

# ISRO PLANS NEXT

## INTER-PLANETARY MISSION

**Bengaluru:** After India's much hailed successful missions to the Moon and Mars that boosted its global standing in space, the next inter-planetary expedition to be launched is under discussion, according to ISRO.

"Currently, discussions are going on...on Venus, Mars, any planetary system," Indian Space Research Organisation Chairman A S Kiran Kumar told reporters, adding, an advisory committee headed by renowned space scientist U R Rao was looking into the issue. Scripting space history, India had on September 24 last year placed its low-cost Mars spacecraft in orbit around the red planet, making it the first country to succeed in the very maiden attempt.

India's first lunar mission, Chandrayaan-1, was

launched in 2008 and it helped confirm the existence of water on the Moon. A second lunar exploration mission Chandrayaan-2, is being planned for launch during the next two to three years.

"We have an advisory committee on Science with Professor U R Rao as the Chairman, so that committee will decide what should be our priority, what planets we should be doing, what science studies we should be doing," Kumar said. The ISRO Chairman's response came in reply to a question on media reports about ISRO's next inter-planetary mission to Venus in about two-and-a-half years.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of World Metrology Day here, he said, "Once they (the com-

mittee) come up with a finalised plan, we have to approve that..."

World Metrology Day was organised here by Metrology Society of India, Southern Region, in association with Central Manufacturing Technology Institute. Kumar said ISRO was also in the process of indigenously developing atomic clock for its next generation navigation satellites. Currently, it is procuring atomic clocks from Europe.

"Atomic clock gives you accurate frequency and time measurement capability and stability; IRNSS satellites, each of those satellites carry an accurate clock and that clock should have a stability... because using that clock you determine the distance..." he said. *PTI*