

## EIR Daily Alert Service

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## EDITORIAL

### **BRICS XV: ‘Rise Like Lions!’**

Aug. 22, 2023 (EIRNS)—The Schiller Institute “Appeal to the Citizens of the Global North: We Must Support the Construction of a New Just World Economic Order” began to circulate yesterday as the 15th Conference of

the BRICS nations convened in Johannesburg, South Africa. Hundreds have already endorsed it (see below), and thousands more should circulate it, together with the specially-prepared Economic Development Package designed to accompany it. That Development package consists of the Zepp-LaRouche “Ten Principles of a New International Security And Development Architecture” and several documents illustrating some of the salient physical-economic ideas of the great economist and statesman Lyndon LaRouche, so that people can learn how to think clearly, and economically, in this time of crisis.

LaRouche’s 1975 International Development Bank proposal is still, today, the best conceptual statement of the intent that must inform the BRICS New Development Bank. As for the United States itself, only by correcting the last three generations’ mistaken ideas about labor, credit, technology, production, money, banking and economic growth—discredited ideas still held, even despite multiple catastrophes, such as the 2007-2008 financial meltdown—can we hope to return our nations to sanity. With the assistance of the BRICS summit, millions are now being awakened from their Malthusian slumber.

Perhaps our efforts may be in enough time to prevent the State Department mediocrities that believe they are geniuses, the “royal screw-ups” of the British/European oligarchy and their American cohorts, from triggering thermonuclear war, and perhaps not. But the International Peace Coalition initiative, and the Appeal just now circulating, are intersecting a force for optimism in the world, assembled now in Johannesburg, which potentially represents an “Alliance for Progress” among the majority of the human race. That is surely the precondition to stop world war. As CGTN journalist Zhang Shanhui said during a symposium on the BRICS summit aired in Algeria last night, “It’s that, today, the developing countries, their voices need to be heard, their presence needs to be seen, their force needs to be felt today, in this world. And also, how to bring these different forces together, to contribute to the larger possibility of humanity. This is one of the most important issues to be talking about.” The time must now come, in order that humanity survive, when the idea, “the new name for peace is

development,” become synonymous with the concept of the General Welfare in the minds of nations.

- Watch [Harley's Updates](#) with Harley Schlanger on Wednesday August 23, 2023: Every weekday morning on The LaRouche Organization, Schlanger will give you the strategic briefing you need to start your day.

## NEW STRATEGIC & ECONOMIC ARCHITECTURE

### Putin Tells BRICS Business Forum, NDB Is 'Credible Alternative to Existing Western Development Institutions'

Aug. 22, 2023 (EIRNS)—BRICS leaders addressed the BRICS Business Forum at its conclusion today, as is customary, and Russian President [Vladimir Putin](#) among them, albeit by video. While Putin was prevented by a blatantly fraudulent International Criminal Court arrest warrant from attending the BRICS summit in Johannesburg in person, his remarks delivered by livestream zeroed in on critical points that can be taken up by the BRICS leaders' summit.

Putin said: “It is important that this Forum focuses on such pressing issues as the post-pandemic economic recovery of the BRICS states, improvement of citizens' well-being, industrial modernization, development of effective transport and logistics chains, and stimulation of equitable technology transfers.

“These challenging and complex tasks need to be tackled against the backdrop of the increasing volatility in stock, currency, energy and food markets, coupled with substantial inflationary pressure stemming from, *inter alia*, the irresponsible large-scale money creation by a number of countries seeking to mitigate the effects of the pandemic, which has led to the accumulation of private and public debt.

“The global economic situation is also seriously affected by the illegitimate sanctions practice and illegal freezing of assets of sovereign states, which essentially amounts to trampling upon all the basic norms and

rules of free trade and economic life—norms and rules that not so long ago seemed immutable.”

He went on: “Prices for food, basic agricultural products and crops are forced up, making the most vulnerable, poor countries suffer the most.

“Importantly, under these circumstances the BRICS states have stepped up their interaction.... More and more new infrastructure and investment projects are being launched, mutual trade is growing, industry contacts are expanding.

“The main thing is that our cooperation is based on the principles of equality, partner support, and respect for each other’s interests. And that is what lies at the core of our Association’s forward-looking strategic course—the course that reflects the aspirations of most of the world’s community, the so-called global majority.”

