Satellite and Launch Vehicle Technology with India's Space Observations

India has made significant strides in satellite and launch vehicle technology, establishing itself as a major player in the global space arena. Here's an overview focusing on the development of satellite technology, Indian satellites and their missions, and the evolution of launch vehicles:

7.1 Development of Satellite Technology

India's journey in satellite technology began with the launch of its first satellite, Aryabhata, in 1975. Since then, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has steadily developed its capabilities in designing, building, and launching satellites for various applications. Key developments include:

Satellite Technology:

- 1. Remote Sensing Satellites:
 - Indian Remote Sensing (IRS) Program: Initiated in 1988, this program aims to provide Earth observation data for various applications. Satellites include the Cartosat series (highresolution imaging for cartography and urban planning), Resourcesat series (monitoring agriculture and forestry), and RISAT series (radar imaging for all-weather surveillance).
- 2. Communication Satellites:
 - Indian National Satellite System (INSAT): Operational since 1983, INSAT satellites serve communication, broadcasting, and meteorological purposes across India and neighboring regions. The GSAT series (GSAT-6, GSAT-7, etc.) are examples of advanced communication satellites launched by ISRO.

3. Navigation Satellites:

• Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS): Also known as NavIC (Navigation with Indian Constellation), it consists of a constellation of satellites providing accurate positioning and timing information for users in India and surrounding areas, comparable to GPS.

Launch Vehicle Technology:

1. ISRO Launch Vehicles:

• **PSLV (Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle)**: This workhorse of ISRO has been instrumental in launching satellites into polar orbits. It has an impressive track record of over 50 successful launches and has been used for launching satellites for India as well as international customers.

• **GSLV (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle)**:

- **GSLV Mk II**: Initially used for launching satellites into • geostationary transfer orbit (GTO), it has been progressively enhanced.
- **GSLV Mk III**: ISRO's heaviest and most powerful launcher, capable of carrying heavier payloads to GTO and beyond. It has successfully launched Chandrayaan-2 and GSAT-29 among other missions.
- 2. Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV-TD):
 - Technology Demonstrator: ISRO has been developing technologies for a reusable spaceplane to reduce launch costs. The RLV-TD program aims to achieve cost-effective access to space through reusability.

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Space Observations and Achievements:

- **1. Interplanetary Missions:**
 - Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan): Launched in 2013, Mangalyaan made India the first Asian country to reach Mars orbit and the fourth globally. It continues to study Mars' surface, morphology, and atmosphere.
 - Chandrayaan Missions:
 - Chandrayaan-1: Launched in 2008, it was India's first lunar probe and discovered water molecules on the Moon's surface.
 - **Chandrayaan-2**: Launched in 2019, it aimed to explore the Moon's south polar region, including a lander (Vikram) and rover (Pragyan). While the lander lost contact during descent, the orbiter continues to study the Moon.

2. Astrophysics and Astronomy:

- India operates several ground-based observatories such as the Indian Astronomical Observatory (Hanle), located at high altitudes for optimal atmospheric conditions.
- Collaboration in space-based observatories, including participation in projects like the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) and collaboration with international space agencies for astrophysical observations.

Future Directions:

- 1. Gaganyaan:
 - India's ambitious human spaceflight program aiming to send Indian astronauts to space.
- 2. Interplanetary Exploration:

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• Plans for future missions to Venus (Shukrayaan) and beyond, demonstrating India's expanding capabilities in planetary exploration.

The development of satellite technology has been a cornerstone of modern space exploration and applications, with significant contributions from various countries, including India. Here's an overview of how satellite technology has evolved and its current state:

Early Development:

1. Sputnik and Early Satellites:

- The launch of Sputnik 1 by the Soviet Union in 1957 marked the beginning of the space age and demonstrated the feasibility of placing artificial satellites into orbit.
- Early satellites primarily focused on scientific research, telecommunications experiments, and monitoring of the Earth's atmosphere.

Evolution and Advancements:

1. Communications Satellites:

- Early Telecommunications: Satellites like Telstar (1962) enabled the first live transatlantic television broadcasts.
- **Global Coverage**: Geostationary satellites, positioned over fixed points on the equator, revolutionized global communications by providing continuous coverage for telecommunication, television broadcasting, and internet services.
- 2. Remote Sensing Satellites:
 - **Earth Observation**: Beginning with the Landsat series (1972), remote sensing satellites have provided invaluable data for



agriculture, forestry, urban planning, disaster management, and environmental monitoring.

- **Resolution and Applications**: Advances in sensor technology have improved spatial resolution and spectral capabilities, enhancing the accuracy and scope of applications.
- 3. Navigation Satellites:
 - Global Positioning System (GPS): Developed by the United States, GPS and similar systems (GLONASS, Galileo, Beidou) use constellations of satellites to provide precise positioning, navigation, and timing services worldwide.

