INDIAN SPACE ASSOCIATION
Bhumandal Se Brahmaand Tak

JULY 2026

NEWSLETTER

INDIAN SPACE ASSOCIATION

AAGAMAN: THE ARRIVAL OF INDIA'S PRIVATE ORBITAL AGE

INDIAN SPACE ASSOCIATION
Bhumandal Se Brahmaand Tak

Welcome to **ISpA Newsletter**, a trusted conduit for illuminating the latest strategic endeavours, technological innovations and industry insights shaping the future of sustainable space exploration.

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MESSAGE FROM DG-ISpA

The month of July 2026 marked a defining moment for India's private space sector, with the country's private industry achieving a long-awaited milestone.

The defining achievement of the month was Skyroot Aerospace's Vikram-1, which became the first privately developed Indian rocket to reach orbit on its maiden flight, Mission Aagaman, launched from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota. The success made India only the third country, after the United States and China, with private orbital launch capability - a landmark that industry, government and media alike recognised as a defining moment for India's NewSpace journey. ISpA was privileged to see its member company achieve this feat, with Skyroot's co-founders subsequently featured on the cover of Fortune India's August 2026 issue as part of its 40 Under 40 list.

India's national space programme also continued to register progress. ISRO accomplished major qualification milestones for the Gaganyaan Crew Module systems, successfully conducted a flight acceptance test of the CE20 cryogenic engine for the upcoming LVM3 mission and carried out the fifth Integrated Main Parachute Airdrop Test (IMAT-05) for the crew module deceleration system. Scientific missions delivered valuable results as well, with Aditya-L1 offering new insights into photospheric iron fluorescence during solar flares and Chandrayaan-3's APXS data linking the Shiv Shakti Statio site to a known lunar meteorite composition.

On the policy and regulatory front, IN-SPACe has released new Norms, Guidelines and Procedures for the Authorisation of Planned Re-entry of Space Objects, providing much-needed regulatory clarity as India's reusable launch and post-mission disposal activities scale up. Major announcements including new Common Technical Facilities in Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, the release of Unified Space Standards and Dhruva Space's selection as the first investee under the ANTARIKSH Venture Capital Fund. Reliance Jio also received IN-SPACe approval for its proposed 1,600-satellite LEO network.

India's private space sector continued to demonstrate growing depth and maturity through the month. Agnikul Cosmos signed MoUs worth approximately $100 million with Finland's ICEYE and France's Safran at Bharat Innovates 2026 in Nice, with its Agnibaan rocket presented to President Emmanuel Macron. Astrome secured the iDEX PRIME contract to develop its Space Operations Training Simulator, SpaceFields received Andhra Pradesh Cabinet approval to establish a solid propellant manufacturing complex in Anantapur and SatSure won NABARD's National Climate Stack Innovation Challenge for its Climate Vulnerability Index. Several other member companies - including Cosmoserve Space, PierSight, CYRAN AI, ICEYE and BQP Technologies - advanced key technology demonstrations and secured new contracts, together reflecting the increasing innovation and global competitiveness of India's space enterprises. With private investment in the sector crossing $618 million and the start-up ecosystem now exceeding 450 ventures, the momentum is unmistakable.

ISpA remained actively engaged throughout the month - representing India at the Asia Leadership Summit 2026's APAC space collaboration panel, engaging with the Department of Youth Affairs under the MY Bharat initiative, hosting expert webinars on the SpaceX IPO and the geopolitics of Space and convening its 5th Annual General Meeting and National Advisory Committee meeting to chart the Association's priorities for the year ahead.

As we look forward, ISpA remains committed to supporting the policies, partnerships and initiatives that will strengthen India's space ecosystem and reinforce its position as a leading space-faring nation. The achievements captured in this edition are a testament to the collective efforts of all our stakeholders and we look forward to building further on this momentum in the months ahead.

Lt Gen A K Bhatt
PVSM UYSM AVSM SM VSM (Retd)
Director General,
Indian Space Association (ISpA)
(Former DGMO, MS & GOC 15 Corps)

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

- VIKRAM-1 REACHES ORBIT: SKYROOT BECOMES FIRST PRIVATE INDIAN COMPANY TO ACHIEVE ORBITAL LAUNCH
- ISRO ACHIEVES SUCCESSFUL ACCOMPLISHMENT OF MAJOR QUALIFICATION TESTS CREW MODULE SYSTEMS OF GAGANYAAN MISSION
- ISRO CONDUCTS GROUND TEST FOR NEW SUB-ORBITAL SOLID MOTOR-BASED TEST VEHICLE
- ISRO CONDUCTS FLIGHT ACCEPTANCE TEST OF CRYOGENIC ENGINE SUCCESSFULLY FOR NEXT LVM3 MISSION
- IN-SPACE RELEASES NORMS FOR AUTHORISATION OF PLANNER RE-ENTRY OF SPACE OBJECTS
- RELIANCE JIO GETS IN-SPACE APPROVAL FOR 1,600-SATELLITE LEO NETWORK
- DHRUVA SPACE BECOMES FIRST COMPANY TO RECEIVE INVESTMENT FROM ANTARIKSH VENTURE CAPITAL FUND

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

- AGNIKUL COSMOS SIGNS ~$100M MOUS WITH ICEYE AND SAFRAN AT BHARAT INNOVATES 2026, AGNIBAAN PRESENTED TO PRESIDENT MACRON
- INDIA'S PRIVATE SPACE STARTUP ECOSYSTEM CROSSES 450 VENTURES, PRIVATE INVESTMENT TOPS $618 MILLION
- PM MODI MEETS SKYROOT FOUNDERS TO DISCUSS INDIA'S FUTURE SPACE PLANS
- AIRBUS SELECTED BY ESA TO BUILD AEOLUS-2 WEATHER SATELLITE
- CHINA BECOMES SECOND COUNTRY TO RECOVER AN ORBITAL ROCKET BOOSTER WITH LONG MARCH 10B
- ICEYE LAUNCHES FOUR NEW SAR SATELLITES, EXPANDING GLOBAL CONSTELLATION

MEMBERS BULLETIN

AGNIKUL COSMOS

Agnikul Cosmos showcased its reusable rocket technology at Bharat Innovates 2026 in Nice, France, as the only Indian launch vehicle builder present at the event, with its Agnibaan rocket presented to French President Emmanuel Macron in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. At the event, Agnikul signed MoUs with Finland's ICEYE and France's Safran, together valued at approximately $100 million.

The ICEYE partnership will explore building, launching and operating Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) earth observation systems from India, combining Agnikul's responsive launch capabilities with ICEYE's SAR satellite technology, already used by seven European governments.

Agnikul also announced Mission-02, targeting India's first-ever orbital-class booster recovery, with plans to repurpose the upper stage as an in-orbit platform.

ASTROME

Astrome has been awarded the prestigious iDEX PRIME contract by iDEX-DIO to develop Paribhrama, an advanced Space Operations Training Simulator (SOTS), for India's Defence Space Agency. As space becomes both a critical national security domain and a bustling commercial frontier, Paribhrama is designed to provide a high-fidelity, virtual environment to safely simulate, visualise and prepare for a wide spectrum of orbital contingencies.

Built as a dual-use platform, the simulator is intended to serve both defence and commercial applications. For commercial constellation operators navigating an increasingly crowded orbit, it functions as an advanced operational twin - allowing teams to track satellite health, predict collisions, optimise trajectories and manage entire fleet deployments. The award marks a significant step forward in strengthening India's space capabilities under the Make in India initiative.

MEMBERS BULLETIN

BQP TECHNOLOGIES

BosonQ Psi Federal LLC (BQP) has secured its first federal contract, awarded through SpaceWERX's SBIR program, to develop a Physics-Constrained Quantum-Assisted Machine Learning (PC-QAML) application for identifying unknown objects in an increasingly congested orbital environment.

Built on BQP's BQPhy® platform, the technology runs AI inference directly on space-qualified processors rather than relying on cloud computing or GPUs, reducing model size by 99% while maintaining over 99% classification accuracy, alongside lower latency and power consumption - enabling autonomous space domain awareness at the tactical edge and supporting mission objectives for Space Operations Command and Space Systems Command.

COSMOSERVE

Hyderabad-based Cosmoserve Space completed its first in-orbit demonstration, Mission Embrace, aboard Skyroot Aerospace's Vikram-1 rocket, marking the first-ever test of soft robotic petals in space for debris capture.

Telemetry and video data confirmed that the actuation system, control electronics, software and algorithms, communication system, power system and structural elements all performed as expected. The capture petals themselves did not open in orbit, while the hold-down and release mechanism's performance remains unconfirmed - both areas now under analysis to inform Version 2 hardware.

While the full capture demonstration wasn't achieved, the flight test itself was a clear success, generating valuable in-orbit engineering data that puts Cosmoserve a step closer to an affordable, scalable debris removal solution.

MEMBERS BULLETIN

CYRAN AI SOLUTIONS

CYRAN AI successfully demonstrated its multi-sensor Edge AI compute capabilities aboard an indigenously developed tactical aerostat surveillance system, in a trial hosted by IIT Delhi with the DRDO-supported aerostat platform commercialised by GB Texcoat Solutions.

Rather than transmitting raw video to ground stations, CYRAN ran inferencing directly in-flight on its Edge AI hardware, analysing imagery in real time - reducing latency and bandwidth needs while ensuring only actionable intelligence reaches the ground. The demonstration, supported by DRDO's Industry Academia-Centre of Excellence and IIT Delhi, reflects the strength of academia-industry collaboration in advancing indigenous AI-enabled surveillance technology.

DHRUVA SPACE

Dhruva Space has become the first private company to receive investment from the Antariksh Venture Capital Fund (AVCF), with an INR 60 crore investment announced at the 10th IN-SPACe Industry Connect event. The landmark achievement reflects the growing strength of India's NewSpace ecosystem and marks an important step towards accelerating innovation, entrepreneurship and indigenous space capabilities.

The investment, backed by the Government of India, IN-SPACe and SIDBI Venture Capital Limited, underscores the continued momentum behind India's NewSpace sector and its growing capacity to build world-class space capabilities from India, for the world.

Alternately, Dhruva Space and Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) have signed an MoU to co-develop the ASCENT Centre of Excellence at the MAHE campus in Manipal, expected to be inaugurated in late 2026, combining academic research with industry-grade space engineering infrastructure.

MEMBERS BULLETIN

ICEYE

ICEYE successfully launched four new satellites on July 7 aboard SpaceX's Transporter-17 rideshare mission, integrated via Exolaunch. All four satellites separated cleanly from the Falcon 9 rocket, with communication established shortly after as early orbit operations got underway.

The launch adds a new Gen4 satellite to ICEYE's global fleet and delivers dedicated satellites for ICEYE US and the Finnish Defence Forces, strengthening both its commercial constellation and sovereign mission capabilities. ICEYE has now launched 76 satellites in total, with production on track to double from 50 satellites annually today to 100 per year by 2027.

ICEYE-built constellations are offered as a fully sovereign capability, free from ITAR restrictions and can be deployed and made operational within 12 months - complete with ground segment, training and continuous software updates.

PIERSIGHT

PierSight Space's Payload Controller card has successfully passed its vibration test, meeting Qualification Model standards in line with SpaceX Falcon launch guidelines. The subsystem was tested across a 20-2000Hz frequency range at roughly four times actual launch-vibration intensity, sustained for 120 seconds to simulate the launch environment. Post-test evaluation found no cracked solders, bent pins, or broken chips, with the system booting up and all connections and interfaces functioning without error.

Separately, the reflectarray antenna deployment mechanism for PierSight's first commercial satellite, Varuna 2.0, completed its third consecutive successful deployment cycle on the ground. Unlike conventional single-plane satellite antennas, PierSight's design deploys across multiple planes - a significantly more complex sequence. Using gravity-compensation fixtures to simulate microgravity conditions, the mechanism deployed flawlessly across all three cycles, marking another validated step toward Varuna 2.0's readiness.

MEMBERS BULLETIN

SATSURE

SatSure has won NABARD's National Climate Stack Innovation Challenge, run in partnership with the Gates Foundation and Dalberg Advisors, for its Climate Vulnerability Index (CVI) innovation. The winning submission was built by Pranjal Prateek, Gurulingappa S B and Vishnuvardhan R.

