GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF SPACE

RAJYA SABHA

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2373**

TO BE ANSWERED ON THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2026

**INVOLVEMENT OF STUDENT RESEARCHERS**

2373. SMT. SUMITRA BALMIK:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether ISRO has specific programmes to involve student researchers in satellite development, payloads experiments and space missions;

(b) if so, the number of students satellites launched during the last five years and educational institutions involved;

(c) the measures to democratize space research beyond IITs and premier institutions to include students from tier-2 and tier-3 colleges;

(d) the budget allocated for student space projects and educational outreach programmes;

(e) whether a national student space competition with flight opportunities is planned; and

(f) the mentorship and incubation support provided to young space entrepreneurs?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES & PENSIONS AND IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE**
**(DR. JITENDRA SINGH):**

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(a) Yes. ISRO runs structured programs that allow student researchers to participate in real space technology projects:

i. Student Satellite Projects: ISRO's initiative under the U R Rao Satellite Centre enables academic institutes and student teams to design and develop student satellites and payloads, with technical mentoring, integration support and launch opportunities.

ii. Internship and Project Trainee Schemes: Open to undergraduate, post-graduate and doctoral students across recognized institutions, providing hands-on research experience at ISRO centres.

iii. Space Technology Incubation Centre (SITC): ISRO has established 6 STICs under various regions of country covering all the states to carry out the space research to develop indigenized space technologies. STIC projects are carried out by students mentored by Professors & ISRO scientist.

In addition to this, Indian National Space Promotion & Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) has organized two student competition events aimed at familiarizing participants with the design, development, and manufacturing of CAN-sized satellites (7U satellites) and model rockets. A total of 97 student teams, comprising approximately 850 students, have participated in these events.

(b) So far, IN-SPACe has authorized 17 student satellites/payloads, out of which 11 have been launched successfully. Details are as follows:

| **Sl. No.** | **Satellite/Payload** | **Institution Involved** |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Aazadisat 1 Satellite | SpaceKidz India, Chennai |
| 2. | Aazadisat 2 Satellite | SpaceKidz India, Chennai |
| 3. | StarberrySense on POEM-2 of PSLV-C55 | Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Bengaluru |
| 4. | ARIS on POEM-2 of PSLV-C55 | Indian Institute of Space Science & Technology, Thiruvananthpuram |
| 5. | PiLOT on POEM-2 of PSLV-C55 | Indian Institute of Space Science & Technology, Thiruvananthpuram |
| 6. | BeliefSat-0 on POEM-3 of PSLV-C58 | K J Somaiya Institute of Technology (KJSIT), Mumbai, Maharashtra |
| 7. | WeSAT on POEM-3 of PSLV-C58 | LBS Institute of Technology for Women, Trivendrum, Kerala |
| 8. | SR-0 Demosat Satellite | SpaceKidz India, Chennai |
| 9. | Amity Plant Experimental Module in Space (APEMS) on POEM-4 of PSLV-C60 | Amity University Maharashtra, Mumbai |
| 10. | STeRG-P1.0 on POEM-4 of PSLV- | Dr. Vishwanath Karad MIT World |

| Sl. No. | Satellite/Payload | Institution Involved |
|---|---|---|
| | C60 | Peace University (MIT-WPU), Pune |
| 11. | RVSAT-1 on POEM-4 of PSLV-C60 | RV College of Engineering, Bangalore, Karnataka |
| 12. | BGS-ARPIT on POEM-4 of PSLV-C60 | SJC Institute of Technology (A unit of Sri Adichunchanagiri Shikshana Trust), Chickballapur, Karnataka |
| 13. | Lachit-1 | Assam Don Bosco University, Sonapur, Assam |
| 14. | DSAT-1 Spacecraft | Atal Incubation Centre - Dayanand Sagar University Innovation Foundation, Bengaluru, Karnataka |
| 15. | SBB-1 Hosted Payload on MOI-1 Spacecraft | BlueBlocks Montessori Educational Society, Hyderabad |
| 16. | CGUSAT-1 | CV Raman Global University, Bhuvaneswar |
| 17. | SANSKARSAT-1 | Laxman Gyanpith, Ahmedabad, Guajrat |

(c) Below are the key initiatives by ISRO to democratize space research beyond IITs and premier institutions:

i. **Sponsored Research Programme:** Academic institutions across the country can participate and contribute in various Space related research activities through RESPOND projects. ISRO has evolved the RESPOND programme through which necessary financial and technical support is provided to academia for conducting research and development activities related to Space Science, Space Technology and Space Applications.

ii. **Regional Academic Centres for Space (RAC-S)** It is a regional level initiative to pursue advanced research in the areas of relevance to the future technological and programmatic needs of the Indian Space Programme and act as a facilitator for the promotion of space technology activities in the region. RAC-S is functioning as access points for ISRO programmes, ensuring that students from smaller towns and colleges receive exposure to space science, space technology and space applications.

iii. **Space Technology Incubation Centre (STIC) –** ISRO has established 6 STICs under various regions of country in tier-2 & tier-3 cities to carry out the space research to develop indigenised space technologies.

IN-SPACe has also taken the following measures/initiatives to expand the participation of Academic institutions and students in space activities:

- In pursuance of Indian Space Policy-2023 and in consideration of the importance of advancing space technology education in the country, a National Committee for Adoption of Space Technology Education in India is formed during 2023.
- AICTE has approved the Space Technology minor course.

(d) Yearly budget allocated for students' educational outreach activities is around Rs. 1000 lakhs.

(e) **Model Rocketry & CANSAT India Student Competition** was jointly organised by IN-SPACe, ISRO and the ASI during October, 2025 in Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh. 67 teams comprising of 500 students from universities and technical institutions across the country participated in the competition. Students designed, fabricated, and launched the model rockets that carry CanSat payloads to around 1 km altitude.

(f) The following initiatives/schemes announced by IN-SPACe is extending support to young space entrepreneurs:

i. Mentorship is being provided through its resident experts
ii. Pre incubation entrepreneurship support program for entrepreneurship development
iii. Co-working space is being provided at IN-SPACe Technical Centres

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