

14 SMALL FOREIGN SATELLITES TO LAUNCH ON NEXT 3 PSLVS

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The PSLV, the Indian space vehicle for light satellites, has bagged new rides for 14 small spacecraft of four international customers.

All 14 are being accommodated as minor secondary passengers on the next three successive PSLV flights, according to Spaceflight, the U.S. company that arranges such flights for agencies seeking to put their spacecraft in orbits.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will have one of its earth observation satellites as the larger primary payload on each of the three PSLV flights.

The customer satellites will be sent to their respective orbits on the PSLV-C47 (where ISRO's own Cartosat-3 is the main payload), C48 & C-49 in November and December.

"Payloads will launch on the PSLV's C47, C48 and C49 missions, scheduled to launch in November and December 2019 from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre. Customers aboard the missions include Analytical Space, Spire, iQPS and Kleos Space," Spaceflight announced on Monday night.

All but Spire will be new users of the PSLV.

Curt Blake, CEO and president of Spaceflight, said, "The PSLV continues to be a reliable launch partner for us. By the end of 2019, we will have executed 11 launches on PSLVs and sent more than 100 satellites to orbit on this vehicle."

In all, the PSLV has launched around 300 mostly small (1kg-100kg) satellites to low-earth orbits for many foreign customers.

Globally there are not enough launch vehicles suited to take a growing number of small satellites to space when they need to go. Satellite operators say a timely and dependable launch vehicle is important to try out a new technology or continue ongoing missions.

Analytical Space Inc.'s spacecraft Meshbed is due to ride PSLV- C47 next month. It is aimed at proving an antenna technology that will enable faster access to satellite data, including for strategic communications, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.

Using the PSLV C48 slated for early December, Japan's iQPS is testing a revolutionary 100-kg synthetic aperture radar microsatellite for all-weather, 24/7 earth observation.

Luxembourg-based Kleos Space is launching three Kleos Scouting Mission satellites on C49, expectedly in December.

Old customer Spire Global is sending four more Lemur nanosatellites for earth, sea observation, weather and aviation and weather monitoring.

Spaceflight in August disclosed buying the first full ride on ISRO's Small Satellite Launch Vehicle or the SSLV, which is still under development.

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