

South Asia's Ascending Space Ambitions: Pakistan's Astronauts, India's Lunar

Space Exploration · Answer Key · 15 Questions

1. In Pakistan's collaboration with China for human spaceflight, which Pakistani astronaut candidates are undergoing advanced training at the Astronaut Center of China for a mission to the Tiangong Space Station, slated for late 2026?

A) Muhammad Zeeshan Ali and Khurram Daud

- B) Ashfaq Ahmad and Tariq Masood
- C) Imran Khan and Pervez Musharraf
- D) Bilal Maqsood and Faisalabad Ali

2. ISRO's Gaganyaan program is progressing with uncrewed missions before the crewed flight. What is the updated target timeline for the first uncrewed Gaganyaan mission, as indicated by ISRO Chairman V. Narayanan in late June 2026?

A) By the end of 2026

- B) By the end of 2027
- C) By the end of 2025
- D) By the end of 2028

3. What is the primary objective of India's Chandrayaan-4 mission, currently in the design phase with a planned launch around 2028?

A) Lunar sample return

- B) Deploying a larger lunar rover
- C) Establishing a lunar base
- D) First Indian human landing on the Moon

4. Bhutan aims to launch an in-house remote sensing satellite by 2027. Which Indian entity is collaborating with Bhutan on space technology initiatives, as highlighted during Bhutan Space Week 2026?

A) Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)

- B) Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)
- C) Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)
- D) National Atmospheric Research Laboratory (NARL)

5. Between January 2025 and April 2026, Pakistan's SUPARCO launched six Earth observation satellites. What is the primary stated purpose attributed to these satellites in recent reports?

A) Surveillance of India and surrounding regions

- B) Environmental monitoring and climate research
- C) Disaster management and communication
- D) Mapping and resource exploration

6. The NISAR (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar) satellite, an equal 50/50 partnership, is scheduled for launch in July 2025. What is its primary scientific objective?

- A) To provide the most detailed and sensitive map of Earth's surface**
- B) To study the Sun's corona and solar flares
- C) To search for exoplanets in habitable zones
- D) To map the dark matter distribution in the universe

7. As of mid-2026, Pakistan is preparing to send astronauts to the China Space Station. What is the estimated launch timeframe for this mission, with a Pakistani astronaut serving as a payload expert?

- A) Late 2026**
- B) Late 2027
- C) Early 2027
- D) Mid-2027

8. India's Chandrayaan-5 mission is a joint long-duration mission with which country, and what is a key feature planned for its rover?

- A) Japan; a 350-kg rover capable of operating for nearly 100 days**
- B) Russia; a 100-kg rover with advanced drilling capabilities
- C) France; a 50-kg rover for sample collection
- D) Germany; a 75-kg rover for seismic studies

9. The Maldives Space Research Organisation (MSRO) conducted its first microgravity experiment in August 2025 aboard the ISS. What type of seeds did they send to space as part of a global seed resilience mission?

- A) Maldivian mangrove seeds**
- B) Cinnamon seeds
- C) Coconut seeds
- D) Saffron seeds

10. Which of the following is NOT among the stated objectives of Bhutan's upcoming in-house remote sensing satellite, planned for launch by 2027?

- A) Military surveillance of neighboring countries**
- B) Mapping vegetation density
- C) Environmental monitoring
- D) Earth observation

11. Pakistan's recent rapid satellite launches, particularly between January 2025 and April 2026, have been largely facilitated by which nation's launch vehicles and technical support?

- A) China**
- B) Russia
- C) North Korea
- D) United States

12. ISRO's Gaganyaan program plans for three uncrewed missions before the first crewed launch. What is the status of the second and third uncrewed Gaganyaan missions (G2 and G3) concerning their launch timeline in 2026, according to a May 2025 report?

- A) They were slated to launch in 2026**
- B) They have been postponed to 2027
- C) They are planned for late 2025
- D) Their timelines are not yet defined

13. India has officially identified a landing site for its Chandrayaan-4 mission. Which specific lunar region has been selected for the lander's touchdown?

- A) Mons Mouton in the South Polar region**
- B) Mare Imbrium
- C) Tycho Crater
- D) Oceanus Procellarum

14. The Maldives Space Capital for High-Impact Fund (MSCHIF) has been launched with a significant investment. What is the primary goal of this fund?

- A) To develop sovereign space capabilities for the Maldives and other island nations**
- B) To fund a manned mission to Mars
- C) To establish a commercial spaceport in the Maldives
- D) To develop advanced rocket propulsion systems

15. Nepal's 'Munal' satellite, a co-passenger satellite on an ISRO mission, is designed for what primary purpose?

- A) Earth observation, specifically mapping vegetation density and environmental monitoring**
- B) Communication and internet services
- C) Weather forecasting and climate analysis
- D) Navigation and positioning services