SatSure's CVI is a first-of-its-kind AI-native Climate Risk Score product that delivers village-level risk assessments covering all of India's major climate hazards. Designed as a real-time, objective decision-intelligence tool, it combines interoperable data streams, localised hazard modelling and decision-ready dashboards to help industries and institutions make climate-resilient, proactive decisions - turning satellite data and AI into climate intelligence that reaches lending desks, insurers and farms directly, rather than sitting in a report.

PIXXEL

Pixxel, the US–India space technology company behind the world's highest-resolution hyperspectral satellite constellation, has announced a strategic partnership with geospatial analytics firm 4EI to accelerate the use of hyperspectral data in environmental research and monitoring.

The initial focus is habitat mapping and ecosystem health tracking. Where conventional RGB and multispectral sensors capture a handful of broad bands, hyperspectral imaging resolves hundreds of narrow, contiguous bands — allowing detection of chlorophyll shifts, vegetation stress, water quality changes and species-level classification that standard imagery misses. Longer term, 4EI plans to extend the work into methane detection, where spectral fidelity supports more accurate localisation and quantification of emissions.

The R&D will draw on Pixxel's Firefly constellation, which delivers 5-metre resolution across 135+ spectral bands with global daily revisit.

MEMBERS BULLETIN

SKYROOT AEROSPACE

Skyroot Aerospace achieved a major milestone on 18 July 2026, Mission Aagaman. - Vikram-1 reaches orbit first-ever private orbital launch from India. Mission "Aagaman" lifted off from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota at 12:05 PM IST (after a 35-minute hold), reaching a 450km orbit at 60° inclination ~15 minutes after liftoff. Makes Skyroot the first private Indian company to reach orbit and India the third country (after the US and China) with private orbital launch capability.
Following this achievement, Skyroot co-founders Naga Bharath Daka and Pawan Kumar Chandana feature on the cover of Fortune India's August 2026 issue, part of the magazine's 40 Under 40 list recognising entrepreneurs, innovators and business leaders shaping India's future as representatives of a new generation of entrepreneurs taking Indian innovation to new frontiers.

SPACEFIELDS

The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet has approved SpaceFields' proposal to establish an integrated solid propellant manufacturing complex in Anantapur andhra Pradesh - an important step in strengthening India's indigenous propulsion and space manufacturing capabilities under the Make in India initiative.
Anantapur was selected after evaluating industrial clusters across the country, with strong support from Andhra Pradesh's senior leadership helping steer the proposal to Cabinet approval. SpaceFields becomes the first non-legacy company to enter solid propulsion manufacturing at this scale - a domain traditionally led by large established players - building on its earlier milestone as the first Indian start-up to deliver rocket motors to the Indian armed forces.

MEMBERS BULLETIN

VYOMIC

Vyomic has moved into a new 30,000 sq. ft. facility, marking significant growth in under a year of operations. The expansion comes as the company builds toward developing India's first sovereign navigation system - designed to be far more capable than conventional GPS.

With this milestone, Vyomic continues to build out its team, inviting driven talent from India and around the world to join its mission of building navigation systems that nations can depend on.

MEMBERS BULLETIN

ISpA ACTIVITIES

5TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

ISpA successfully convened its **5th Annual General Meeting (AGM)**, bringing together its members to review the Association's progress, discuss key developments and chart the roadmap for the continued growth of India's space ecosystem. The meeting provided an opportunity to reflect on ISpA's achievements over the past year, deliberate on strategic priorities and reaffirm the collective commitment towards strengthening India's commercial space sector through collaboration, innovation and policy advocacy.

Key highlights of the AGM included the presentation of **ISpA's Annual Report**, showcasing the **Association's key initiatives, activities and achievements over the past year, along with a review of ISpA's accomplishments and the significant milestones achieved by its Member Companies** across various segments of the space sector. Members also deliberated on strategic priorities and the roadmap for advancing India's commercial space ecosystem through collaboration, innovation and policy advocacy.

ISpA welcomed **Skyroot Aerospace** and **Digantara** as its newly **elected Startup Member** representatives to the E**xecutive Council (EC) for the upcoming year, 2026-2027.**

ISpA remains committed to working closely with its members, government and stakeholders to enable a vibrant, globally competitive and innovation-driven space ecosystem, contributing to India's vision of becoming a leading global space power.

ISpA ACTIVITIES

NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL (NAC) MEETING

The ISpA- Indian Space Association successfully convened its National Advisory Council (NAC) Meeting, bringing together distinguished leaders and experts from across the space ecosystem to deliberate on key priorities shaping the future of India's space sector.

Opening remarks reflected on Skyroot Aerospace's successful orbital launch on July 18, 2026, as a landmark moment for India's private space sector, alongside India's ambition to grow its share of the global space economy - projected to expand from USD 8.4 billion in 2022 to USD 44 billion by 2033.

Discussions spanned a wide range of priority areas shaping India's space ecosystem, including progress on IN-SPACe authorisations and funding mechanisms, launch vehicle technology transfer, satellite communications and spectrum allocation, the strategic importance of NavIC, launch infrastructure capacity and avenues to strengthen venture capital participation in the sector. Members also reviewed ISpA's recent activities, including industry dialogues, capability workshops and publications since the last NAC meeting.

The Committee reaffirmed its commitment to advancing key policy recommendations through sustained engagement with government stakeholders, with several position papers to be taken forward. Members also looked ahead to ISpA's flagship event, the India International Space Conclave (IISC) 2026, scheduled for November 23-24, as a platform to advance the sector's key priorities.



ISpA ACTIVITIES

ISpA DG REPRESENTS INDIA AT ASIA LEADERSHIP SUMMIT 2026, ADVANCES APAC SPACE ECOSYSTEM DIALOGUE

ISpA Director General Lt Gen Anil Kumar Bhatt (Retd) joined an exclusive cohort of executives, entrepreneurs and investors from Japan and across Asia at the **Asia Leadership Summit 2026** in Bangalore, for a critical panel discussion on "APAC Space Collaboration – Building the Ecosystem."

The session explored the strategic roadmap for building a resilient regional space economy, anchored around four key pillars: Geopolitical Positioning, Regional Synergies, Supply Chain Resilience and Shared Infrastructure. Lt Gen Bhatt shared insights on strategic geopolitical positioning, highlighting how APAC nations can collectively navigate the shifting global landscape to establish themselves as vital, reliable space hubs.

ISpA served as the Ecosystem Partner for the summit, playing a key role in deepening strategic collaboration between Japan and India in the space domain. Realising the full potential of the space frontier calls for deep, trusted cross-border partnerships - and ISpA remains committed to driving these regional collaborations forward.

ISpA ACTIVITIES

Fostering Bilateral Synergy & Spacetech Investment: ISpA at Asia Leaders' Summit 2026

The Asia Leaders' Summit 2026, held in Bengaluru from July 2–3 and hosted by Incubate Fund Asia, marked a monumental milestone for cross-border collaboration.
As the proud *Ecosystem Partner* for this prestigious event, the Indian Space Association (ISpA) successfully steered key bilateral cooperation efforts to advance the region's rapidly growing space economy.

Key Highlights from the Summit:
• High-Level Leadership Engagement: ISpA's Director General, Lt Gen Anil Kumar Bhatt (Retd.), joined an exclusive cohort of executives, entrepreneurs, and investors from Japan and across Asia for a critical plenary session titled "APAC Space Collaboration – Building the Ecosystem." The discussion focused on actionable strategies to accelerate regional integration, drive tech co-development, and build robust long-term partnerships.

• Showcasing Atmanirbhar Bharat on the Global Stage: Esteemed ISpA member companies proudly spearheaded India's commercial space vision. Industry trailblazers from Bellatrix Aerospace, Digantara, Pixxel, Skyroot Aerospace, GalaxEye, and AgniKul Cosmos took centre stage to showcase groundbreaking innovations and reinforce India's position as a global powerhouse of commercial space technology.
• Unlocking Investment & Growth: The summit served as a high-impact catalyst, opening critical new avenues for international venture investment, cross-border business synergies, and strategic technology transfer between India, Japan, and the wider APAC region.

ISpA remains deeply committed to championing our members globally and bridging the gap between visionary enterprises and international capital.


ISpA ACTIVITIES

National Day of France

ISpA was honoured to have represented at the French National Day (Bastille Day) celebrations on 14th July in New Delhi, hosted by H.E. Thierry Mathou, Ambassador of France to India. With 2026 marking the France-India Year of Innovation, the event highlighted expanding bilateral cooperation across industries, with space playing a pivotal role in strengthening Indo-French strategic synergy.

ISpA ACTIVITIES

ISpA PARTICIPATES IN INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION CONCLAVE WITH DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS UNDER MY BHARAT INITIATIVE

ISpA participated in the Industry Association Conclave with the Department of Youth Affairs, held on July 3, 2026. Organised by the Department of Youth Affairs, Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of India, under the MY Bharat (Mera Yuva Bharat) initiative, the Conclave brought together representatives from Government, industry associations, corporates and development partners to foster collaboration in advancing youth development and nation-building.

ISpA was represented at the Conclave by Director General Lt Gen Anil Kumar Bhatt (Retd) and Director Gp Capt TH Anand Rao (Retd). During the session, Gp Capt Rao presented the vast and emerging opportunities for India's youth in the rapidly growing space sector, highlighting ISpA's initiatives in outreach, skilling, industry-academia engagement and capacity building - aimed at preparing young talent for careers across the space ecosystem.

ISpA looks forward to collaborating with MY Bharat and other stakeholders to create greater awareness, expand access to skilling opportunities and inspire the next generation to contribute to India's growing space economy.

ISpA ACTIVITIES

ISpA HOSTS EXPERT WEBINAR ON DECODING THE SPACEX IPO: VALUATION, ASSETS & FINANCIAL INSIGHTS

ISpA hosted an engaging webinar unpacking one of the most anticipated milestones in the global commercial space sector - the potential SpaceX IPO. Held on July 10, 2026, the expert-led session explored SpaceX's valuation methodology, business fundamentals, asset portfolio and financial outlook, while examining what this landmark event could mean for the future of the space economy, capital markets and investor participation.

Discussions covered the IPO structure and listing landscape, valuation methodology and market expectations, SpaceX's assets and business model, its launch services, Starlink and satellite infrastructure, software-driven platforms and future growth opportunities, along with financial, policy and capital market perspectives.

The session featured insights from Akshat Johri (AGM, IIFCL Projects Ltd), Rajat Kumar Singh (AGM, IIFCL Projects Ltd) and Deepika Arora (DGM, IIFCL Projects Ltd), who offered a closely watched, expert perspective on the financial and strategic dimensions of one of the most significant developments in the global space industry.

Watch it back: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ga_T7lxF4Qs&t=4502s

ISpA ACTIVITIES

ISpA PARTNERS WITH TAKSHASHILA INSTITUTION FOR EXPERT CAPSULE COURSE – SPACE POWER (COHORT 4)

Space is no longer just a frontier for exploration-it is a strategic domain shaping national security, economic growth, technological innovation and global governance. ISpA has partnered with The Takshashila Institution to bring you the Expert Capsule Course – Space Power (Cohort 4), a comprehensive programme offering deep insight into India's evolving space ecosystem, covering India's space reforms, the rise of the private space sector, governance under the Outer Space Treaty, the megaconstellation revolution and the military space strategies of India and China.

Designed for professionals, policymakers, researchers, industry stakeholders, students, members of the armed forces, legal professionals and anyone with a serious interest in the space domain, the course requires no prior technical background.

Programme Details

- Duration: 4 weeks (Fully Online), 1–29 August 2026
- Curriculum: 8 Core Modules + 4 Practitioner Sessions
- Schedule: Saturday webinars with an optional Wednesday session
- Time Commitment: ~5 hours per week
- Award: Certificate of Achievement
- Partner: ISpA – Indian Space Association
- Programme Fee: ₹12,000 + GST
- Scholarship Fee (Serving Members of the Armed Forces): ₹10,000

Seats are still open - whether you're looking to deepen your understanding of space strategy, policy, governance, or the commercial space sector, this programme offers valuable insights from leading scholars, strategists and practitioners at the forefront of India's space ecosystem.

Apply here: https://lnkd.in/gBD67mnE

ISpA ACTIVITIES

ISpA DG GRACES IIIT KOTA'S 5TH CONVOCATION CEREMONY 2026 AS GUEST OF HONOUR

It was an honour for ISpA to be part of the 5th Convocation Ceremony of IIIT Kota, celebrating the academic achievements of the graduating batch. The ceremony was graced by the Hon'ble Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Shri Om Birla, who attended as Chief Guest.

