

IISL COLLOQUIUM ON THE LAW OF OUTER SPACE (E7)
Supervision of Space Activities (5)

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SUPERVISION OF SPACE ACTIVITY IN INDIA

Abstract

The Space Program in India, developed over a period of five decades, with a focus on applications driven programmes and bringing space to the services of common man. Over years, ISRO has become one among the six largest space agencies in the world. As the space expands, so does the applications and the business aspects – thus creating a complete eco-system in the country. To harness the huge untapped potential that exists in the country, in terms of human resources, technical acumen, capabilities of industries in space sector etc., it is found prudent to enable private and public participation in the process. Space reforms were introduced at the Government for empowering and encouraging Non-Government Entities (NGEs) of the country to carry out space activities. To achieve this, the Government of India has created an autonomous single window, independent nodal agency - Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe) under Department of Space (DOS), under broad mandate to permit, regulate, promote, hand-hold, monitor and supervise the space activities in the country.

IN-SPACe is working on formulating a long and short-term strategy and vision for the Indian space sector taking into account, the projected demand across all the verticals and identifying the white spots. One of the Directorates of IN-SPACe is Program Management and Authorization (PMA) which is responsible for receiving the applications from NGEs, scrutinize the proposal in terms of its concept, utility, feasibility, readiness, marketability, compliances and thus, issue the authorization followed by end-to-end monitoring of space activity in the country. Space activity like satellites, launch vehicle, ground segment, applications etc. by NGEs require IN-SPACe authorization so as to ensure compliance with the Outer Space Treaty 1967 and other international conventions/policies for which India is a signatory. Apart from authorizing the space activities, PMA also enable NGEs to access capital intensive, high technology ISRO facilities, technologies and technical support etc.

The space market is evolving at a faster pace. Thus, space activities call for continuous monitoring and control at all times. The constitution of IN-SPACe is just in time when the Indian space market is opening up with enthusiastic young start-ups (close to 165) flooding the market. The role of IN-SPACe is not only to act as a catalyst in the success stories of NGEs and Start-ups but also to monitor, regulate and supervise their actions. Whatever said and done, the liability and responsibility lies with the country.