

Japan's lander survives second night on the moon

Japan's SLIM lunar lander survived another night on the moon, even though it was not designed to survive the moon's cold conditions.



SLIM is not dead yet

The SLIM spacecraft, Japan's first successful lunar lander, has survived the long, cold night on the moon for the second time. Mission team members announced the news via X in late March, in a post with a new photo taken by the lander's navigation camera.

SLIM, the abbreviation for "Smart Lander for Lunar Investigation", launched last September and landed on the moon on January 19, making Japan the fifth country in the real world perform a soft landing on the moon. The four countries that have successfully landed on the moon are the former Soviet Union, the United States, China and India.

The solar-powered SLIM landed on the moon, a less than optimal direction for capturing sunlight. The 200 kg probe went dark shortly afterwards but then woke up on January 28 and began collecting data.

The mission team put SLIM into hibernation for a few days and two weeks later, while the surface temperature at the lunar site dropped to about minus 130 degrees Celsius.

SLIM had already achieved its main mission goals – making a precision lunar landing, deploying two small rovers and doing much of the science work – at that time and was not expected to last. anymore.

Yet, SLIM is now having its second revival, although the harsh conditions are starting to take a toll on this lucky little robot.

"According to the data obtained, some temperature sensors and unused batteries are starting to malfunction, but the majority of functions that survived the first moon night are maintained even after the second moon night ,' the information team members said in a post on social network X.

Meanwhile, the January collapse of SLIM was followed by the US ship Odysseus. Odysseus' moon landing was the first by a private spacecraft and the first by an American vehicle since Apollo 17 in 1972.

Odysseus was active for a week on the moon's surface, then fell silent before the first moonlit night. And this silence is forever. Intuitive Machines announced earlier this week that Odysseus's quest was over.

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