Lt Gen Anil Kumar Bhatt (Retd), Director General, ISpA, participated in his capacity as Chairman of IIIT Kota, joining the Chief Guest as Guest of Honour to recognise the brilliance of the graduating class.

As IIIT Kota continues to serve as a dynamic centre of excellence in technical education, research and innovation, it plays a vital role in strengthening India's technological and space ecosystem. ISpA extends its warmest congratulations to the graduating students and the entire IIIT Kota team, wishing them continued success as they embark on their professional journeys.

ISpA ACTIVITIES

ISpA HOSTS EXCLUSIVE WEBINAR ON THE EVOLVING ROLE OF SPACE IN THE GEOPOLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

ISpA hosted an exclusive webinar exploring the evolving intersection of geopolitics and the global space economy. Held on July 24, 2026, the session examined how changing global alignments are influencing the aerospace industry, creating new commercial opportunities and redefining the global space supply chain.

Discussions covered the evolving geopolitical landscape and its impact on the space sector, emerging opportunities in the global space economy, supply chain resilience and strategic partnerships, risk mitigation in an increasingly complex environment and the role of Indian industry in the next phase of space growth.

The session featured Lt Gen A. K. Bhatt (Retd.), Director General, ISpA, alongside Kevin Kelly and Morris Reid, both Partners at ACTUM LLC, who offered an engaging discussion on the evolving role of space in shaping global geopolitics and the future of the commercial space ecosystem.

Watch it back: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=btuBqh3q2Q8

ISpA ACTIVITIES

ISpA MEETS UNION MINISTER RAKSHA NIKHIL KHADSE TO ENGAGE YOUTH IN INDIA'S SPACE ECOSYSTEM

India's space ambitions will be powered by its youth. ISpA had the honour of meeting Hon'ble Minister of State for Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of India, Smt. Raksha Nikhil Khadse, to explore avenues for engaging young Indians in the country's rapidly expanding space ecosystem.

Representing ISpA, Lt Gen Anil Kumar Bhatt (Retd), Director General and Gp Capt T H Anand Rao (Retd), Director, discussed collaborative initiatives under MY Bharat to create a vibrant pipeline of future-ready talent for the space sector. Key areas of discussion included expanding Experiential Learning Programmes (ELPs) for hands-on exposure to the space ecosystem, conducting awareness programmes in schools and colleges to nurture curiosity and innovation and organising expert talks, mentoring sessions and outreach programmes to inspire the next generation of scientists, engineers, entrepreneurs and innovators.

As India moves towards becoming a global space powerhouse, developing a skilled and motivated talent pool is essential. By bringing together the Government, MY Bharat, academia and industry, young people can be given meaningful exposure to cutting-edge technologies and exciting career opportunities in the space domain.

ISpA looks forward to partnering with the Department of Youth Affairs, MY Bharat, industry stakeholders and educational institutions to transform this shared vision into impactful national initiatives. The future of India's space journey lies in empowering its youth today.

ISpA ACTIVITIES

ISpA DG PARTICIPATES AS PANELIST AT SPACE POLICY CONFERENCE 2026, ORGANISED BY IAFI

ISpA participated as a supporting partner in the Space Policy Conference 2026, organised by the ITU-APT Foundation of India (IAFI), on July 22, 2026.

Lt Gen Anil Kumar Bhatt (Retd), Director General, ISpA, was a panelist during the session "From Policy to Implementation – Is India's Space Framework Delivering?" He shared insights on India's evolving space policy framework, the progress of recent space sector reforms and the importance of continued collaboration between government and industry to accelerate innovation and strengthen the nation's space ecosystem.

The session fostered insightful discussions on translating policy into implementation, strengthening regulatory frameworks, enhancing spectrum and market access and unlocking new opportunities for India's rapidly growing space sector.

ISpA remains committed to fostering meaningful policy dialogue, strengthening industry collaboration and supporting the continued growth of India's vibrant space ecosystem.

ISpA ACTIVITIES

ISpA PARTICIPATES IN VIASAT ROUNDTABLE ON "SATCOM: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN INDIA"

ISpA participated in Viasat's high-level roundtable discussion on "SATCOM: Opportunities and Challenges in India," held on July 23, 2026. The roundtable convened senior policymakers, regulators and industry leaders to deliberate on India's evolving satellite communications landscape, with discussions focused on the policy and regulatory framework, spectrum management, infrastructure development, investment, affordability and market adoption - underscoring the importance of sustained public-private collaboration in unlocking the full potential of SATCOM and advancing India's digital and space ambitions.

Representing ISpA, Lt Gen Anil Kumar Bhatt (Retd), Director General, shared his perspectives on India's evolving SATCOM landscape. He highlighted that India's greatest advantage lies in its scale, while the convergence of lower launch costs and satellite miniaturisation is making satellite communications more accessible and enabling it to complement terrestrial networks.

He also emphasised the growing role of India's private space ecosystem, noting that startups such as Skyroot Aerospace are strengthening indigenous capabilities and driving innovation - further reinforcing India's emergence as a global space power.

ISpA ACTIVITIES

NATIONAL DAY OF FRANCE

ISpA was honoured to have represented at the French National Day (Bastille Day) celebrations on 14th July in New Delhi, hosted by H.E. Thierry Mathou, Ambassador of France to India. With 2026 marking the France-India Year of Innovation, the event highlighted expanding bilateral cooperation across industries, with space playing a pivotal role in strengthening Indo-French strategic synergy.

ISpA ACTIVITIES

IRON FLUORESCENCE ON THE SUN DURING MASSIVE SOLAR FLARES: ADITYA-L1 OBSERVATION | JULY 03, 2026

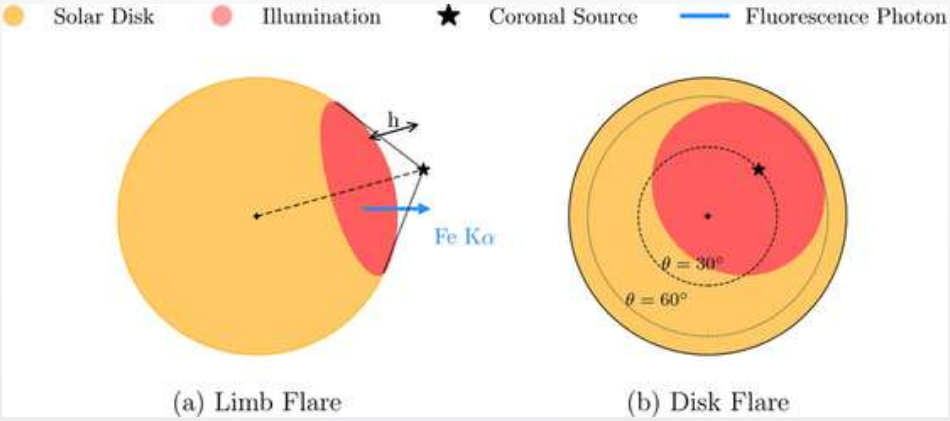
India's maiden space-based solar observatory, Aditya-L1, continues to help us understand the mysteries of our nearest star. During its first year at the Lagrangian point 1 (L1) in 2024, the Sun was exceptionally active, producing numerous intense solar flare events. Aditya-L1's observations from this special vantage point present the first comprehensive analysis of a fascinating solar phenomenon: photospheric iron fluorescence, observed during 47 massive X-class solar flares in 2024.

What is Iron Fluorescence?
When a massive solar flare erupts, it heats the Sun's corona to extreme temperatures, releasing a burst of high-energy X-rays. While most travel outward into space, a fraction travel downward, striking the Sun's cooler, denser photosphere, where they interact with neutral iron atoms. These atoms absorb the energy and emit their own characteristic X-ray glow at 6.40 keV - a process called "X-ray fluorescence."

The Solar Low Energy X-ray Spectrometer (SoLEXS) aboard Aditya-L1, indigenously developed at ISRO's U. R. Rao Satellite Centre (URSC), is suited to detect both flare X-rays and this photospheric iron fluorescence from strong flares.

Understanding Solar Flare Geometry
The study found that the brightness of the iron fluorescence depends heavily on where the flare occurs on the Sun's disk. Flares near the center of the disk showed strong fluorescence, while the signal was heavily suppressed near the limb (edge).

This "center-to-limb" variation matches theoretical models and researchers can now use iron fluorescence as a diagnostic tool to probe the altitude of coronal X-ray sources and study the viewing geometries of these explosive events.



CHANDRAYAAN-3'S ALPHA PARTICLE X-RAY SPECTROMETER MEASUREMENTS CONNECT THE COMPOSITION AT SHIV SHAKTI STATIO TO THE FIRST LUNAR METEORITE ALHA 81005 | JULY 03, 2026

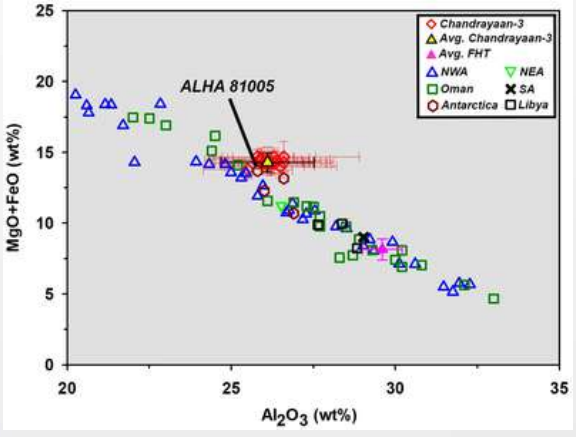
After the successful soft-landing of Chandrayaan-3 on 23 August 2023, the Alpha Particle X-ray Spectrometer (APXS) onboard the Pragyan rover measured the elemental composition at Shiv Shakti Statio (69.37° S, 32.32° E), in the Moon's southern high-latitudes on the nearside.

Scientists from the Physical Research Laboratory (PRL), Ahmedabad, carried out a geochemical analysis of the APXS data and found that Shiv Shakti Statio's composition closely resembles ALHA 81005, a meteorite discovered in Antarctica's Allan Hills region in 1981–82 - notable as the first meteorite ever classified as lunar in origin.

The soil at Shiv Shakti Statio is homogenous, with lower aluminium and higher iron and magnesium abundances than typical lunar highland regions and a higher olivine/pyroxene ratio than the Feldspathic Highland Terrain (FHT):

Oxide	Unit	Mean abundance of Shiv Shakti	Mean abundance of FHT	Mean abundance of ALHA 81005
Al_2O_3	wt%	26.1	29.6	25.8
FeO+MgO	wt%	14.4	8.15	13.7
Mg#	mol%	70	65.5	73

Comparing Chandrayaan-3 data with 66 lunar meteorites, ALHA 81005 emerged as the closest match. Both occupy a rare compositional space between ferroan anorthosites (FAN) and Mg-suite rocks, with similar Al_2O_3 and FeO+MgO levels - indicating both represent a similar type of magnesium-rich lunar crust, not that the meteorite originated at this specific site.



The soil appears to be a mix of upper-crust material and magnesium-rich fragments from deeper layers - possibly excavated during the formation of the nearby South Pole-Aitken (SPA) basin (~350 km away). These findings support the Lunar Magma Ocean (LMO) hypothesis and confirm primitive mantle-related materials at the site.

ISRO INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION

ISRO CONDUCTS GROUND TEST FOR NEW SUB-ORBITAL SOLID MOTOR-BASED TEST VEHICLE | JULY 04, 2026

ISRO is developing a solid motor based Sub-Orbital Launch Vehicle for Experiments (SOLVE) as a test platform to carry out Integrated Parachute Tests for validation of deceleration system of Gaganyaan Crew Module under various test conditions. During these test missions, the Crew Module will be carried to an altitude of 10 - 17 km and separated from the vehicle. A series of 10 parachutes will be deployed to reduce the velocity of the Crew Module before splashdown in the sea.

The solid stage of SOLVE is derived from the PSLV Strap-on Motor with few modifications to meet the Gaganyaan test requirements including development of slow burn rate propellant and straight nozzle with secondary injection thrust vector control.

