

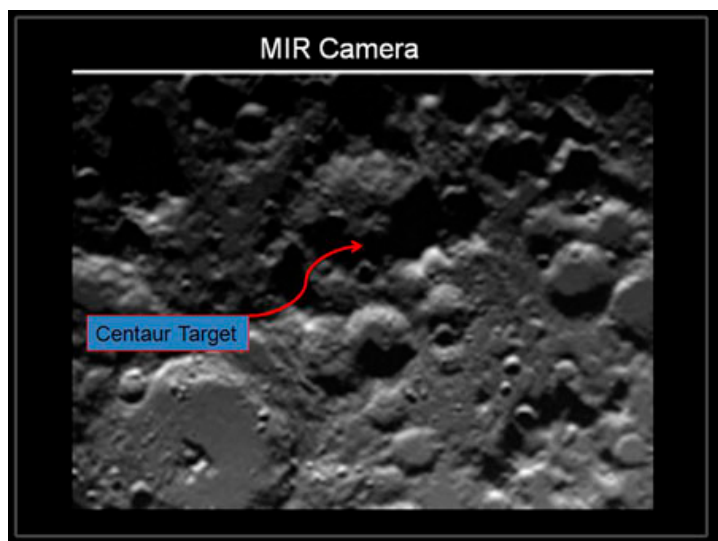
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NASA: Moon strike not total waste of time

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NASA's Lunar Crater Observation and Sensing Satellite (LCROSS) impact view is seen in this image released on October 9, 2009. Two U.S. spacecraft were crashed into a lunar crater Friday but scientists said it was too early to say whether the mission to search for supplies of water on the Moon had been a success. (Xinhua/Reuters Photo) [Photo Gallery>>>](#)

BEIJING, Oct. 19 (Xinhuanet) -- One week after the impact of the LCROSS probe, NASA scientists have finally found a debris plume created by the impact in the data, proving their moon strike worthwhile after all.

New images show a mile-high plume of lunar debris from the probe's target crater, named Cabeus, shortly after the space agency's Centaur rocket struck Oct. 9.

The debris plume was captured by the LCROSS ultraviolet/visible and near infra-red spectrometer. Its signature was faint, but distinct.

Before the impact, many observers told the media that they were disappointed because of the lack of spectacle. But scientists said the mission was carried out for "a scientific purpose, not to put on a fireworks display for the public."

Now that the plume was found, scientists hope that the analysis of it will show signs of water ice ejected from the Cabeus crater.

The magnitude, form, and visibility of the debris plume offer more information about the concentrations and state of the material at the impact site.

However, Michio Kaku, a professor at the City College of New York, said that beautiful pictures captured are not worth 79 million U.S. dollars. "To be a spectacular success, we had to find large quantities of underground ice."

The LCROSS team will continue combing through and examining the probe's data in the

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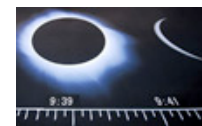
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