

INDIA, FRANCE WORKING ON THIRD JOINT SPACE MISSION: ISRO CHAIRMAN

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Europe, European Union (EU) and India

ISRO Chairman K. Sivan. File | Photo Credit: [PTI](#)

India and France are working on their third joint satellite mission, even as the bilateral space collaboration is entering into multiple domains, including human spaceflight programme, ISRO Chairman K. Sivan said.

Mr. Sivan, also Secretary in the Department of Space, said many French companies are keen to tap into opportunities thrown up by recent reforms injected into the space sector by the Government.

"France is the biggest partner of India in space", he said at the DST (Department of Science and Technology) Golden Jubilee Discourse on 'unlocking India's space potential - geospatial data & mapping', an event presented on virtual mode by the National Council for Science and Technology Communication and 'Vigyan Prasar' on Friday.

According to ISRO officials, ISRO and French space agency CNES (Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales) have undertaken two joint missions 'Megha-Tropiques', which was launched in 2011, and 'Saral-Altika' in 2013.

"Currently, we are working for the third one (mission)", Mr. Sivan said.

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Officials said ISRO and CNES have completed the feasibility study to realise the earth observation satellite mission with thermal infrared imager, TRISHNA (Thermal infraRed Imaging Satellite for High resolution Natural resource Assessment) and are working towards finalising an implementing arrangement for the joint development.

Mr. Sivan said India is also working with France on joint experiments and accommodation of scientific instruments in space missions.

"Indo-French space collaboration is expanding into multiple domains including space exploration and human space flight programme," he said.

ISRO officials said the two space agencies have also finalised all interface control documents for accommodating CNES's 'ARGOS' instrument in ISRO's OCEANSAT-3 satellite.

ARGOS instrument has been delivered at Bengaluru for integration with the satellite.

"Discussions on establishing '[NavIC](#)' (an independent regional navigation satellite system developed and maintained by India) reference station in France and CNES 'Scintillation' receivers in India are also progressing well", they said.

ISRO-CNES HSP (Human Space Programme) Working Group had a number of discussions on medical aspects of human spaceflight and finalising an implementation arrangement to formalise

cooperation in the field of space medicine, it was noted.

Mr. Sivan said with the recent reforms initiated by the government in the space sector, the Indo-French space cooperation is expected to grow further involving industries, academia and research institutes.

He said many French companies want to "make use of" reforms in the sector and "they are going to involve".

So, the reforms would not only strengthen space cooperation at government-to-government level but industry-to-industry interaction is going to get a "fresh relook" in the changed environment, Mr. Sivan added.

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