

## ISRO's IRNSS-1H satellite launch unsuccessful

Launch of PSLV-C39/IRNSS-1H is scheduled on August 31, 2017 at 19:00 hrs from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, SHAR, Sriharikota. Photo: ISRO

India's attempt to launch its eighth regional navigation satellite failed on Thursday. The satellite IRNSS-1H didn't come out of the heat shield as it should have, though the rocket's lift off was as planned.

Confirming that the launch was unsuccessful, ISRO chief A.S. Kiran Kumar told mediapersons, "There was no problem in any of the stages. But the heat shield has to separate. And once that happens the satellite gets into the orbit. It got separated internally. But it's enclosed within the heat shield in the fourth stage."

"We are getting into the details of what has happened," he added.

IRNSS-1H was being sent to space to back up — and mostly replace — the functions of India's first navigation satellite. IRNSS-1A was launched four years back. Indian Space Research Organisation had to quickly get two back-ups ready when all three rubidium atomic clocks on 1A failed around mid-2016. Mr. Kumar had earlier said 1H had atomic clocks that had been corrected and improved.

Between 2013 and 2016, ISRO put up seven IRNSS satellites to form the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System, since called NavIC or Navigation with Indian Constellation.

NavIC is the Indian regional version similar to the U.S. Global Positioning System GPS. It will drive all position-based activities on ground, sea and air, by giving near accurate location details of persons or objects. It will be used for military, commercial and common everyday uses.

An earlier version of the article incorrectly mentioned the launch was successful. Actually it was the PSLV lift-off that was successful. The error is regretted.

A study of nearly 300 people living in different parts of India found that nine single-base variants (single-nucleotide polymorphisms or SNPs) account

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