Why did the Soviets never set foot on the Moon?

The dream of a Soviet astronaut walking on the moon faded away on a launch pad in Kazakhstan in the summer of 1969.

On 3 July 1969, just 17 days before NASA astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin officially became the first humans to set foot on the moon, the Soviet Union made a second test shot for the missile. N1, the most advanced rocket model in the world at that time, carried the Soviets' ambition to conquer the Moon.

There is absolutely no official announcement about the test being made until later. In other tests beyond the Soviet Union in Tyuratam, Kazakhstan, however, many times a US spy satellite captured a completely damaged image on one of the launchers. is where the moon missile N1.

The Soviets were completely unaware that at that time, their hopes for the moon ended on a broken launch pad in 1969.

Yuri Gagarin and Sergei Korolev

The real opportunity never came to the Soviet Union

Much of the story of the N1 missile and the Soviet moon conquest program remains a mystery to this day, especially compared to NASA's Apollo program. The evidence is, for now, historians are constantly debating how and why the pioneering Soviet space program was suddenly lagging behind in the race to the moon with the

United States, as well. like how far they had lagged at the time Armstrong and Aldrin created historic landmarks in human civilization.

The truth was that there weren't any 'supernatural elements' from the outside that could completely fail the Soviet Moon program, the problem with their own roots. The Kremlin fell asleep over the US victory in the Sputnik race to orbit and the internal rivalry and conflict between Soviet space program leaders like Sergei Korolev, Valentin Glushko and Vladimir Chelomei There were certainly negative effects.

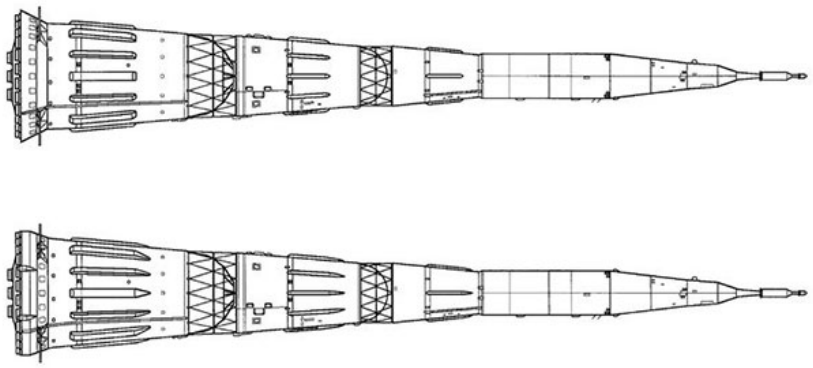
On the opposite side, as early as April 1961, American policymakers viewed the moon-exploration mission as something they were able to achieve before the Soviet Union, simply because of economic advantages. and the technology that this country holds. In addition, the investment in the civilian space program (taken by the military) was not really abundant, which gave Soviet engineers little chance of beating NASA in accessing these new technology and techniques.

Unfinished mission

It was not until 2015 that a series of documents showing the difficulties the Soviet Union faced in its moon exploration program half a century ago was truly revealed to the public.

Specifically, documents from April 1963 show that Soviet engineers have just completed analysis of 26 possible scenarios for the first lunar expedition, then shortened four different plans. While basically, a series of in-depth, more detailed studies will be needed before a final option can be selected.

The program's biggest challenge was how to build a boosters that could quickly and safely land astronauts down to the moon. The missile is named N1 and was designed by genius engineer Sergey Korolev. It has five floors, using fuel kerosene and liquid oxygen. The first floor has 30 NK-33 engines, the second floor has eight NK-43 engines, the third floor uses four NK-39 engines, the fourth floor uses one NK-31 engine and the fifth floor uses dynamic engine RD-58. The N1 was considered a 'counterweight' to the American Saturn-V missile at that time.



Moon rocket N1 illustration

In 1966, Korolev suddenly died when the N1 missile development project was in progress. Engineer Vasily Mishin becomes the takeover. From 1969-1972 the Soviet Union launched four tests of this missile but all failed. Including the first 2 times the missile failed to take off, 2 times after it only flew 50.1 seconds and 107 seconds and then exploded.

In it, the massive explosion almost completely wiped out half of the two-platform launchers - the project took several years to complete. Some missile-like debris was found about 6 miles away from the launch pad and its windows crashed into the building four miles away. This was clearly a total pitfall of Soviet engineers.

