



## THE MOON – OUR NEIGHBOUR IN THE SKY

The Moon is 3,84,000 km away from the Earth. The Moon takes 27.3 days for one rotation about its own axis. It takes the same period of time for one revolution around the Earth. Hence the other side of the Moon is never visible to us.

The size and the mass of the Moon is  $\frac{1}{4}$ <sup>th</sup> and  $\frac{1}{81}$ <sup>th</sup> of the Earth respectively. The acceleration due to gravity on the Moon is  $\frac{1}{6}$ <sup>th</sup> of that on the Earth.

There are ridges, mountains, valleys and plateau on the Moon's surface similar to those on the Earth. On the Moon there are also craters due to the impact of meteors. There is no water and atmosphere. But recent studies have confirmed the chances for the presence of ice in the polar regions. If we are able to understand the origin and the evolution of the Moon, it will lead to many important findings about the evolution of the solar system. CHANDRAYAN - 1 is an important step in this direction.