

## PSLV bags first Australian order

A file picture of GSLV carrying a communication satellite at Sriharikota.

The Indian PSLV launcher has broken into a rising Australian space market and bagged its first small but promising order from Down Under. Fleet Space Technologies, an IoT (Internet of Things) startup, disclosed last week that its first 10-kg nanosatellite Centauri I would fly to space on a PSLV later this year.

The prospect for the PSLV is in the fact that Adelaide-based Fleet plans to put up a constellation of an unstated number of tiny satellites — all of which will need a suitable, timely launch vehicle to take them to space.

Australia is in the throes of setting up its space agency and an industry around it. Adelaide in South Australia is the current hub of this activity. The second nanosat, Centauri II, is to be launched on the U.S. SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket later this year.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has planned a part-commercial PSLV flight around August. Neither Fleet nor Antrix Corporation, ISRO's business arm, could immediately say if Centauri I would go on it.

For lighter payloads

The PSLV's three versions can lift satellites of 1,000-1,750 kg to distances of around 600 km in pole-to-pole orbits. A neat launch record has made the booster a trusted and affordable space vehicle for small satellites. Big rocket players are focussed on taking heavy, multi-tonne satellites to space.

Since its first commercial launch in 1999, the PSLV has put in orbit 237 small satellites of 28 countries, About half of them are from the US. Antrix recently said it has many more orders confirmed or under discussion.

Low-cost connectivity

A news release from the Australian company quoted its co-founder and CEO Flavia Tata Nardini and said it is developing a series of 10-kg nanosatellites about the size of a shoebox to enable low-cost connectivity for agriculture, logistics, mining and other industries.

"The first satellite," it said, "will establish a global network that will connect [75 billion] sensors and devices, for free." A single nanosat can apparently cover 90% of the globe.

Sign up to receive our newsletter in your inbox every day!

Please enter a valid email address.

The streaming giant is reportedly spending \$8 billion on content this year, and India is a big part of its plans. Chief Content Officer Ted Sarandos talks about growth and original web series Sacred Games' possible global reach

END