



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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NASA Artemis II Mission: First Ship-to-Ship Call with ISS

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The NASA achieved a historic milestone under its Artemis Program as astronauts of the Artemis II conducted the first-ever “ship-to-ship” communication with astronauts aboard the International Space Station. This communication took place between the Orion spacecraft crew, traveling near the Moon, and ISS astronauts orbiting Earth, marking a significant advancement in deep-space communication.

Mission Overview:

Artemis II, launched on 1 April 2026, is a crewed lunar flyby mission using the Orion spacecraft and the Space Launch System. The mission lasts about 10 days and follows a free-return trajectory, ensuring the spacecraft safely returns to Earth without major propulsion adjustments. It is the first human mission beyond low Earth orbit since the Apollo 17 mission.

Astronauts:

The Artemis II crew includes Reid Wiseman, Victor Glover, Christina Koch, and Jeremy Hansen (Canada). During the mission, they interacted with ISS astronauts, including Jessica Meir. Notably, Christina Koch and Jessica Meir had earlier conducted the first all-female spacewalk in 2019, making this interaction historically significant as well.

Significance of the Event:

The successful communication demonstrates the capability for real-time interaction between deep-space missions and low Earth orbit missions, which is crucial for future space exploration. It strengthens coordination for upcoming missions such as Artemis III, which aims for a human Moon landing, and supports long-term plans for human missions to Mars.

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Additional Key Facts:

Artemis II astronauts traveled more than 252,000 miles from Earth, setting a record for one of the farthest human spaceflights. The mission highlights advancements in communication technology and showcases international collaboration in space exploration. The Artemis Program also includes plans for establishing the Lunar Gateway, a space station in orbit around the Moon.