The first ground test of the SOLVE solid motor was carried out successfully at the Static Test Facility, Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota. The test was successfully conducted on 03-07-2026 at 10:00hrs and the motor performance parameters are as expected. The development of SOLVE vehicle provides flexibility in conducting Gaganyaan Test Missions simulating various conditions in the actual mission.

Photographic view during the Static Test of SOLVE-ST01

ISRO CONDUCTS FLIGHT ACCEPTANCE TEST OF CRYOGENIC ENGINE SUCCESSFULLY FOR NEXT LVM3 MISSION | JULY 07, 2026

The upper stage of LVM3 launch vehicle is powered by indigenously developed CE20 cryogenic engine. The engine is also qualified to operate at thrust levels ranging from 19 to 22 tonne and the engine performed successfully in 8 successive LVM3 missions including Chandrayaan-2, Chandrayaan-3 and three commercial missions. Human-rating qualification requirements were also accomplished on this engine for inducting in Gaganyaan missions

In order to enable testing of CE20 engine with nozzle of full area ratio 100 under sea-level conditions, the Nozzle Protection System (NPS) was developed and validated on a qualification engine with multiple tests. Implementation of NPS simplifies complex activities associated with testing under High Altitude Test (HAT) conditions; requires less resources and enables enhancement of test duration.

Flight acceptance hot test of CE20 engine earmarked for LVM3-M7 mission is successfully carried out with a thrust level of 22 t using NPS for the first time at Main Engine & stage Test facility (MET) at ISRO Propulsion Complex, Mahendragiri on 06th July 2026. During this test, the engine was operated with a thrust level of 19.5 t for 45 s duration & 22 t for a duration of 25 s.

Test results confirm the satisfactory performance of the engine systems & NPS. The engine will be further refurbished and assembled to the C32 flight stage being integrated for the LVM3-M7 vehicle.

Photograph of E18 Engine Flight Acceptance Hot Test

ISRO INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION

ISRO SUCCESSFULLY CONDUCTS INTEGRATED MAIN PARACHUTE AIR DROP TEST (IMAT) FOR GAGANYAAN PROGRAMME | JULY 08, 2026

ndian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully conducted a critical Integrated Main parachute Airdrop Test (IMAT) for the Gaganyaan Missions on July 07, 2026 at the Aerial Delivery Research and Development Establishment (ADRDE) drop zone in Sheopur, Madhya Pradesh.

The deceleration system of Gaganyaan Crew Module comprises of a total of 10 parachutes of 4 types. The descent sequence begins with two Apex Cover Separation parachutes that remove the protective cover of the parachute compartment, followed by two Drogue Parachutes that stabilize and decelerate the module. Upon release of the drogues, three Pilot Parachutes are deployed to extract three Main Parachutes, which further slows down the Crew Module to ensure a safe splashdown in the sea.

The objective of this test was to qualify the Main Parachute for its structural integrity & design margins under the maximum expected load conditions in the first uncrewed Gaganyaan G1 mission. A simulated assembly of single main parachute and a dummy mass was dropped from an altitude of 2.5 km using an Indian Air Force IL-76 aircraft. The complex descent sequence began with an extractor parachute that deployed a Drogue parachute to stabilize oscillations. Upon achieving the requisite conditions, the main parachute was deployed which slowed the payload to a safe terminal speed.

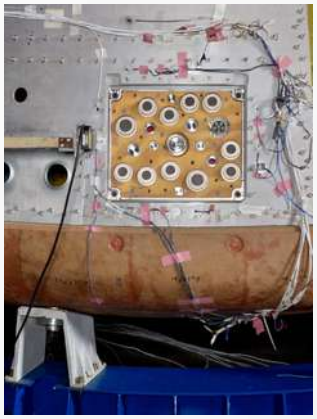
This is the 5th test in a series of Integrated Main parachute Airdrop Tests (IMAT) to qualify the critical Main Parachute for the Gaganyaan Mission. The successful completion of IMAT-05 provides necessary confidence in the performance and reliability of the Main Parachute System for the first Uncrewed Gaganyaan Mission (G1).
This successful test is a joint effort of ISRO, DRDO, Indian Air Force and Indian Army.

ISRO INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION

SUCCESSFUL ACCOMPLISHMENT OF MAJOR QUALIFICATION TESTS CREW MODULE SYSTEMS OF GAGANYAAN MISSION | JULY 12, 2026

ISRO has successfully accomplished three major qualification tests for Crew Module (CM) systems of the Gaganyaan mission: the Float Inflation Test for the Crew Module Up-righting System (CMUS), umbilical separation testing of the Crew Module Service Module Connect & Disconnect System (CSCDS) and the Crew Module Structure qualification test for Apex Cover separation loads.

1. Float Inflation Test of Crew Module Up-righting System (CMUS)
Ensuring the Crew Module remains upright after splashdown is a key crew safety requirement, met by a stored cold gas-based up-righting system. A system-level qualification setup with all CMUS elements successfully demonstrated inflation of the primary floatation module - stored gas from a high-pressure bottle inflated the floats via control valves. The test confirmed the module met functional and performance requirements, including inflation time, across the full range of operating gas pressures.



2. Umbilical Separation Testing of Crew Module Service Module Connect Disconnect System (CSCDS)
CS-CDS serves as the electrical and hydro-pneumatic umbilical link between the Crew Module (CM) and Service Module (SM), carrying both electrical communication and ECLSS fluid transfer. It comprises two umbilicals - CSU-1 and CSU-2 - on the SM and CM sides respectively. After SM separates from CM at CSU-1, CSU-2 separates from the CM side before re-entry.
The separation test of CSU-2 from a simulated Crew Module demonstrated clean separation, structural stability of the CM panel and interfaces and validated the system's design margins.

3. Crew Module Structural Qualification Test for Apex Cover Separation Loads
The apex cover protects the Crew Module's parachutes and related subsystems, separating pyrotechnically at a set altitude before parachute deployment. To validate structural integrity during this event, an instrumented test rig with a simulated crew module was subjected to loads roughly 1.75 times the estimated reaction forces at key locations. Strain and deformation measurements confirmed the design margins and validated the CM's structural integrity for apex cover separation during flight.

ISRO INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION

SPECIAL YUVIKA PROGRAMME FOR OMAN STUDENTS | JULY 15, 2026

YUva VIjyani KArayakram (YUVIKA) programme was conceived to impart basic knowledge on Space Technology, Space Science and Space Applications to young students. The Hon'ble Prime Minister, during his visit to Oman on 18th December, 2025, announced the organization of the YUVIKA programme for Omani students. Accordingly, ISRO planned one week residential programme at SDSC SHAR, Sriharikota and processed the same through MEA. In follow up the Ministry of Education, Sultanate of Oman, has nominated eight students and two observers from Omani schools to participate in the programme.

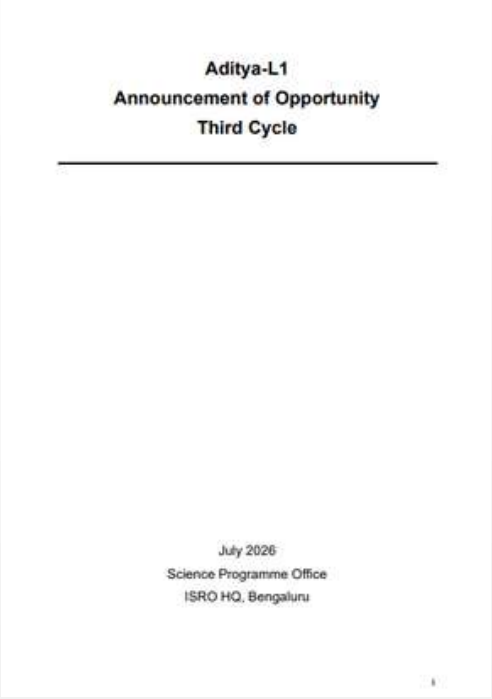
The programme was inaugurated on 13th July, 2026 by Shri S Muthuchezian, Director, SDSC SHAR. The programme includes classroom training, practical demonstrations of experiments, hands-on experience with robotic kits, model rocketry, field visits and Interaction with ISRO scientists.

ISRO INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION

ADITYA-L1 MISSION: ANNOUNCEMENT OF OPPORTUNITY (AO) SOLICITING PROPOSALS FOR THE THIRD AO CYCLE OBSERVATIONS | JULY 16, 2026

The Aditya-L1 Mission marks a major milestone in India's space science programme, enabling continuous and comprehensive observations of the Sun from the Sun–Earth L1 point. Scientific data from the mission are regularly released in public domain for global scientific utilization. At present there are more than 30 TB data in public domain and several important scientific results have been published in International peer reviewed journals. To further maximize the scientific return from this unique mission, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has released the third Announcement of Opportunity (AO) inviting proposals from the Indian solar physics community for Aditya-L1 observation time. The below document outlines the eligibility criteria, proposal submission process and observation schedule for proposal submission. Researchers are encouraged to go through the complete AO details and submit high-quality proposals that advance our understanding of solar and heliospheric science.

[Click here to open the full Aditya-L1 Announcement of Opportunity for third AO cycle (PDF)]


Aditya-L1
Announcement of Opportunity
Third Cycle

July 2026
Science Programme Office
ISRO HQ, Bengaluru

ISRO INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION

FIRST PRIVATE ORBITAL LAUNCH LIFTS OFF FROM SRIHARIKOTA | JULY 18, 2026

Vikram-I, a small satellite launcher developed by Indian space start-up Skyroot Aerospace, lifted off from ISRO's Satish Dhawan Space Centre on July 18, 2026, at 12:05:30 PM - marking the first orbital launch by a private Indian company from Indian soil and successfully so on its very first attempt.

This milestone follows the Government of India's 2020 space-sector reforms, which opened the sector to private industry and accelerated growth among space start-ups developing launch vehicles, satellites and space applications.

The Mission

Vikram-I carried multiple payloads, including two satellites - SCOPE and Grahaa - successfully injected into Low Earth Orbit. Remaining payloads on the upper stage will conduct various in-orbit experiments.

From Sub-Orbital to Orbital

Skyroot had earlier conducted a sub-orbital test launch, Vikram-S, from Sriharikota on November 18, 2022. Vikram-I was subsequently developed as a 4-stage rocket (3 solid stages + 1 liquid stage) capable of launching small satellites to LEO.

ISRO & IN-SPACe Support

ISRO and IN-SPACe provided extensive handholding for the venture:

- ISRO's SDSC facilities were used to cast and test the first-stage solid motor and to validate the second-stage motor
- The liquid engine (RAMAN-I) used in the upper stage was tested at LPSC
- ISRO supported vehicle stage preparation, material handling, transport, trajectory analysis and integration at the First Launch Pad (FLP), with ISRO's safety team ensuring 24x7 safe operations

ISRO INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION

FIRST NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON MICROGRAVITY RESEARCH | JULY 19, 2026

The Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC), ISRO, organised a first National Workshop on Microgravity Research at ISRO Headquarters, Bengaluru, on 15 July 2026 to provide a common platform to deliberate on sustainable microgravity research ecosystem in India. More than 270 delegates from academia, research laboratories, industry, startups, government organizations and ISRO Centres across the country participated in the workshop.

The workshop featured presentations on India's recent microgravity research activities, experiences and scientific outcomes from conducting experiments aboard the ISS during the Axiom-4 mission and the status and future opportunities under the Indian Microgravity Experiments (iMEx-2026) initiative. Two panel discussions addressed the themes of Building Research and Industrial Capabilities for microgravity research in India.

Secretary, Department of Space / Chairman, ISRO Dr. V. Narayanan inaugurated the workshop and emphasized the need to create a microgravity research ecosystem in India to harness the potential benefits of cutting-edge research in the domain of space bio-technology, physical sciences, materials & manufacturing, human research and space biology in microgravity conditions.

The workshop concluded with an interactive open session Chaired by Shri AS Kiran Kumar, Chairman, National Advisory Board for Microgravity Research in Indian Human Space Programme, reaffirmed that the collective commitment of ISRO and the wider scientific community to foster a collaborative, multidisciplinary and self-sustaining microgravity research ecosystem that supports future human spaceflight missions while delivering societal and technological benefits.

ISRO INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION

NISAR S-BAND SAR DATA PRODUCTS RELEASE | JULY 24, 2026

NISAR, the NASA-ISRO dual-frequency (L-band/S-band) radar satellite, provides wide-swath (~240 km), high-resolution, all-weather Earth imaging from a 747 km orbit with a 12-day repeat cycle - key for monitoring environmental change, geohazards and resources.

