ISRO Expanding Student Participation in Space Missions; 11 Student Satellites Launched with Mentorship and Launch Opportunities: Dr. Jitendra Singh

Nearly 850 Students Participate in IN-SPACe Satellite and Rocket Design Competitions: Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh

ISRO Mentoring Young Innovators to Build Satellites, Offering Launch Opportunities to University Student Satellites: Dr Jitendra Singh

Kushinagar Hosts National Model Rocketry Competition as ISRO's Student Satellite Programme Gives Real Mission Experience to Young Researchers: Dr Jitendra Singh

Posted On: 12 MAR 2026 7:38PM by PIB Delhi

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, and MoS in the Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh today informed the Rajya Sabha that the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has launched a series of structured initiatives to actively involve students and young researchers in satellite development, payload experiments, and space missions.

Replying to an Unstarred Question asked by Smt. Sumitra Balmik in the Rajya Sabha, Dr. Jitendra Singh said that the Government is committed to democratizing access to space technology and ensuring that students from across the country, including tier-2 and tier-3 institutions, get opportunities to contribute to India's rapidly expanding space ecosystem.

The Minister said that ISRO has instituted dedicated programmes that allow student researchers to work on real space technology projects, including satellite design, payload development, and mission experiments. Under the Student Satellite Programme led by the U R Rao Satellite Centre, academic institutions and student teams are encouraged to design and develop satellites with technical mentoring from ISRO scientists. These student-built satellites also receive integration support and launch opportunities through ISRO missions.

Dr. Jitendra Singh further noted that internship and project trainee schemes are available for undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral students from recognised institutions across the country. These programmes provide hands-on research exposure at ISRO centres, enabling young researchers to work

directly with advanced space technologies.

To further expand academic participation, Space Technology Incubation Centres (STICs) have been established across different regions of the country. These centres facilitate collaborative research between universities and ISRO scientists and help students develop indigenous space technologies under expert mentorship.

The Minister also highlighted the role of the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) in promoting student engagement in the space sector. IN-SPACe has organised student competitions focused on designing and developing CAN-sized satellites and model rockets, in which 97 student teams comprising nearly 850 students have participated.

Dr. Jitendra Singh informed the House that IN-SPACe has authorised 17 student satellites and payloads so far, of which 11 have already been successfully launched. These missions have involved institutions from across the country including Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Indian Institute of Space Science & Technology, RV College of Engineering, Amity University Maharashtra, MIT World Peace University, Assam Don Bosco University, CV Raman Global University, and several other academic institutions, reflecting the growing national participation in student-led space missions.

Emphasising the Government's commitment to making space research more inclusive, the Minister said ISRO's RESPOND (Sponsored Research) Programme provides financial and technical support to universities and academic institutions across India to undertake research in space science, space technology, and applications.

In addition, Regional Academic Centres for Space (RAC-S) have been created to serve as regional access points for ISRO programmes, ensuring that students from smaller towns and colleges gain exposure to space science and technology.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said that Space Technology Incubation Centres have also been deliberately located in tier-2 and tier-3 regions, helping develop indigenous technologies and promoting innovation beyond premier institutions.

The Minister further informed that AICTE has approved a Space Technology Minor Course, and a National Committee for Adoption of Space Technology Education in India has been formed in line with the Indian Space Policy-2023 to strengthen space education in the country.

Highlighting the growing enthusiasm among students, Dr. Jitendra Singh said that Model Rocketry and CanSat India Student Competition was jointly organised by IN-SPACe, ISRO and the Astronautical Society of India (ASI) in October 2025 at Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh, where 67 teams comprising nearly 500 students designed, fabricated, and launched model rockets carrying CanSat payloads up to an altitude of about 1 kilometre.

The Minister also informed that the Government has earmarked around ₹10 crore annually for student-focused educational outreach activities related to space science and technology.

Dr. Jitendra Singh added that IN-SPACe is also nurturing the next generation of space entrepreneurs through several initiatives including mentorship from domain experts, pre-incubation entrepreneurship support programmes, and co-working facilities at IN-SPACe Technical Centres.

He said these initiatives are part of the Government's broader vision to build a vibrant and inclusive space ecosystem in India, where students, startups, academic institutions, and industry all contribute to the country's expanding role in the global space sector.

PHOTO: Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh replying to a Parliament Question in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday.

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