Current State and Applications:

- **1. Types of Satellites:**
 - Communication Satellites: Continuously expanding capacity and coverage for global telecommunications and broadband internet.
 - **Remote Sensing Satellites**: Providing high-resolution imagery and data for various applications, including disaster response, urban planning, agriculture monitoring, and climate studies.
 - Navigation Satellites: Supporting precise positioning for military, civilian, and commercial applications, including transportation, surveying, and location-based services.
- 2. Miniaturization and Constellations:
 - CubeSats and SmallSats: Miniaturization of satellite components has led to the development of small satellites (CubeSats) and constellations, offering cost-effective solutions for diverse applications such as Earth observation, communication, and scientific research.

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3. Advanced Technologies:

- Artificial Intelligence: Integration of AI and machine learning techniques to analyze satellite data, automate processes, and derive actionable insights.
- Inter-satellite Communication: Development of networks and constellations where satellites communicate with each other to improve coverage and data relay capabilities.

Future Trends:

- 1. Next-Generation Satellites:
 - High Throughput Satellites (HTS): Enhancing data transmission capabilities to meet increasing demands for connectivity.
 - Hyperspectral Imaging: Advancements in sensor technology enabling detailed spectral analysis for environmental monitoring, agriculture, and resource management.
- 2. Space Sustainability:
 - Debris Mitigation: Initiatives to address space debris through responsible satellite design, deployment, and endof-life disposal.
 - Satellite Servicing: Development of technologies for satellite refueling, repair, and end-of-life removal to extend operational lifetimes and reduce space debris.

India has developed and launched a variety of satellites, each serving specific missions and applications. Here's an overview of some prominent Indian satellites and their missions:



Remote Sensing Satellites:

- 1. Cartosat Series:
 - Cartosat-1 to Cartosat-3: High-resolution Earth observation satellites primarily used for cartography, urban planning, rural development, and infrastructure mapping. They provide imagery with resolutions ranging from 0.6 meters to 1 meter.

2. Resourcesat Series:

- Resourcesat-1, Resourcesat-2: Multispectral imaging satellites designed for resource monitoring, agriculture, forestry, and disaster management. They provide data in various spectral bands for comprehensive analysis.
- 3. **RISAT Series**:
 - RISAT-1, RISAT-2, RISAT-2B: Radar imaging satellites capable of all-weather surveillance, day-and-night imaging, and disaster monitoring. They use synthetic aperture radar (SAR) technology to capture high-resolution images through clouds and during darkness.

Communication Satellites:

1. INSAT/GSAT Series:

• INSAT-3A to INSAT-4CR, GSAT-6A, GSAT-7A:

Communication satellites providing services for telecommunication, television broadcasting, meteorology, and disaster warning. They operate in geostationary orbits and support a wide range of applications across India and neighboring regions.



Navigation Satellites:

1. IRNSS/NavIC Series:

 IRNSS-1A to IRNSS-1I: The Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS), also known as NavIC (Navigation with Indian Constellation), consists of a constellation of satellites providing accurate positioning and timing information over India and surrounding areas. It offers services similar to GPS for various applications, including civilian and military use.

Scientific and Interplanetary Missions:

- 1. Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan):
 - India's first interplanetary mission launched in 2013. It successfully entered Mars' orbit in 2014, making India the first Asian country to do so and the fourth space agency globally. Mangalyaan continues to study Mars' surface, morphology, and atmosphere.

2. Chandrayaan Missions:

- Chandrayaan-1: Launched in 2008, it was India's first lunar probe and discovered water molecules on the Moon's surface. The mission provided valuable data about the Moon's topography and mineral composition.
- **Chandrayaan-2**: Launched in 2019, it aimed to explore the Moon's south polar region. The orbiter continues to study the Moon while the lander (Vikram) and rover (Pragyan) had a partial success with the orbiter continuing to provide valuable scientific data.

Future Directions:

- 1. Gaganyaan:
 - India's human spaceflight program aiming to send Indian astronauts into space aboard an Indian spacecraft.
- 2. Shukrayaan:
 - Proposed mission to Venus to study its atmosphere and surface composition.

Continuing with Indian Satellites and their Missions:

Weather and Environmental Monitoring Satellites:

- 1. INSAT Series:
 - INSAT-3DR: Dedicated meteorological satellite providing weather forecasting, cyclone detection, and climate monitoring services. It enhances India's capabilities in disaster management and agriculture.

Navigation and Positioning Satellites:

- 1. IRNSS/NavIC Series:
 - IRNSS-1I: Continues to augment India's navigation capabilities, providing precise positioning and timing services crucial for terrestrial, aerial, and maritime navigation.

