

# MARS ORBITER LAUNCH ON NOV 5

**Chennai:** India's ambitious space mission to explore planet Mars would be launched on November 5 from the spaceport of Sriharikota, ISRO announced, on Tuesday.

The Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM), 'Mangalyan', would now be launched onboard PSLV C25 on November 5 at 14:36 hours from the first launch pad of Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota, some 80 km from here, an ISRO spokesperson said.

ISRO had stated that the timing of the launch was 3:28 PM. In a revised press release, ISRO said "the correct time of lift-off is 14:36 hrs IST on Tuesday, November 5, 2013."

A decision on the launch date was to be taken on October 19 but postponed to today in view of bad weather in the South Pacific Ocean.

The powerful XL version of the Indian Space Research Organisation's workhorse Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) would be used for the Rs 450 crore mission.

Primary objectives of

the mission are to demonstrate India's technological capability to send a satellite to orbit around Mars and conduct meaningful experiments such as looking for signs of life, take pictures of the red planet and study Martian environment.

Launch campaign has already commenced in Sriharikota from where the 1,350-kg MOM spacecraft is slated to be launched by the Rs 110 crore Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle.

The satellite will carry compact science experiment instruments, totaling a mass of 15 kg. There will be five instruments to study Martian surface, atmosphere and mineralogy, ISRO said.

After leaving the earth's orbit, the spacecraft will cruise in deep space for about ten months using its own propulsion system and will reach Martian transfer trajectory in September 2014.

The spacecraft subsequently is planned to enter into a 372 km by 80,000 km elliptical orbit around Mars. *PTI*