St Theresa's pupil heads to India for space mission

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TIYANDZA Ndlovu has secured Eswatini a place in Mission ShakthiSat after emerging as the country's top-ranked participant following a three-month online space science programme.

The country is set to make its mark on the global space science stage as a Form V pupil from St Theresa's High School joins young women from 108 Commonwealth and partner countries for Mission ShakthiSat in India.

The mission, which runs from August 22 to 31, will expose Tiyandza to satellite integration and payload development, space diplomacy, women's leadership dialogues and cultural and technical exchanges with participants from across the world.



Tiyandza Ndlovu and Nokulindwa Dlamini jetting off to India for the landmark space mission. (Courtesy pic)

Tiyandza is accompanied by Nokulindwa Dlamini, an ICT officer and girls in STEM advocate, who is serving as Eswatini's Country Ambassador for the mission.

The programme is a collaboration between the ministry of information, communication and technology, the ministry of education and training, the High Commission of India in Mbabane and Space Kidz India.

The collaboration is expected to strengthen opportunities for young women in space science and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), while exposing them to emerging technologies and international networks.

Mission Director of Space Kidz India Dr Srimathy Kesan was also acknowledged for her leadership and commitment to creating opportunities for young women in space science and STEM.

Tiyandza's participation comes as the country advances its ambitions in space science and technology.

The country is developing its national space science policy, while preparations are being made for a domestic astronomical observatory and groundwork is being laid for a future space agency.

Against this background, Mission ShakthiSat provides an opportunity for Eswatini to develop the human capital required to support its emerging space ambitions.

The programme will also expose Tiyandza to fields, including artificial intelligence, robotics, big data and the wider digital economy.