARD**

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Syllabus Relevance: Important for current affairs relating to international space missions, space technology, and scientific challenges.

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