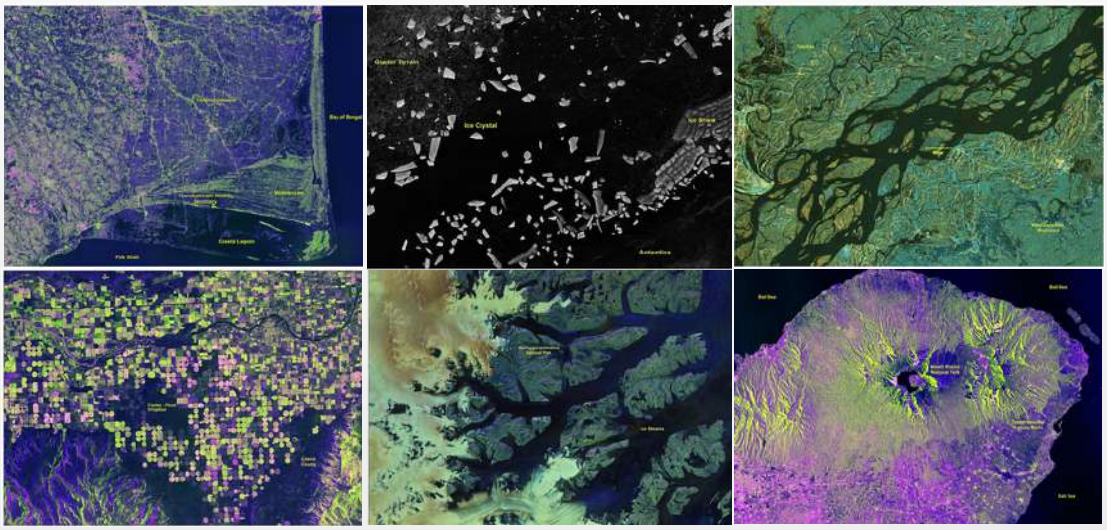
ISRO has released daily processed S-Band SAR data via Bhoonidhi (bhoonidhi.nrsc.gov.in), covering Indian and global sites. From Cycle 25 (July 8, 2026 onward), products are available directly on release; earlier data will be reprocessed and archived in phases. Current baseline: v1.4.0 (CRID P00500).

Data Release Details
ISRO has released daily processed S-Band SAR data products via Bhoonidhi, its EO data hub (bhoonidhi.nrsc.gov.in), covering Indian and global locations across NISAR science themes.

- Onward Processing (Cycle 25+): From Cycle 25 (started July 8, 2026), products are generated in the operational environment and available for direct download
- Historical Reprocessing: Pre-Cycle 25 datasets will be reprocessed in phases and added to archives
- Baseline Version: v1.4.0, CRID P00500

Products Released: Standard (L1-RSLC, L2-GSLC, L2-GCOV), Interferometric (L1-RIFG, L1-RUNW, L2-GUNW) and Offset (L1-ROFF, L2-GOFF) products.

Calibration: Reflects latest in-flight Cal/Val updates; minor radiometric banding and residual RFI may appear in low-SNR regions, with fixes planned.
Tools: HDF-to-GeoTIFF converter and a QGIS-based SARPOL polarimetric analysis suite.



ISRO INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION

ISRO CONDUCTS START CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP-2026 AT IIRS, DEHRADUN | JULY 29, 2026

From July 27–31, 2026, ISRO is holding the concluding session of the ISRO-START-2026 programme through a newly conceived Capacity Building Workshop at IIRS, Dehradun, benefiting 50 students - including 12 research fellows from IIRS. Of these, 38 undergraduate and postgraduate students were selected as top performers of the ISRO-START-2026 online examination through a stringent selection process, representing multiple states across India.

The workshop was inaugurated by Shri A. S. Kiran Kumar, Member, Space Commission and former ISRO Chairman, in the presence of Dr. R.P. Singh (Director, IIRS), Dr. Tirtha Pratim Das (Director, Science Programme Office, ISRO HQ), Dr. Harish Karnatak (Head, GIT-DL, IIRS) and senior IIRS faculty.

Workshop Highlights

The programme includes advanced lectures on space science & applications, interactions with senior ISRO/DOS scientists, hands-on demonstrations (IR remote sensing, Raman Spectroscopy), satellite data analysis exercises and team-based project work - aimed at boosting student awareness of space technologies and inspiring careers in the field.

About the START Programme

Running since 2023, START features a unique annual theme with 20–25 expert-led lectures for STEM undergraduate and postgraduate students nationwide. It is programmatically linked to ISRO's biennial National Space Science Symposium, where top START performers attend a dedicated mentoring session. The START-2023 lectures ("Overview of Space Science and Technology") were adopted as an AICTE credit course.

START-2026, held March 11 – April 2, 2026, on the theme "Scientific Observations from Space," was inaugurated by the DOS Secretary/ISRO Chairman on March 11, 2026. Cumulatively, the START programme has benefited about 1.6 lakh students, faculty and space enthusiasts.

IN-SPACe INDIAN NATIONAL SPACE PROMOTION AND AUTHORIZATION CENTRE

IN-SPACe LAUNCHES 24TH SAR DATA ANALYSIS SKILL DEVELOPMENT COURSE

As India works toward building a $44 billion space economy, developing a strong talent pipeline remains essential - and that effort continues to gain momentum.
The 24th IN-SPACe Short-Term Skill Development Course on SAR Data Analysis and Applications commenced at the NAMTECH Campus, IIT Gandhinagar Research Park, Gujarat. The programme was inaugurated by Shri Tapan Misra, Former Director, SAC, who delivered the keynote address, in the presence of Rajeev Jyoti (Fellow FNAE, Director, Technical Directorate) and Dr. K.C. Vora (Director, NAMTECH).

About the Programme
The course brings together students, researchers and professionals to build expertise in Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) data analysis through expert-led sessions. With missions like EOS-4 and NISAR expanding India's Earth Observation capabilities, demand continues to grow for professionals skilled in analyzing and applying SAR data across industries.

Over five days, participants will gain a strong foundation in SAR remote sensing - covering fundamentals, signal processing, interferometry, polarimetry and multi-parametric data analysis - along with hands-on training using open-source tools across applications including agriculture, environment, forestry, solid earth studies, cryosphere monitoring, flood mapping and AI-enabled analysis.
Through initiatives like this, IN-SPACe continues strengthening India's space talent ecosystem, equipping professionals with industry-ready skills in emerging space technologies.

IN-SPACe INDIAN NATIONAL SPACE PROMOTION AND AUTHORIZATION CENTRE

IN-SPACe LAUNCHES 25TH SKILL DEVELOPMENT COURSE: "THE AUTONOMOUS FRONTIER"

IN-SPACe is committed to empowering the next generation of space pioneers and bridging the gap between innovation and implementation. Continuing this mission, IN-SPACe inaugurated its 25th short-term skill development course on "The Autonomous Frontier: AI-Powered Next-Generation Space Missions and Infrastructure."
The inaugural lecture was delivered by Dr. Biswajit Sharma, Senior Scientist, Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Robotics (CAIR), DRDO, Ministry of Defence, Govt. of India.

Why This Matters
As the global space economy undergoes a paradigm shift, Artificial Intelligence is moving from a supporting tool to the core of mission architecture - powering autonomous spacecraft navigation, real-time obstacle avoidance, intelligent satellite data analysis and optimized mission operations. AI is increasingly seen as key to unlocking the deep-space frontier.

About the Course
The programme is designed to equip industry professionals, researchers and academia with the strategic and technical insights needed to lead this transformation. By exploring the convergence of AI and space infrastructure, IN-SPACe aims to foster a robust ecosystem where Non-Governmental Entities (NGEs) can push the boundaries of what's possible in orbit and beyond.
IN-SPACe remains committed to driving India's journey toward becoming a global space powerhouse - democratizing access to cutting-edge training and building the talent pool that will define the future of the Indian space sector.



IN-SPACe INDIAN NATIONAL SPACE PROMOTION AND AUTHORIZATION CENTRE

IN-SPACe RELEASES NORMS FOR PLANNED RE-ENTRY OF SPACE OBJECTS

As India's space economy grows, so will the number of space objects requiring safe return to Earth - from end-of-life satellite disposal to the reusable launch systems being developed by Indian space startups. Planned re-entry is set to become an increasingly critical part of space operations.

To support this evolving ecosystem and promote responsible space activities, IN-SPACe has released the Norms, Guidelines and Procedures for implementing the Indian Space Policy 2023 with respect to Authorisation for Undertaking Planned Re-entry of Space Objects.

Key Requirements
The framework mandates that operators:

- Conduct detailed risk assessments
- Demonstrate casualty risk remains below the prescribed threshold
- Define impact zones and re-entry corridors
- Coordinate necessary notifications
- Implement measures to protect people, property and the environment

Purpose
The guidelines aim to provide regulatory clarity to space operators while enabling safe mission planning, post-mission disposal and the development of future reusable space transportation systems.


Norms, Guidelines and Procedures
for Implementation of
Indian Space Policy-2023
in respect of
Authorisation for Undertaking
Planned Re-entry of Space Objects
Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre
Department of Space
Government of India
July 2026
IN:ISP2023:NGP-Re-entry:2026/V1.0

AIRBUS SELECTED BY ESA FOR THE AEOLUS-2 WEATHER SATELLITE | 02 JULY 2026

Airbus Defence & Space has been selected by the European Space Agency (ESA) to design and build Aeolus-2, the successor to the pioneering Aeolus mission launched in 2018. The satellite will provide highly precise vertical wind-profile data to improve weather forecasting and climate models. The programme will support leading European meteorological organisations, including EUMETSAT and ECMWF, further reinforcing Europe's autonomous Earth observation capabilities.

Aeolus-2 follows the original Aeolus satellite (Airbus-built, launched 2018), which delivered the first high-resolution vertical wind profiles from space, improving weather forecast accuracy by 4%. ESA's Simonetta Cheli called it the evolution from research to an operational service benefiting citizens worldwide.

UK Space Minister Liz Lloyd and Airbus UK's Kata Escott highlighted the mission as a major investment in British talent and Earth observation leadership.

Technical Highlights

- Equipped with a pioneering Doppler wind lidar using ultraviolet lasers, scanning from ground level up to 30 km with measurements every 0.01 seconds
- Provides global coverage every seven days
- Includes an additional detector to measure atmospheric aerosols
- Will orbit Earth 15 times a day at a 450 km altitude, with a mission lifetime of 5.5 years
- Delivers data to users within 120 minutes of the oldest measurement per orbit

Aeolus-2 is being developed by ESA in partnership with EUMETSAT, benefiting major weather centres including the UK Met Office and the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF).

ARIANESPACE AND INFINITE ORBITS SIGN LANDMARK DIRECT-TO-GEO AGREEMENT | 07 JULY 2026

Arianespace and Infinite Orbits have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to explore future European direct-to-GEO launch capabilities, announced at the French NewSpace Summit.

Key Highlights

- The MoU establishes a framework for collaboration on multiple direct-to-geostationary orbit (GEO) launch services
- The partnership prepares for future in-orbit servicing needs by studying launch capabilities required for satellite inspection missions and life-extension missions in GEO
- It reflects Arianespace's commitment to supporting European NewSpace players and strengthening European space sovereignty through new launch capabilities

Why It Matters

The collaboration combines Arianespace's decades of launch heritage with Infinite Orbits' next-generation in-orbit servicing capabilities. For Infinite Orbits, future direct-to-GEO access is a key enabler for its Orbit Guard and Endurance missions, allowing faster deployment of servicing spacecraft with greater operational flexibility.

The MoU underscores growing commercial demand for sovereign European direct-to-GEO capabilities, aiming to help satellite operators extend mission life, maximise the value of existing GEO assets and strengthen the resilience of Europe's space infrastructure.

ARIANE 6 PREPARES LAUNCH OF SATELLITE MTG-I2 | 20 JULY 2026

Arianespace will launch the MTG-I2 meteorological satellite aboard Ariane 62 from Kourou on 27 August 2026. Built by a Thales Alenia Space-led consortium under ESA leadership, MTG-I2 will boost severe weather forecasting through rapid-refresh imaging. This is Ariane 6's fourth mission of 2026 and its first to geostationary transfer orbit (GTO), with a flight duration of ~36 minutes.