Putin emphasized: “The objective and irreversible process of the de-dollarization of our economic ties is gaining pace. We are working to fine-tune effective mechanisms for mutual settlements and monetary and financial control. As a result, the share of U.S. dollar in export and import operations within BRICS is declining: last year it stood at only 28.7%.

“Incidentally, during this summit we will discuss in detail the entire range of issues related to the transition to national currencies in all areas of economic cooperation between our five nations. The BRICS New Development Bank, which has already become a credible alternative to existing Western development institutions, has a great role to play in these efforts.”

Putin highlighted two major international connectivity routes Russia is collaborating on: The Northern Sea route which runs from the Barents Sea, near Russia’s border with Norway, to the Bering Strait between Siberia and Alaska; and the 7,000 km International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) running from St. Petersburg to Mumbai, via Iran and Caspian Sea region, among other countries.

He focused participants' attention on fundamental objectives: "to fight poverty, expand people's access to quality healthcare, eradicate hunger and improve food security." "As a first step, we have decided to gratuitously provide six African countries with 25-50,000 tons of grain each with free delivery of these cargoes. Negotiations with partners are being completed."

He concluded his remarks: "I would like to invite representatives of your countries' business circles to attend the Eastern Economic Forum in Russia that will take place on Sept. 10-13 in the city of Vladivostok, where, by tradition, the discussions will focus on issues that are also of interest to the business communities of the BRICS countries."

### **NDB To Increase Borrowing and Lending in Local Currencies, Says Rousseff**

Aug. 22, 2022 (EIRNS)—Dilma Rousseff, President of the BRICS New Development Bank and former President of Brazil, flew into Johannesburg, South Africa, with Brazilian President Lula da Silva yesterday. Lula posted a government video clip of his reception at the airport by South African Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor and her welcoming committee. The subtitles included the statement that the BRICS summit agenda includes using local currencies for transactions. Rousseff indicated the NDB's plans in this regard, in an interview with the *Financial Times* today: "We expect to lend between \$8 billion and \$10 billion this year. Our aim is to reach about 30% of everything we lend ... in local currency." To do this, the NDB will issue rand-denominated bonds in order to then lend in the South African currency, and do "the same thing in Brazil with the real. We're going to try to either do a currency swap or issue debt. And also in rupees [in India]," she explained. The bank has already issued debt in Chinese renminbi and made loans in that currency.

This incipient plan of the NDB to capitalize itself outside the dollar-dominated speculative financial system is crucial to break free of that stranglehold. Since its founding in 2015, the NDB has lent only \$33 billion—about \$3.5 billion per year—and it has capitalized itself almost entirely in dollars. That is now changing, and Rousseff's plan to lend \$8-10

billion this year also represents a major expansion of activities. She also reported that the NDB was considering applications for membership from about 15 countries and was likely to approve the admission of 4 or 5.

Rousseff pointed out that nations need to protect themselves from exchange-rate risk, and variations in U.S. interest rates. “Local currencies are not alternatives to the dollar. They’re alternatives to a system. So far the system has been unipolar ... it’s going to be substituted by a more multipolar system.”

And unlike the IMF and World Bank, “We repudiate any kind of conditionality. Often a loan is given upon the condition that certain policies are carried out. We don’t do that. We respect the policies of each country.... We’ll transform ourselves into an important bank for developing countries and emerging markets. Our focus has to be that: a bank made by developing countries for themselves.”

She acknowledged that the NDB has been forced to suspend all operations in member country Russia, to avoid being sanctioned and cut off from the international financial system.

Reflecting this bold policy, on Aug. 21 the NDB signed a loan agreement with the [Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority](#) (TCTA) for the implementation of Phase II of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project. The NDB will provide a project loan of R3.2 billion South African rand (\$170 million) to TCTA under the sovereign guarantee of South Africa.

The [Lesotho Highlands Water Project](#) is a multi-phased project to provide water to the Gauteng region of South Africa and to generate hydro-electricity for Lesotho. It was established by the 1986 Treaty signed by the governments of the Kingdom of Lesotho and the Republic of South Africa. The project entails harnessing the waters of the Senqu/Orange River in the Lesotho highlands through the construction of a series of dams for the mutual benefit of the two countries. Phase I of the project was inaugurated in 2004, and Phase II is currently underway. The project will increase the yield of the Vaal River Basin by almost 15%, and will support economic growth and foster livelihoods of people of the highly urbanized province of

Gauteng, South Africa, which includes the nation's administrative capital of Pretoria, and the provincial capital of Johannesburg.