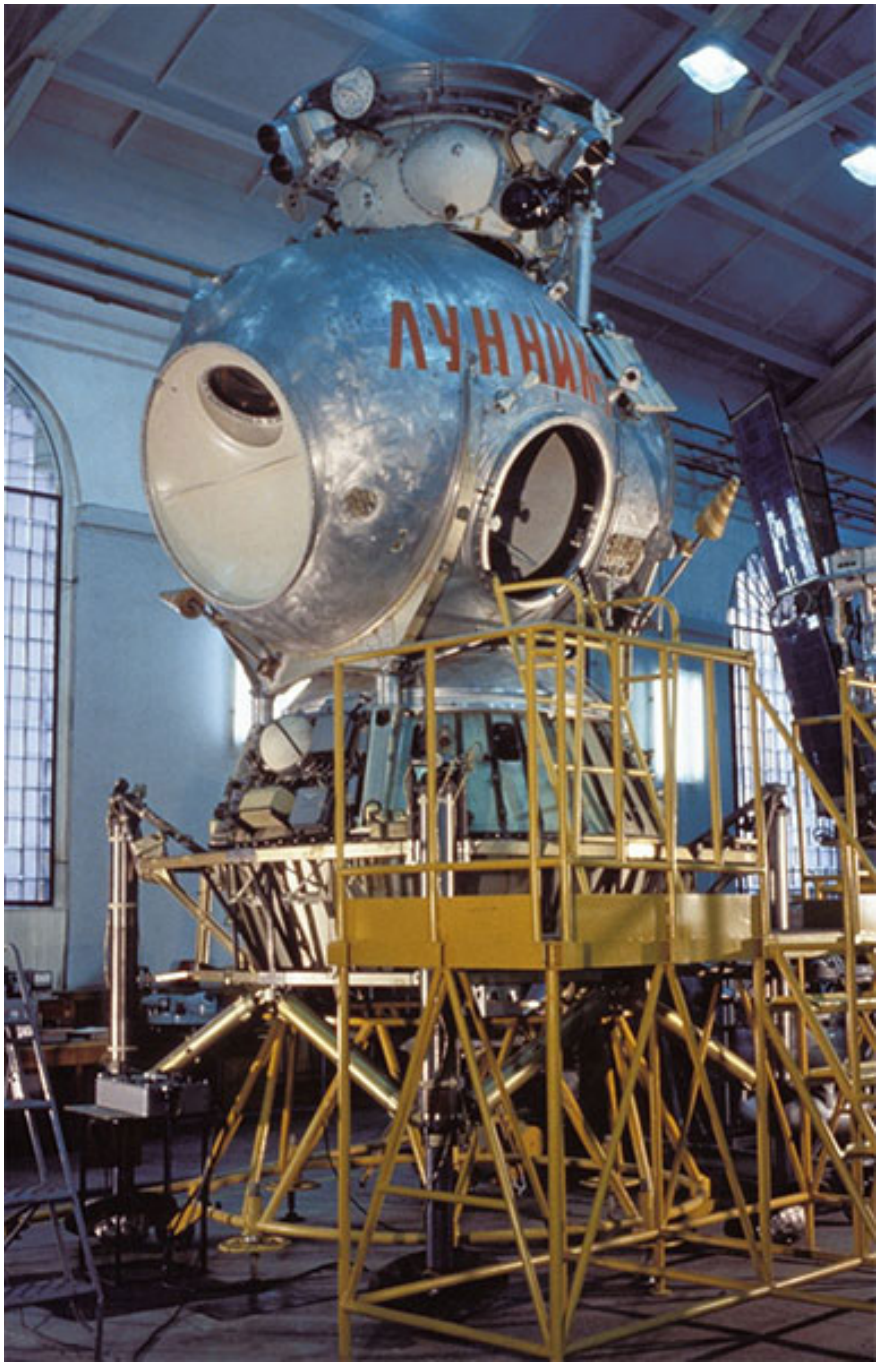
Back in the early stages of the moon conquest program, when the Kremlin was still struggling to approve serious investments, on the 'field', Soviet engineers were behind the United States. years and beyond.

In addition, disagreements over the use of propellants and the design of the future moon rockets, as well as other political conflicts among the leadership circles have led to the Moon program. The Soviet Union became complicated and continued to be delayed. It was only in 1964 that Soviet engineers had taken the political steps needed to take part in the race to the moon, but by then it was too late.

Over the next four years, as is known, numerous technical problems and erroneous tests caused the gap between Apollo and the Soviet program to widen.

The ending is foreshadowed

Failure in the second test launch of the N1 missile officially put an end to the Soviet ambitions in the race to the moon and raised the 'painful' question of whether a Soviet astronaut was. now set foot on the moon or not.



The Lunik 1 manned lunar lander was planned for the Soviet moon program

The failure of this program can be attributed to poor management. In fact, in the Soviet Union, there was no agency with complete autonomy like America's NASA. Therefore, there has been too much political intervention for scientists, not just professional difficulties. For example, each chief design engineer often has to find a certain high-ranking official to expect his plan to be 'approved'. There are also structural problems that make it difficult for engineers to access the latest scientific and technological achievements.

The Soviet space program then continued to make great contributions to the mission of human space exploration, including the famous Soyuz rocket. However, the dream of a Soviet cosmonaut walking on the moon perished on a launch pad in Kazakhstan in the summer of 1969.