MTG-I2 completes the first family of the Meteosat Third Generation (MTG) system - the world's most powerful meteorological constellation, offering major gains over MSG in detecting fast-developing storms. Operating alongside Meteosat-12 (MTG-I1) (launched 2022), it will scan Europe every 2.5 minutes, ensuring continuity of European weather services.

Developed by ESA (per EUMETSAT requirements) and built by Thales Alenia Space, with OHB Systems and Leonardo as key partners, MTG-I2 arrived in French Guiana on June 12 and is being prepped at the Guiana Space Centre. EUMETSAT will handle operations and data dissemination.

The mission reflects Arianespace's continued role in strengthening Europe's autonomous access to space for institutional needs like meteorology and climate monitoring.

ARIANEGROUP SECURES MAJOR INDUSTRIAL CONTRACTS FOR ARIANE 6 | 08 JULY 2026

ArianeGroup and Beyond Gravity have signed a new contract for the operational phase of Ariane 6, securing Europe's access to space for years to come. The agreement covers the supply of 27 payload fairings for the flight models 16 to 42 of Ariane 6.

ArianeGroup, a French-German leader in space technology, is prime contractor for Ariane 6. Following the successful completion of its initial flights, ArianeGroup is currently increasing the Ariane 6 production rate.

Beyond Gravity, a leading international space supplier headquartered in Switzerland with 12 locations in six countries, has been producing payload fairings for every Ariane mission since the first flight of Ariane 1 in 1979. Beyond Gravity is also playing an important role in the Ariane 6 programme.

Depending on the mission, the European heavy-launcher can be equipped with a short (14-meter) or long (20-meter) payload fairing. This allows Ariane 6 to adapt to a wide variety of payloads. Instead of maintaining a separate system for each mission type, a common technical platform covers the entire spectrum.

The new contract for the operational phase starts at the end of 2026 and marks the largest to date in the history of Beyond Gravity's Swiss launch vehicle business. By producing 20 long and seven short payload fairings, the company is making a key contribution to the industrial ramp-up of the Ariane 6 program and to the planned launch cadence of nine to ten missions per year.

MAIASPACE EXPANDS COMMERCIAL MOMENTUM | 08 JULY 2026

Loft Orbital has selected Maia, MaiaSpace's future reusable launcher, for multiple missions starting 2028, becoming the fourth commercial customer to sign with MaiaSpace in the past 14 months - alongside Exotrail, U-Space and Eutelsat. MaiaSpace has reportedly secured roughly three-quarters of its first three years of operations.

About Maia

Maia features a 3.5m-diameter payload fairing, up to 4 tons lift capability and an optional Colibri kick stage for added mission flexibility. Launching from the Guiana Space Centre, its Atlantic-facing location enables access to all orbital inclinations, making Maia well-suited for satellite constellation deployment.

Partnership Highlights

For Loft Orbital, the deal strengthens its ability to deliver end-to-end satellite missions from Europe - combining platform standardization, mission integration and in-orbit operations - while securing sovereign European launch access for institutional and commercial customers.

Yohann Leroy, CEO, MaiaSpace, noted the contract comes just days after groundbreaking on the MaiaFactory production facility in Vernon and highlighted Maia's modularity - expendable and reusable configurations plus the Colibri kick-stage - supporting everything from single-satellite launches to constellation replenishment, with an ambition to reach ~20 launches/year by the early 2030s.

Emmanuelle Meric, Managing Director, Loft Orbital France, said the partnership reflects a shared commitment to agility and reliability and supports a more sovereign, resilient European space ecosystem.

ES'HAILSAT AWARDS TELECOMMUNICATIONS SATELLITE CONTRACT TO THALES ALENIA SPACE | 30 JUNE 2026

Es'hailSat Awards Telecommunications Satellite Contract to Thales Alenia Space
Thales Alenia Space has signed a contract with Es'hailSat, the Qatar Satellite Company, to develop a next-generation, software-defined satellite based on the Space INSPIRE (INstant SPace In-orbit REconfiguration) platform.

About the Satellite
Named Eshail-3/Türksat-Biruni, the satellite will provide high-speed broadband connectivity across Europe, Africa, Central Asia and the Middle East, shared with Turkish operator Türksat. Space INSPIRE offers instant in-orbit reconfiguration to adjust to broadband demand while optimizing satellite resources - allowing Es'hailSat to enhance services throughout the satellite's operational life.

As prime contractor, Thales Alenia Space is responsible for the satellite's design, manufacturing, testing and on-ground delivery, along with the ground segment and associated services.
Leadership Perspectives

Supporting the Product Line
The Space INSPIRE platform was developed with support from CNES, France's Programme d'Investissements d'Avenir (PIA), ESA (via two ARTES programs) and the UK Space Agency, which supported the electrical propulsion module.

FRANCO-ITALIAN SUPPORT FOR THE FUTURE EUROPEAN SATELLITE CHAMPION | 30 JUNE 2026

During the 36th Franco-Italian Summit, held on 25 June 2026, French and Italian authorities reiterated support for the "Bromo" project, a corporate initiative aimed at consolidating satellite manufacturing activities involving Airbus, Thales and Leonardo - seen as a potential European response to growing competition from American and Chinese space players.
From the Joint Statement

Under the summit's Space section, France and Italy committed to enhancing close cooperation in the space domain, building on corporate initiatives in favour of innovation, European sovereignty and global competitiveness, such as the Bromo project, welcoming and supporting its progress.
The two countries also agreed to strengthen ties in access to space by supporting the ramp-up of Ariane 6 and VEGA C, in line with growing European strategic demand, while reinforcing cooperation in exploration, Earth observation, satellite telecommunications and Space Situational Awareness (SSA), with a focus on space for defence.

To deepen coordination, both nations will hold regular bilateral space consultations to promote coordination on issues including industrial policy, European programs, international cooperation, defence and security, with close coordination planned ahead of the International Space Summit to be held in France on 9–10 September 2026.

The statement also reaffirmed shared objectives on IRIS² (secure connectivity in Low Earth Orbit) and coordinated positions on EU/ESA programmes, procurement and spectrum management.

GIFAS

GROUPEMENT DES INDUSTRIES FRANÇAISES AÉRONAUTIQUES ET SPATIALES

GREENERWAVE WINS MAJOR FRENCH DEFENCE SATELLITE COMMUNICATIONS CONTRACT

| 07 JULY 2026

We are very pleased to announce that the French Defence Procurement Agency (DGA – Direction générale de l'armement) has awarded Greenerwave the CAMELEON framework agreement, aimed at developing the next generation of satellite communication terminals for the French Armed Forces.

As the lead contractor under the framework agreement and owner of the proprietary technology, Greenerwave will rely on a leading industrial ecosystem bringing together Airbus Defence and Space and Thales to design a new generation of SATCOM terminals, tailored to the rapid transformation of the space sector and to the operational requirements of the armed forces.

With a duration of 7 years and a maximum value of €120 million, this framework agreement will enable the award of subsequent contracts to meet the needs of the Ministry of the Armed Forces in the field of satellite communications. A market covering a particularly broad scope, encompassing all major satellite orbits – Low Earth Orbit (LEO), Medium Earth Orbit (MEO) and Geostationary Orbit (GEO) – as well as all the main frequency bands.

This marks the culmination of several years of innovation and collaboration with the DGA around our sovereign low-power electronically steered antenna technology.

FRENCH SCIENTISTS WARN AGAINST CUTS TO SPACE BUDGETS | 07 JULY 2026

More than 800 scientists have publicly called for renewed French ambition in space, raising concerns over budget reductions affecting CNES programmes, including Earth observation missions dedicated to climate monitoring.

The concerns follow a €330 million budget cut imposed on CNES over the 2026–2028 period - roughly 20% of the agency's mobilisable budget - following an earlier €100 million cut the previous year. The reductions were mandated by the French government (Matignon) in late 2025, forcing CNES to overhaul its medium-term plan and make difficult choices across its programme portfolio, including scientific missions.

Scientists and industry observers warn the cuts could lead to the cancellation or postponement of major scientific missions, weaken French research capabilities and strain the broader French space ecosystem - raising questions about France's position as a leading European space power.

The issue is expected to feature prominently at the International Space Summit in Paris this September, where final budget arbitrations are also anticipated.

ISpA IN NEWS

Industry leaders applaud Skyroot's orbital mission Aagaman
18 July 2026 | Voice&Data

Skyroot's orbital launch: India's own SpaceX is born, startup to give country another option to Isro for satellite launches
19 July 2026 | The Times of India

India's Private Space Dream Lifts Off With Vikram-1
19 July 2026 | The Times of India

Skyroot's Vikram-1 success puts India's private space sector in orbit
19 July 2026 | Business Standard

Hyderabad's Skyroot start-up: Vikram-1 India's first private orbital rocket mission; defining moment, says PM Modi
19 July 2026 | The Indian Express

Resignations, mission delays, stoic silence: What's going on with Isro?
20 July 2026 | India Today

The Space Economy's Biggest Revenue Engine Isn't Launch. It's Connectivity by Lt. Gen. AK Bhatt, DG, ISpA
July 2026 | Disruptive Telecoms World Report

Skyroot's Vikram-1 launch proves India's private space sector is "Ready for the World": ISpA Chief
22 July 2026 | ANI/ The Tribune

Highly Significant Achievement...': ISpA Chief Hails Skyroot's Orbital Launch
22 July 2026 | ANI

Skyroot Aerospace's Vikram-S Mission by Lt. Gen. AK Bhatt, DG, ISpA
July 2026 | Defstrat

ISpA IN NEWS

HYDERABAD'S SKYROOT START-UP

Vikram-1 India's first private orbital rocket mission; defining moment, says PM

Tech payloads: India third country, after US & China, to have launch capability in pvt sector

Space startup Skyroot Aerospace's Vikram-1 rocket lifts off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Saturday.

Anonna Dutt
New Delhi, July 18

USHERING IN a new era of India's space programme, Vikram-1, a rocket named after the legendary space leader Vikram Sarabhai, on Saturday became the country's first privately-built launch vehicle to achieve an orbit around the Earth, and successfully deploy a diverse set of technology demonstration satellites in space.

Built by the Hyderabad-based company Skyroot Aerospace, Vikram-1 marks the beginning of private space flights in India, a development that has been actively enabled and supported by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the government. With this

•CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

India's privately developed orbital rocket, Vikram-1 successfully reaches orbit

AGENCY
NEW DELHI, JULY 18

India's first privately developed orbital rocket, Vikram-1 on Saturday successfully placed multiple technology demonstration payloads and postcards, including from Prime Minister Narendra Modi into a low earth orbit. Dubbed Mission Aagaman' (meaning arrival), it marks the entry of India's private space sector into the orbital launch market, spearheaded by Skyroot Aerospace. The mission was a "grand success," the company said. "Vikram-1 has left the pad at Sriharikota. India's first privately developed orbital rocket is flying. History is being made," Skyroot Aerospace posted on X. Lt Gen AK Bhatt (retd), Director General, Indian Space Association (ISpA) said: "The successful orbital launch of Skyroot Aerospace's Vikram-1 (Mission Aagaman) is a defining milestone for India's space journey. By executing the mission's first fully private orbital flight, Skyroot has shattered legacy boundaries, demonstrating that our domestic industry is primed to handle end-to-end space missions. We are equally proud to congratulate the pioneering tech-demo payloads safely deployed on this flight, i.e. Cosmosense Space's EMBRACE robotic arm for orbital debris removal, Skyroot's own SCOPE and Graban Space's SOLARAS S3 satellite." Government reforms are also accelerating the growth of India's space economy. Valued at approximately USD 8.4 billion today, the sector is projected to grow four-fold to USD 40–45 billion by 2030. It is further aimed to reach USD 100 billion by 2040. S Somnath former ISRO chairman said, "This is far more than the maiden orbital flight of a rocket, it marks the arrival of India's private rocket building capability and reflects the remarkable transformation of our space ecosystem. Built on years of innovation, policy reforms, and the strong foundation laid by ISRO, and the energy of the entrepreneurial youth, this mission opens new opportunities for Indian industry, startups, and the global space economy."

