

Minor Planet Centre

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Minor Planet Centre Latest News

Recently, the Minor Planet Centre (MPC) announced 15 new moons had been found, four around Jupiter and 11 around Saturn.

About Minor Planet Centre

- It is the world's **primary repository** for all observations of **small bodies in the solar system**.
- It is Located in **Cambridge, Massachusetts**
- It operates at the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory under the International Astronomical Union
- **Process**
 - When astronomers discover a new object, they send their data to the MPC, where experts verify the observations and calculate the object's orbit.
 - If the discovery is new, the **MPC assigns it an official designation**.

Functions of Minor Planet Centre

- It plays a vital role in **tracking asteroids, comets, and the moons of the outer planets**.
- One of the MPC's most critical jobs involves **monitoring near-earth objects** (NEOs).
- NEOs are space rocks that could potentially threaten the earth.
- MPC maintains a large database that allows scientists to predict if and when a rock might come close to the earth.
- The MPC also facilitates communication within the global scientific **community by publishing electronic circulars** that alert researchers to new discoveries or interesting celestial events.

Source: TH

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