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Author: Dr. Mukund Kadursrinivas Rao
National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), India

Prof. Sridhara Murthi K. R.
India
Dr. Baldev Raj
India

INDIAN SPACE POLICY – "NATIONAL" ECO-SYSTEM FOR FUTURE SPACE ACTIVITIES

Abstract

The vision of Indian Space was enunciated (in early 1970) by Dr. Vikram Sarabhai – who envisioned the development and use of Indian space capability for benefit to society and meeting national development goals and founded on self-reliance and indigenous capability in space technology. Indian space activities have made tremendous progress in the past 50 years with successful programmes that have contributed to national development, science endeavor and technological capability. of Indian communication satellites in INSAT; Indian EO satellites in IRS and Indian launch vehicles in the PSLV and GSLV. India has also had a mission to Moon - Chandrayaan-1; a mission on-way to Mars and the IRNSS. Successful foray into global markets have also been achieved. All this has enabled a high-class end-to-end systemic capability of design, development and operations of Indian space assets and applications.

Space based services have created a huge and growing user base – which is a unique opportunity for developing space industry and creating high technology jobs. Changing policy environment in India - favoring deregulation; investments and thrusted privatization; impetus to manufacturing; intensified co-operation etc are generating a strong market drive for space activities in India. Indian space needs to orient for a quantum jump in technological growth, adopt organisational models that will ensure economic efficiency and position a vibrant private sector. National consequences for Indian human space-flight and planetary exploration programmes; quest for a larger share and role in global space market; strategies to deal with changing political and economic environments and focused imperatives of international cooperation need strategic focus.

National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) has taken up a policy-research study to determine a futuristic Indian Space Policy - a comprehensive "Indian Space Policy" which addresses the long-term strategy of Indian space and promotes a holistic Indian Space enterprise – alignment to national goals of industrialization and development; evolving a vibrant eco-system of government-private sector partnership that assures operational space services (communications, EO and navigation etc) and advanced technology development; national commitment for "long-term' human space-flight and planetary exploration mission investments and a strategic international cooperation regime. NIAS has undertaken wide consultation with Indian space professionals and is organising a National Space Policy Workshop – all of which will be assimilated into the Policy document. The paper presents the outcome of this study and the future Indian Space Policy.