In its maiden voyage, the four-stage, seven-storey-tall Vikram-1 rocket lifted off majestically at 12:05 pm am on Saturday amid cloudy skies from the first launch pad, leaving behind plumes of orange smoke and marking a new era from this spaceport. A "planned hold" due to apparent navigation issues forced a revised launch time of 12:05 pm. After its ascent, the primary payloads — technology demonstrators from Grabus Space, Cosmoverse, DCubed, and Skyroot's SCOPE — were sequentially deployed into a 450 km Low Earth Orbit (LEO). The vehicle also successfully deployed a micro-jet payload, an 18-karat gold rocket and a handwritten postcard from Prime Minister Narendra Modi bearing the message "Vande Mataram", along with postcards from engineers, scientists, and Indian astronauts.

SKYROOT

India's space unicorn aces first private orbital rocket launch

India's Skyroot Aerospace orbital rocket Vikram-1 blasts off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Andhra Pradesh's Sriharikota.

Sanjay Kumar New Delhi

India's space startup Skyroot Aerospace completed its first orbital flight on Saturday, making India the third country in the world with a private company capable of such a feat.

The Vikram-1 rocket lifted off at 12:05 p.m. from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, an island off the Bay of Bengal.

The four-stage, seven-story rocket was named after the late Vikram Sarabhai, who pioneered the Indian space program. Designed to carry payloads of up to 350 kg into low-Earth orbit, it managed to deploy its payloads about 16 minutes later.

"Hello space, we have arrived. Vikram-I's Test Flight-1 has completed its mission. The first-ever Indian private sector launch has been successfully completed," Skyroot said on X.

Saturday's orbital flight, dubbed "Mission Aagaman," which means arrival, is the first in a series of test flights before moving to commercial launches.

"This is a defining moment in India's space journey. The growing participation of our private sector is opening new frontiers and accelerating innovation," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on social media, welcoming the successful launch as "historic."

With the first fully private orbital flight, Skyroot has demonstrated that India's "domestic industry is primed to handle end-to-end space missions," according to Lt. Gen. AK Bhatt (retd.), director general of the Indian Space Association.

"The Indian private space sector is no longer a high-risk bet; it is a highly bankable, globally competitive asset class capable of breaking the global small satellite launch bottleneck," Bhatt said.

India's private space sector has increasingly played a role in the country's ambitious space goals, which include plans to increase its current 2 percent share in the $450 billion global space economy to almost 8 percent by 2033.

The 'Aagaman' of India's Private Space Era

Lt Gen AK Bhatt (Retd)
Director General, Indian Space Association (ISpA)

The successful launch of Skyroot Aerospace's Vikram-1 marks a defining moment in India's space journey, demonstrating that private enterprise has evolved from a supporting role into a strategic partner capable of advancing the nation's commercial, technological and defence space ambitions.

For decades, the defining imagery of India's space journey was an archival photograph from 1963: a rocket nose transported on the back of a bicycle across the coastal village of Thumba. Today, as the founder of Skyroot Aerospace's Vikram-1 rocket is hoisted across the Bay of Bengal, we are witnessing a complete paradigm shift. A sleek, seven-storey, all-carbon composite orbital vehicle successfully launched from the Satish Dhawan Launch Pad in Sriharikota represents a new reality: India's private space sector has officially transitioned from experimental interests to industrial powerhouse.

Mission Aagaman, literally meaning "the arrival", this successful test flight is not just a triumph for a single company. It is a watershed moment for the Indian private space sector and a resounding validation of India's 2020 space sector reforms initiated and mentored personally by the Prime Minister.

India's 'Falcon 1' Moment

To understand the importance of what Skyroot has achieved, one must look at global precedents. In September 2008, a young company called SpaceX successfully launched Falcon 1 into orbit after three failed attempts. That single flight laid the foundation for the modern commercial space era, proving that private enterprise could disrupt a domain traditionally restricted to Government agencies.

This single flight is a way was the start of new space age led by the private sector and bringing in new disruptive technologies like reusable rockets, unstructured satellites, and Low-Earth Orbit (LEO) constellations for broadband communications.

The Vikram-I launch vehicle, piercing payloads into Low Earth orbit, Skyroot has made India one of the very few nations with a fully operational, privately developed orbital launch capability. What makes this achievement profoundly significant is the sheer speed and efficiency with which it was accomplished. Developed over nearly 1,000 days by a team of 1,000 engineers, Vikram-I didn't rely on legacy tech transfers. It features cutting-edge, in-house innovations including high-thrust solid rocket motors, 3D-printed engines, and advanced carbon fiber structures designed to carry up to 350 kg to Low Earth Orbit (LEO). Ingesting its immense commercial potential, the rocket successfully deployed a highly sophisticated, diverse payload stack on its maiden flight, ranging from Cosmosense's specialized space debris removal arm to advanced

Vikram-1 major leap for India's space ecosystem: Industry leaders

Mission demonstrates private sector's ability

Skyroot co-founders Pawan Chandana and Naga Bharath Daka after successful orbital launch.

The successful orbital launch of Skyroot Aerospace's Vikram-I under Mission Aagaman on Saturday has drawn widespread praise from industry leaders, who described the mission as a landmark achievement that validates India's growing private space capabilities and opens new opportunities for satellite launches and downstream space applications.

In separate statements, the Indian Space Association (ISpA) and space analytics firm Suhora Technologies said the mission represents a major leap for India's commercial space ecosystem and reinforces the country's emergence as a global space technology hub.

Lt Gen AK Bhatt (Retd), Director General of the Indian Space Association (ISpA), said the successful orbital launch of Vikram-I was a defining milestone in India's space journey, as it marked the nation's first fully private orbital mission. "The successful orbital launch of Skyroot Aerospace's Vikram-I (Mission Aagaman) is a defining milestone for India's space journey. By executing the nation's first fully private orbital flight, Skyroot has shattered legacy boundaries, demonstrating that our domestic industry is primed to handle end-to-end space missions," Bhatt said.

"We are equally proud to congratulate the pioneering tech-demo payloads safely deployed on this flight, i.e., Cosmoverse Space's EMBRACE robotic arm for orbital debris removal, Skyroot's own SCOPE and Grabus Space's SOLARAS S3 satellite," he mentioned.

According to him, the mission proves that Indian private companies are now building globally relevant infrastructure for space sustainability and advanced Earth observation. "The successful deployment of such complex, IP-heavy payloads proves that our ecosystem is now building critical global infrastructure for space sustainability and high-resolution Earth intelligence," he added.

Modi congratulates Skyroot team

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday congratulated the team of Skyroot Aerospace on the successful launch of Vikram-I, saying the milestone reflects the growing strength of India's private space sector and will encourage youngsters across the country to pursue innovation with confidence.

In a post on social media platform X, the Prime Minister said he had spoken to the Skyroot Aerospace team and congratulated them on the successful launch of Vikram-I. "Spoke to the team of Skyroot Aerospace and congratulated them on the successful launch of Vikram-I. This is a defining moment in India's space journey. The growing participation of our private sector is opening new frontiers and accelerating innovation. This achievement will encourage countless youngsters to dream bigger and innovate fearlessly," PM Modi wrote.

Earlier, during a telephonic conversation with Skyroot Aerospace CEO, Pawan Kumar Chandana, and Co-founder Bharat Daka, after the successful mission, the Prime Minister congratulated the entire team for carrying six payloads, including two satellites, into a 450-km low-Earth orbit aboard India's first privately-developed orbital launch vehicle.

Vikram-1

launch, India has become just the third country, after the US and China, to have launching capabilities in the private sector.

Saturday's launch mission was named Aagaman, meaning "arrival". The company said it signified the arrival of a new era in India's space sector, in which "Indian innovation, engineering and enterprise come together to provide reliable access to orbit".

Skyroot had flown Vikram-S rocket, an earlier version of the Vikram-1, to sub-orbital space in 2022. Another private company, the Chennai-based Agnikul, has also carried out a sub-orbital flight of its Agniban rocket, the world's first to be powered by a 3-D printed engine, in 2024.

In sub-orbital flights, rockets usually fly without any satellites, enter into space, and then fall off on to the Earth under the impact of gravity. They do not attain an orbit around the Earth, and are largely meant for technology demonstration.

Vikram-I, on the other hand, has now become a full-fledged satellite launch vehicle, having deposited its payloads in the intended low-Earth orbits at an altitude of about 450 km.

"This is a defining moment in India's space journey," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in a post on X. "The growing participation of our private sector is opening new frontiers and accelerating innovation. This achievement will encourage countless youngsters to dream bigger and innovate fearlessly," he said.

Soon after the launch from ISRO's launch facility at Sriharikota, the young co-founders of Skyroot, Pawan Kumar Chandana and Naga Bharath Daka, had a conversation with Modi over phone. Modi, who has held several meetings with young space entrepreneurs in the last few years, had sent a signed postcard with the message "Vande Matram" that was carried on Vikram-1.

Commending the company on its success, Modi said his government's decision to open up the space sector to private players was seen by many to be risky, and thanked the Skyroot founders for proving him right. "...because of you, my decision has been proven right. Now my team will also accept that we should trust the youth of the country, we should give them work and they will do it. And, you have done it," he told them.

The launch survived a few anxious moments in the morning, when the countdown had to be halted just five minutes ahead of the scheduled launch. However, it was resumed soon thereafter, the launch, initially slated for 11:30 am, happened at 12:05 pm. It was a smooth launch, and the rocket was able to deploy the satellites in their orbits in about 20 minutes.

Vikram-1 is a multi-stage rocket, rising up to about seven storeys, and is powered by a propulsion system developed in-house, including 3-D printed engines and high-thrust solid fuel motors. It is designed to carry small satellites, weighing up to 350 kg, to low-Earth orbits.

ISRO Chairman V Narayanan, former chairpersons S Somanath, A S Kiran Kumar, K Radhakrishnan, astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla, and Pawan Goenka, chairman of INSPACe (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre) were present at the mission control in Bengaluru. In Delhi, Science and Technology Minister Jitendra Singh, who is also the minister in charge of the Department of Space, witnessed the launch live.

"They have always been extremely innovative and creative. It is not an empty payload like many first missions carry. Here we have an experimental payload... If the PM had not opened the space sector, we would not have witnessed this. This marks India's entry into the highly competitive global space sector. For India, sky is no longer the limit," Jitendra Singh said.

Lt Gen A K Bhatt (retd.), Director General, Indian Space Association, said: "The successful deployment of such complex, IP-heavy payloads prove our private ecosystem is now building critical global infrastructure for space sustainability and high-resolution Earth intelligence."

While the name of the rocket pays homage to the father of India's space programme, Dr Vikram Sarabhai, the solid engines have been named 'Kalam' for the rocket man, former President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, and the liquid engine 'Raman' for the physicist, Dr C V Raman.

Vikram-1 success clears runway for private space investments

Tejon.U@timesofindia.com

Chennai: India's first successful private orbital launch is expected to turbocharge investments, sharpen commercial capabilities and propel the country deeper into global small satellite launches, industry experts said after Skyroot Aerospace's Vikram-1 mission reached orbit Saturday.

The mission marked a watershed for space-sector reforms launched in June 2020, when satellite launches were opened to private companies.

Experts said Vikram-1 proved Indian startups can execute end-to-end space missions while strengthening capabilities in satellite launches, earth observation and in-orbit technologies.

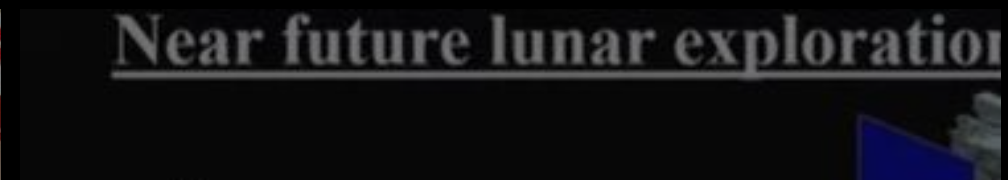
Isro chairman V Narayanan said the agency is targeting seven launches this financial year

(ISpA) director general Lt Gen (retd) AK Bhatt said the mission showed the country's private industry had come of age. "The successful deployment of such complex, IP-heavy payloads proves that our private ecosystem is now building critical global infrastructure for space sustainability and high-resolution earth intelligence," he said.