### **Lukin Discusses China's Important Role in African Growth**

Aug. 22, 2023 (EIRNS)—In a conversation published Aug. 20 with Russia newspaper *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, [Alexander Lukin](#), research director of the Russian Academy of Sciences' Institute of China and Contemporary Asia, stated: “BRICS is important for China. It is positioning itself as a leader of the Global South. In this group, China is the strongest country from an economics point of view. That said, though, one cannot say that China is the leader, as there [within BRICS] each [member] country is preoccupied with its own prestige. As for China's dialogue with African countries, this is above all about economic interests. China needs raw materials and Africa has a lot of them. China needs markets for its goods. It also needs investment projects, in particular for investing in infrastructure. China has a lot of companies building railroads, airports, seaports. In China itself, by now there is almost no room for such companies to use their expertise, but their capacities remain and should be applied somewhere, so now China is boosting construction of infrastructure facilities in Africa. At the same time, building port facilitates importing oil from Africa. This is a mutually beneficial process.”

One has to add that China has been active as a supporter of African countries since at least the late 1950s, which relations provided a good platform presently for China and African countries to expand cooperation.

### **BRICS Nations Trading, Developing with Africa, as West Disengages**

Aug. 22, 2023 (EIRNS)—The 15th BRICS Summit in Johannesburg, reflects an underlying reality: For the last two decades, the BRICS nations have been greatly increasing trade and advancing development with Africa. The colonialist powers of Europe and the United States have tried to impose their Malthusian policies on Africa, but are no longer the economically dominant power. Their role has significantly diminished, through a reduction in France's semi-colonial CFA franc currency in 15

largely Francophone countries, or outright disengagement. It is an important precondition for African nations' efforts to work with BRICS.

In the last decade, BRICS has become the largest trading partner of Africa, outstripping the EU and United States. According to official statistics, the two-way trade value between China and Africa hit an all-time high of \$282 billion in 2022, up 11% year-on-year. China has also invested heavily in infrastructure and industrial projects in African countries. Meanwhile, according to Indian Ministry of Commerce and Industry data, India has set up a \$10 billion fund to support development projects in Africa.

Brazil's trade with Africa was expected to rise to about \$25 billion in 2022, and Russia's trade in 2022 with Africa was \$18 billion. Part of the reason why Russia's figure appears to be lower, is the dollar's rise against the ruble, thus, with trade levels reported in dollars, Russia's trade with Africa would appear to be lower than it is. Already, Russian President Vladimir Putin stated, in the first half of 2023, Russia's trade with Africa has risen 30% compared with the same period last year.

Adding it up, in 2022, these four BRICS nations' two-way trade with Africa reached about \$425 billion, greater than any other group of nations. Nations in Africa know this, reflected in different ways through their palpable economic progress.

By contrast, the once-mighty British Empire's two-way trade with Africa, which was \$43 billion in 2012, fell to \$14 billion in 2020, before rising a little in 2022. As for the United States, for the first half of 2023, its two-way trade with Africa fell to \$34.3 billion, compared with \$37.6 billion for the first-half of 2022, a fall of 9%.

Europe and the United States may take turns yelling at the nations of Africa to consume less, to give up their own sovereign fossil fuels, to stop working with Russia and China, etc., but they no longer have the imperial power they had before. Should Western nations give up their arrogance and participate with Africa, as Helga Zepp-LaRouche proposes, not only would Africa grow more, but West would also greatly benefit.

## Burkina Faso Sends Hundreds of Truckloads of Food to Niger

Aug. 22, 2023 (EIRNS)—Burkina Faso sent hundreds of truckloads of food and other materials into Niger. The nearly 300 trucks have helped to relieve the humanitarian crisis caused by the sanctions imposed by the Economic Community of West African States, after the Niger military seized power in July. These sanctions have been fully endorsed by the European Union, France, and the United States. Because of these sanctions, hundreds of trucks have been blocked from entering Niger at the Nigerian border. That is causing hardship in Niger, and also in northern Nigeria, where much of the population depends on cross-border trade for their livelihoods. According to the AFP story, because of the danger from terrorist groups operating in the border region between Niger and Burkina Faso, the trucks were protected by military escorts from both countries.

Burkina Faso, also under ECOWAS sanctions, is among the poorest countries in the region, yet it is showing solidarity with Niger. Burkina Faso, Mali and Guinea, have declared themselves allies with Niger, and have warned that any military attack on Niger will be regarded as a potential military attack on themselves.

