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INDIA'S SPACE POLICY FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR: OPPORTUNITIES AND GLOBAL
COMPARISONS

Abstract

India's space program began in the 1960's with the goal of using space for national development. Hence, numerous missions in the areas of telecommunications, weather forecasting and remote sensing were undertaken in the nascent years of India's space programme. With the confidence achieved through the launches of development-oriented missions, India took a leap in the direction of space exploration through its missions to Mars and Moon. The recently undertaken Chandrayaan-3 mission has cemented its place in the international space arena. With the growing demand for space-based activities, both in the upstream and downstream sectors, India has decided to change its model from supply-driven to demand-driven. Therefore, in order to boost competition and space economy, it is currently taking active steps towards opening up the space sector to private space industries. Towards this end, Indian government has established organizations such as Indian National Space Promotion & Authorization Center (IN-SPACe) and NewSpace India Limited (NSIL) with prime objectives being, the promotion of private sector participation. It has further announced a space policy in 2023 with emphasis on enhancing private sector participation in the creation of ground-based space assets.

This paper examines Indian space policy highlighting the terms such as regulatory and liability framework, authorization, funding etc. available for private sector participation. This paper analyses India's current space policy framework in the context of global best practices, comparing it with the approaches of leading spacefaring nations such as the United States, China, and members of the European Union. Through these comparisons, the paper tries to identify critical lessons for India, including the importance of a clear regulatory environment, streamlined approval processes, and robust support for private sector engagement. This analysis highlights India's potential to enhance its space capabilities and foster a vibrant space economy by assimilating successful elements from global counterparts while addressing its unique challenges.