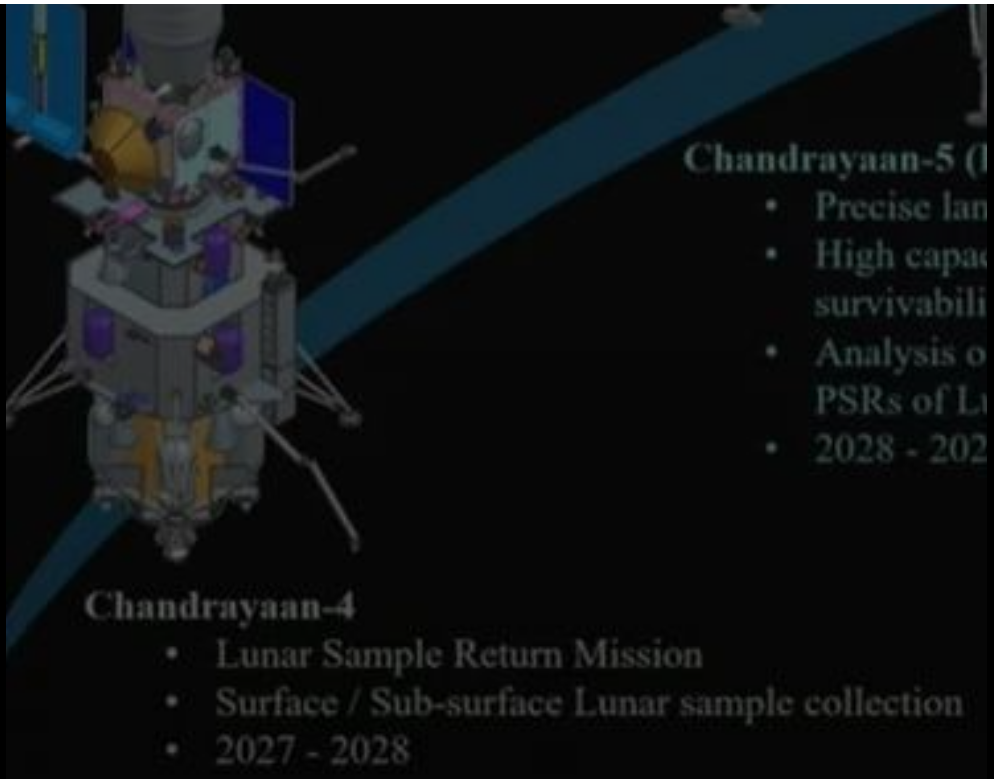
Krishanu Acharya, CEO and co-founder of Suhora Technologies, called the launch a defining milestone for India's space ecosystem. A dependable domestic launch capability would cut costs and speed up deployment of earth observation satellites, he said.

Addressing the media after the launch, Isro chairman V Narayanan said the agency is targeting seven launches this financial year, with the next mission expected in about two months.

He added that Kulasekarapattinam spaceport in Tamil Nadu is likely to be commissioned within six months, giving both Isro and private companies



NATIONAL NEWS



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- China announces plan to build early-warning system for dangerous asteroids
- China releases 1st photo of Earth's elusive 'quasi-moon' Kamo'oalewa
- Chinese startup raises funds for space situational awareness constellation, joining commercial SSA rush
- Lightning strikes Long March 3B after liftoff, Kinetica-1 launches 5 satellites
- China's Shijian-31 satellite is sweeping GEO using a unique orbit
- The strategic competition with China: winning the multi-domain race
- Gravity-1 sea launch off Shanghai puts 9 satellites into orbit
- AI rocket engine startup LegendSpace raises $29.5 million angel round
- China lines up methalox Long March 10C as commercial workhorse after first booster recovery
- China unveils members of state-backed commercial space consortium
- Chinese satellite manufacturer Hongqing raises $191 million
- China becomes second country to recover orbital booster with Long March 10B
- Make Hong Kong China's 'space finance capital', legal group urges Beijing
- Orbital rivalry - the challenge of China's space power
- Chinese scientists find the best way to nuke an asteroid on its way to impact Earth
- China launches secretive TJS-27 pair, orbits next-gen Tianlian relay sat
- China Launches New Communication Technology Test Satellites into Space
- The strategic competition with China: winning the multi-domain race
- Lightning strike on Chinese rocket captured in epic launch photo

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

OTHER NATIONS

- Latitude plans to conduct first launch from Oman
- Namibia Goes Live with LEO Satellite Connectivity as Twoobii-OneWeb Rolls Out
- Vodafone, Irish Govt test satellite tech to keep emergency services connected
- Collaboration aims to deliver LEO satcoms to Southern Africa's heavy industries
- Space milestone for Japan as it successfully launches, lands reusable rocket
- Space junk cloud discovered in key satellite orbit raises collision concerns
- Government Offers £42m to Develop UK LEO Satellite Broadband and Comms Tech
- Defense spending lifts Europe's space economy
- Metal spheres found in Australia show how little we still know about falling space debris, experts say
- Smoke from devastating Canada wildfires visible from space | Space photo of the day for July 17, 2026
- Could evidence of life on Mars be hiding in clay? Europe wants to send a rover to check
- ESA opens call to repurpose Gateway communications module
- Another reusable rocket? Japan launches, lands RV-X prototype (video)
- Japan's Hayabusa2 probe captures remarkable photo of a two-headed asteroid 62 million miles away
- The new space wars: lessons from Ukraine and the Middle East
- Astronauts just launched on a Soyuz rocket with an energy-drink ad on it, continuing a Russian tradition
- Russia launches NASA astronaut Anil Menon and 2 cosmonauts to the International Space Station (video)
- H3 to launch next ispace lunar lander mission
- Spain commits up to $2.3 billion for national military communications for IRIS²
- NASA and ESA facilities avoid major damage from wildfires in Spain
- Japanese company books 1,100 pounds of cargo space on SpaceX Starship mission to the moon
- EU delays release of Copernicus imagery over Gulf of Oman
- Poland commits $745 million to EU's IRIS² constellation project
- UK and Florida commit $400,000 to joint space projects
- Serbia signs the Artemis Accords

OTHER NEWS

jatan.space

By Jatan Mehta

Moon Monday
The world's only newsletter dedicated to covering and contextualizing global lunar exploration updates, including plans to return humans to our Moon this decade.

Upcoming missions to the Moon's farside-that's definitely not its dark side.
Moon Monday #285
27 Jul 2026

Explore our Moon!
A curated page of resources to learn and share how countries worldwide have explored our stellar cosmic companion.
20 Jul 2026

The Moon's south pole is a place of promise and perils. Effective data sharing will benefit and save everyone.
Moon Monday #283: Some engineers and scientists are leading by example.
13 Jul 2026

Achievements and shortfalls in global lunar exploration this half year | Moon Monday #282
A contextualized overview of the world's Moon exploration efforts.
06 Jul 2026

SPACE LAWS, RULES AND AGREEMENTS

69th Session of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS) Concludes: Following the conclusion of the 69th Session of UNCOPUOS, UNOOSA continued work on implementation of discussions relating to the Space2030 Agenda, long-term sustainability of outer space activities and international cooperation.

UNOOSA-UNIDO Sign Landmark Joint Declaration: During the 69th Session of UNCOPUOS, UNOOSA and UNIDO signed a Joint Declaration to strengthen cooperation in leveraging space technologies for sustainable industrial development and achievement of the SDGs.

UNOOSA Launches the Space4Resilience Initiative: Following the 69th Session of UNCOPUOS, UNOOSA launched the Space4Resilience initiative to promote the use of space technologies for disaster resilience, risk reduction and sustainable development.

Open Lunar Foundation Releases First Lunar Ledger Dataset: Open Lunar Foundation announced the first public dataset under its Lunar Ledger initiative, developed in collaboration with JAOPS/Dymon and COSPAR. The initiative aims to improve transparency and information-sharing for lunar missions by making mission data publicly accessible.

McGill's MILAMOS Project Continues International Engagement: The MILAMOS Project continued international outreach and engagement with governments and academic institutions to promote discussion on the McGill Manual on International Law Applicable to Military Uses of Outer Space.

Artemis Accords Continue Global Expansion: The Artemis Accords continued to expand their global membership with Serbia and Mauritius becoming the 69th and 70th signatories, respectively.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES/ CONSULTATIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS/ ANNOUNCEMENTS

IN-SPACe Releases Norms, Guidelines and Procedures for Implementation of Indian Space Policy-2023 in respect of Authorisation for Undertaking Planned Re-entry of Space Objects

On July 23, 2026, IN-SPACe released new Norms, Guidelines and Procedures governing the authorisation of "Planned Re-entry" of space objects under the Indian Space Policy-2023 (document no. IN:PMA:Re-entry:2026/V1.0, approved by Chairman Pawan Goenka). The guidelines are to be read alongside the existing NGP framework (May 2024).
Key highlights:

- Scope: Authorisation is required for any planned re-entry - i.e., where landing area, time, or trajectory is deliberately controlled - undertaken by Indian entities anywhere, or by non-Indian entities re-entering within Indian territory (via an Indian-incorporated partner).
- Exemption: Natural, unguided orbital decay as part of post-mission disposal does not require separate re-entry authorisation, provided it's documented in the Space Debris mitigation plan.
- Declaration timing: Applicants must declare re-entry intent - with full risk analysis - either at the time of satellite/spacecraft authorisation, or at least 6 months ahead if planned post-launch. A fresh authorisation is mandatory even for previously authorised objects.
- Safety threshold: All planned re-entries must keep expected casualty risk below 1 in 10,000, backed by survivability, fragmentation and ground casualty assessments.
- NOTAM requirement: Applicants must secure an IN-SPACe 'Advisory Note' to obtain NOTAM/Danger Zone/NAVAREA warnings, typically 45 days before re-entry - a mandatory precondition for authorisation.
- Liability: Re-entry is undertaken entirely at the applicant's own risk; entities must indemnify the Government of India under the Liability Convention (1972) and are advised to carry third-party liability insurance.
- Ownership changes: Shifts in non-Indian beneficial ownership (≥10%) or management control may trigger a fresh or amended authorisation.

A standardised application template (Appendix-I) has also been issued, covering space object details, mission/trajectory profile and risk assessment requirements.

ISpA UPCOMING EVENTS

INDIA INTERNATIONAL SPACE CONCLAVE 2026

The 5th edition of the India International Space Conclave (IISC) will be held on **23-24 November 2026**, bringing together policymakers, industry leaders, start-ups, investors and global stakeholders to shape the next phase of India's space economy. As a leading platform for strategic dialogue and collaboration, IISC 2026 will focus on policy, innovation, investment and international partnerships across the space sector.

INDIAN SPACE ASSOCIATION
Bhumandal Se Brahmaand Tak

JULY 2026

Founding Members

- Alpha Design Technologies
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- CE Info Systems (MapmyIndia)
- Larsen & Toubro
- Nelco (A TATA Enterprise)
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- Broadcast Engineering Consultants India
- Capella Space
- ESRI India
- HAL - Hindustan Aerospace Division
- Hexcel Composites LLP
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- CI-Metrics
- Cosmoserve Space India
- CYRAN AI Solutions
- Codimaths
- Dhruva Space
- Digantara Research
- Elena Geo Systems
- GalaxEye Space
- Geo Solutions India
- GarudaUAV Soft Solution Pvt Ltd.
- Gritly Analytics
- Ice Aero Pvt Ltd
- Inbound Aerospace
- Indian Technology Congress Association
- Inspecity Space Laboratories
- KaleidEO Space Systems
- Kawa Space
- KSpace
- Kepler Aerospace
- Kerala Spacepark
- Kristellar Aerospace
- LuminASIC Pvt Ltd
- Maan Defence
- Maargin Research and Innovation Pvt Lt
- Manastu Space
- Micronet Solutions
- NAV Wireless Technologies
- OmSpace Rocket & Exploration
- OnEarth Space TS
- Omnipresent Robot Tech
- OrbitAID Aerospace
- Orbitt Space
- Orbix Global
- Piersight Space
- Pixxel
- QOSMIC
- Robinsons Cargo & Logistics
- Saankhya Labs
- Samkalpa Systems
- Sanyark
- SatLeo Labs
- SISIR Radar
- Siliconia Technologies
- Skymap Global India
- Skyroot Aerospace
- SkyServe
- Spacefields
- Space Machines Co.
- Suhora Technologies
- TheSpaceLabs
- ThrustWorks Dynetics
- Ulook Technologies
- Upgraha Space
- VEDCOMSPOC
- Vihaan SpaceTech
- VyomIC
- Xdlinx Space Labs
- Xovian Aerospace

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