

ISRO CARRIES OUT KEY TEST OF ITS HEAVIEST ROCKET'S ENGINE

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ISRO launched the first set of 36 OneWeb satellites by the NSIL from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC- SHAR) in Sriharikota on October 23. | Photo Credit: B Jothi Ramalingam

The flight acceptance hot test of CE-20 engine has been carried out in the High Altitude Test facility of ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC) at Mahendragiri in Tamil Nadu.

The engine is assigned for the LVM3-M3 mission identified for launching the next 36 OneWeb India-1 satellites, the Indian Space Research Organisation said.

Sources said these satellites of OneWeb, the London-based satellite communications company, are expected to be launched by the NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), the ISRO's commercial arm, aboard LVM3 early next year.

Friday's flight acceptance test comes within days of the launch of the first set of 36 OneWeb satellites by the NSIL from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC- SHAR) in Sriharikota on October 23.

According to OneWeb, its partnership with NSIL and ISRO demonstrated its commitment to provide connectivity across the length and breadth of India by 2023.

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From Ladakh to Kanyakumari and Gujarat to Arunachal Pradesh, OneWeb will bring secured solutions not only to enterprises but also to towns, villages, municipalities and schools, including the hardest-to-reach areas across the country, it said.

"OneWeb's commitment to enhance connectivity in India is backed by Bharti Global, its largest investor", the company said.

NSIL Chairman-cum-Managing Director Radhakrishnan D had said: "We look forward to strengthening our partnership with OneWeb and utilising the potential that LEO connectivity has to deliver broadband services across India."

Last Sunday's launch marked the rocket's entry into the global commercial launch service market, according to the Bengaluru-headquartered national space agency.

NSIL, a central public sector enterprise under the Department of Space, had earlier signed two launch service contracts with the Network Access Associated Limited (OneWeb) for launching a total of 72 OneWeb LEO (low earth orbit) satellites on-board ISRO's LVM3.

LVM3, ISRO's heaviest rocket, is capable of launching a four ton class of satellite to Geosynchronous Transfer orbit.

LVM3 (Launch Vehicle Mark 3) is a three-stage vehicle with two solid motor strap-ons, a liquid propellant core stage and a cryogenic stage.

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