## STRATEGIC SHOWDOWN

### Former French President Sarkozy Believes Diplomacy and a Neutral Ukraine Are Only Way Out

Aug. 22, 2023 (EIRNS)—On Aug. 16, on the occasion of the publication of Nicolas Sarkozy's new book *Le Temps des Combats* (*The Time of Battles*), *Le Figaro Magazine* published a long interview with the former French President in which he, plainly speaking as a voice of a more realistic faction of the French foreign policy establishment increasingly furious at Macron, summarizes again his views on Russia.

Sarkozy first honored the just deceased, highly respected Russia expert Hélène Carère d'Encausse. Then Sarkozy said: "The Russians are Slavs, they are different from us. Discussion is always difficult, and has given rise to many misunderstandings in our shared history. Despite this, we need

them and they need us. I have had profound disagreements with Vladimir Putin, and I took my responsibilities in 2008, when I was president of the European Council. I convinced him to withdraw his tanks, which were 25 km from Tbilisi. He had started to invade Georgia. But at the same time, Angela Merkel and I showed him that we were aware of his ‘red lines.’ That’s why we refused to allow Ukraine and Georgia to join NATO, despite strong American pressure. We didn’t want to let Putin drift into the anti-Western paranoia that has long been the temptation of Russian leaders. The Kremlin’s encirclement complex is an old story. Putin was wrong. What he has done is serious and has resulted in failure. But once you’ve said that, you have to move on and find a way out. Russia is and will remain Europe’s neighbor.”

Sarkozy, clearly anticipating that the truth of the Western defeat will become known very soon, said: “We can’t stick to the strange idea of ‘making war without making war.’ We’ll have to clarify our strategy, especially if this war is to last. Diplomacy, discussion and exchange remain the only means of finding an acceptable solution. Without compromise, nothing will be possible, and we run the risk of things degenerating at any moment. This powder keg could have fearsome consequences.”

Le Figaro: “The Allies say they will support Ukraine ‘all the way.’ Are they right?”

Sarkozy: “The words are strong and definitive. ... Does it mean taking back the Donbass? Take back Crimea too? Or go all the way to Moscow? The annexation of Crimea in 2014 was a clear violation of international law. But when it comes to this territory, which was Russian until 1954 and where a majority of the population has always felt Russian, I think that any return to the past is illusory; even if I believe that an indisputable referendum, i.e., organized under the strict control of the international community, will be necessary to ratify the current state of affairs.”

Le Figaro: “And what about the rest of Ukraine?”

Sarkozy: “If the Ukrainians don’t succeed completely [in taking back their territory], the choice will be between a frozen conflict—which we

know will inevitably lead to a new hotbed of conflict tomorrow—or a way out from the top, once again through referenda strictly supervised by the international community, to settle these territorial issues definitively and transparently....

“First of all, we need to agree on Ukraine’s vocation. Joining the EU? I don’t think so. Ukraine is a bridge between West and East. It has to stay that way. We’re in the process of making false promises that won’t be kept. Just like those made to Türkiye for decades. Not just because Ukraine is not ready and does not meet the criteria for membership. But because it must remain a neutral country. I don’t see how this neutrality would be an insult. It could, moreover, be guaranteed by an international agreement providing for extremely strong security assurances, to protect it against any risk of new aggression.”

The French daily *Libération*, historically known as a money and propaganda conduit of the U.S. Embassy and the Anglo-American war party, immediately reacted with unfriendly fire. Responding to Sarkozy’s interview, *Libération* on Aug. 21 ran two articles smearing the former President. The first, written by the “Trotskyite” former chief editor, Serge July, locates Sarkozy’s views as part of an overall “neo-dictatorial temptation,” putting in the same bag Trump, Mélenchon, Sarkozy, and Fillon, all presented as “crypto-putinists” tempted to become strongmen while already on trial for their “illiberal” behavior.

Thomas Legrand then expresses his worries about Sarkozy’s books, which are finding their way to the public. For several days, complains Legrand, Russian TV and media, and also former President Dmitry Medvedev, have been paying honor to Sarkozy! A shame. For Legrand, Sarkozy’s position, as opposed to official French policy, is a complete break from “the tradition of elementary decency of former heads of state,” who are not supposed to express views opposed to the incumbent President. Sarkozy’s ideas are not original, writes Legrand, they only reflect those of the worrisome U.S. billionaire Elon Musk.

## Is Poland Preparing for Offensive War Against Belarus?

Aug. 22, 2023 (EIRNS)—The alternative news website, SouthFront—which itself has been the target of censorship efforts due to its war reporting—reports that everything “points to the fact that Poland is preparing for a strategic offensive operation in the Belarusian direction.” This includes not only the announced plans to send 10,000 troops to the border, but also other signs of preparations, including the deployment of field communication centers and command posts which began after the “migration crisis” of 2021. SouthFront points to the movement of elements of the 12th Mechanized Division, and the 11th Armored Division, from the German border into the region close to Belarus; and the 18th Mechanized Division from near Rzeszów in southern Poland (Rzeszów is the hub of the U.S. military deployment in Poland), to the area of Bielsk-Podlaski. Thus, SouthFront says, “Poland on the border with Belarus, on the border between Grodno and Brest, deployed three divisions, fully staffed, according to the wartime standard.”

Meanwhile, the State Department approved the potential sale of 96 Apache attack helicopters to Poland, along with large quantities of associated weapons and equipment, in a package worth some \$12 billion. If Congress approves the deal (and it probably will), it will make Poland the second-largest operator of Apaches after the U.S. Army. *Breaking Defense* notes that this sale is just the latest in a Polish spending spree that has seen Warsaw throw what a top officer said are “suitcases with money” at modernizing its military. The “splashy orders” include, the Apache helicopters, Abrams tanks and HIMARS rocket launchers from the United States; K2 tanks, Chunmoo rocket launchers, K9 self-propelled howitzers and FA-50 combat aircraft from South Korea; and at least two Swedish early-warning aircraft to complement additional tethered warning systems.

## Russians Say Providing F-16s to Ukraine Will Prolong the Conflict but Not Change the Result

Aug. 22, 2023 (EIRNS)—Before he left Copenhagen yesterday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy declared, “Today we are confident that

Russia will lose this war,” as a result of the promises by both Denmark and Netherlands to provide F-16s to Ukraine.

The Russians, however, are warning that nothing of the kind will result. Russian Ambassador to Copenhagen Vladimir Barbin yesterday asserted that the supply of F-16s to Ukraine will only escalate the conflict. “Under the pretext that Ukraine itself should determine the terms of peace, Denmark, by its actions and words, is trying to leave Ukraine no choice but to continue the military confrontation with Russia,” he said in a statement reported by TASS. “This position pushes Ukraine into the abyss and condemns its people to new sacrifices. There will be no other result from Denmark’s decision to transfer the F-16 jets to Ukraine.”

Alexander Mikhailov, head of the Military-Political Analysis Bureau, a think tank in Moscow, told TASS that the Dutch and Danish decisions on supplying F-16s are merely a political move to placate the Ukrainian side that will have no effect on the course of the special military operation. “We are talking about several dozen fighter jets. Moreover, they were made in the 1980s. The fighter jets are nearly 30 years old, and are to be written off from the Danish and Dutch armies, as they have exhausted their aviation service [both countries are in the process of upgrading to F-35 stealth fighters—ed.]. And although it is still possible to put them in the air and even try to conduct some air battles with them or use them for air strikes, they are not the kind of military armada that can change the situation in the airspace of the special military operation zone anyway,” the expert stressed.

## **North Korea Warns Thermonuclear War Approaching Korean Peninsula**

Aug. 22, 2023 (EIRNS)—Pyongyang denounced the trilateral U.S.-South Korea-Japan summit of last week, just as the U.S.-South Korea Ulchi Freedom Shield joint exercise kicked off. Pyongyang accused Seoul, Washington, and Tokyo of holding their trilateral summit at Camp David last week to adopt a series of documents to “detail, plan and formulate” nuclear war provocations, the Korean Central News Agency said in a commentary, reported Yonhap. “An unprecedented large-scale

thermonuclear war is approaching the Korean Peninsula every moment as reality,” the KCNA said, adding that the allies’ military drills are “aggressive” in nature, likely involving U.S. nuclear strategic assets.

The Ulchi Freedom Shield exercise, based on an all-out war scenario, began on Aug. 21 and runs through Aug. 31. It includes a computer simulation-based command post exercise, concurrent field training, and Ulchi civil defense drills. Yonhap notes that the North has long denounced Seoul-Washington military drills as a rehearsal for an invasion. One of the exercise’s key points is “to counter the advancing threats from North Korea,” South Korean Joint Chiefs of Staff spokesman army Col. Lee Sung-jun told reporters during a news briefing on Aug. 14.

## COLLAPSING WESTERN SYSTEM

### Ukraine Undergoes Economic and Demographic Catastrophe

Aug. 22, 2023 (EIRNS)—Ukraine’s economy has lost the physical ability to reproduce its population’s existence, and is suffering one of the greatest demographic collapses in the world, even as its male population in the Ukrainian Armed Forces are ground up on the battlefield, suffering tens of thousands—and perhaps hundreds of thousands—of deaths, and permanent injuries.

In an Aug. 20 article for the media network Al Mayadeen English, entitled “Living Conditions in Ukraine Are Resembling a New Slavery, a Triumph of Western ‘Democracy’ in the 21st Century,” it is reported that in 1991, when Ukraine declared independence from the Soviet Union, the country had a population of 52 million. In February 2022, before Russia’s special military operation, that had tumbled to 37.6 million, a decline of 14.4 million people, or nearly 27%. Today, estimates the Ukrainian Institute for the Future, only 29 million people live in Ukraine, because many women and children left during the first phases of the war. So, Ukraine’s population has contracted by 43% since 1991.

The Institute says that the average fertility rate for Ukraine is 0.7 children for women in child-bearing age (usually the age range of 15 to 44 years old). For a society to reproduce itself, each woman in child-bearing age, should bear 2.1 children. Ukraine's fertility rate is a catastrophe, as births will be outstripped by natural deaths, even compared to the disastrous fertility rates of Europe and the United States. It is one of the worst on the face of the Earth.

Ukraine presently has a workforce of 9.1-9.5 million; deducting state-employed workers, that leaves only 6-7 million in the non-government workforce. A significant portion of this problem derives from the fact that since Ukraine declared its independence on Aug. 24, 1991, it has been under the policy of British-American shock therapy and IMF conditionalities. Russia had also been under this shock therapy, but Yevgeny Primakov and Vladimir Putin began freeing Russia from that genocidal policy in 1999.

In the "[Schiller Institute Policy Proposal: The LaRouche Plan for a New International Economic Architecture](#)," it documents the 30-year decimation of Ukraine's economy, from manufacturing to agriculture to infrastructure, while it also presents the draft proposal to reconstruct Ukraine.

Today, unemployed male Ukrainians do not sign up for unemployment insurance—which pays only some \$28 per month—because they fear their name will be turned over to the military, leading to their conscription.

In August, deputies of Volodymyr Zelensky's Servant of the People Party introduced a bill into the Verkhovna Rada, that would conscribe all eligible males, who are not in the Army, to do "public works," but much of that "public works" is for the defense industry, and holds up the teetering economy, amid an acute labor shortage.

Scott Ritter and *EIR*'s Carl Osgood have pointed out that the Ukrainian armed forces, suffering significant losses, are running out of trained troops. But Ukraine's ability to even physically generate its population at all, let alone troops, has radically declined. Combined with what is happening to its economy, Ukraine is being "democratically" turned into a charnel house.

## SCIENCE & INFRASTRUCTURE

### India Ready to Moon Landing, but Only if Parameters Are Not Right

Aug. 22, 2023 (EIRNS)—The Indian Space Research Organization’s countdown to the start of the powered descent of the lander module of ISRO’s Chandrayaan-3 Moon mission has begun. ISRO will begin broadcasting the descent and landing live at 7:50 a.m. EDT (17:20 IST; GMT+5:30).

But ISRO is prepared to postpone the landing, should any problem be detected, Space Applications Center Director Nilesh Desai reported today. Desai explained:

“The lander will try to land on the Moon’s surface from a height of 30 km on Aug. 23, and its velocity at that time will be 1.68 km per second. Our focus will be on reducing that speed, because the Moon’s gravitational force will also play its part. If we do not control that speed, there will be chances of a crash landing. If any health parameter [of the lander module] is found abnormal on Aug. 23, then we will postpone the landing to Aug. 27....

“The landing begins at 06.04 p.m. IST (18:04 IST). Two hours before that, we will upload the commands. We will do an analysis of the telemetry signal and consider the conditions of the Moon. If any health parameter goes wrong, we will push it to Aug. 27 and will try to land [on that day] if all goes well.”