Communication and Broadcasting Satellites:

- 1. GSAT Series:
 - GSAT-11, GSAT-15, GSAT-17: Enhancing communication networks across India and neighboring regions, supporting



television broadcasting, telecommunication services, and broadband connectivity.

Advanced Technological Demonstrations:

1. GSAT-29 (GSAT Mk III-D1):

 Demonstrated advanced technologies for communication satellites, including high-throughput capabilities and advanced payloads, improving satellite efficiency and data transfer rates.

Scientific Research and Exploration:

- 1. Astrosat:
 - India's first dedicated multi-wavelength space observatory launched in 2015. Astrosat observes celestial sources in different wavelengths (X-ray, UV, optical), advancing astrophysical research in areas like black holes, neutron stars, and galaxies.

Earth Observation and Resource Management:

- 1. EOS Series:
 - EOS-01: Continues India's legacy in Earth observation, providing data for agricultural planning, disaster management, urban development, and environmental monitoring.





Educational and Technological Outreach:

1. RISAT-2BR1:

 Demonstrates India's commitment to radar imaging for allweather surveillance and disaster management, supporting strategic and humanitarian missions.

Future Space Exploration:

- 1. Aditya-L1:
 - Planned solar mission to study the Sun's outermost layer, the corona, and its impact on space weather and climate.

Collaborative International Efforts:

1. Collaborations:

 India actively collaborates with various countries and international space agencies on satellite launches, joint missions, and scientific research, fostering global cooperation in space exploration and technology development.

Emerging Trends and Innovations in Indian Satellite Technology

Miniaturization and Small Satellite Constellations:

In recent years, India has embraced the trend of miniaturization in satellite technology, leading to the development and deployment of small satellites and constellations. These satellites, often referred to as CubeSats or SmallSats, are characterized by their compact size and modular design, which offer several advantages:



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- **Cost-Effectiveness**: Small satellites are generally more affordable to build, launch, and maintain compared to traditional larger satellites. This cost-effectiveness allows for more frequent launches and constellations of satellites for enhanced coverage and redundancy.
- **Diverse Applications**: Despite their small size, CubeSats and SmallSats are capable of performing various missions, including Earth observation, communication, scientific research, and technology demonstration. They can be customized with different payloads to serve specific needs and applications.
- **Rapid Development and Iteration**: The modular nature of small satellites enables rapid prototyping, testing, and iteration of new technologies and concepts. This agility fosters innovation and allows for quick adaptation to changing mission requirements.
- Examples: In India, ISRO has launched several CubeSats and SmallSats under the PSLV-C37 mission in 2017, which carried a record 104 satellites in a single launch. These included the Cartosat-2 series for high-resolution imaging and multiple small satellites from international customers.

Application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Satellite Operations:

Another significant advancement in Indian satellite technology is the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for satellite operations and data analysis. AI techniques are increasingly being utilized to enhance satellite autonomy, improve data processing capabilities, and derive actionable insights from vast amounts of satellite data:

• Autonomous Operations: AI algorithms enable satellites to autonomously manage and optimize their operations, including orbit adjustments, payload management, and power allocation, thereby reducing reliance on ground control.

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- Data Analysis and Insights: AI-driven analytics facilitate faster and more accurate analysis of satellite imagery and sensor data. Machine learning models can detect patterns, anomalies, and changes on Earth's surface, supporting applications in agriculture, urban planning, disaster response, and environmental monitoring.
- Future Prospects: India is actively exploring the application of AI in satellite navigation, remote sensing, and scientific missions. AI-powered satellites are expected to play a crucial role in enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of space-based applications.

Space Sustainability and Debris Management:

As India expands its satellite fleet and launch capabilities, it is also prioritizing space sustainability and debris management. Measures include:

- **Design for Demise**: Satellites are increasingly designed with features to ensure safe re-entry into Earth's atmosphere at the end of their operational life, reducing the risk of space debris.
- Active Debris Removal: Research and development efforts are underway to develop technologies for active debris removal, aiming to mitigate the growing threat of orbital debris collisions.
- International Cooperation: India collaborates with international space agencies and organizations to establish guidelines and standards for responsible space operations, promoting long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

The evolution of launch vehicles is crucial in advancing space exploration, satellite deployment, and international cooperation. Here's a comprehensive look at the evolution of launch vehicles, with a focus on India's contributions:



Early Launch Vehicle Development:

- 1. V-2 Rocket (Germany):
 - Developed during World War II, the V-2 rocket was the world's first long-range guided ballistic missile. It laid the foundation for subsequent developments in rocketry and space launch technology.

2. Vostok, Mercury, and Apollo Programs:

 These programs by the Soviet Union (Vostok) and the United States (Mercury, Gemini, Apollo) focused on human spaceflight, utilizing increasingly powerful launch vehicles to achieve manned space missions to orbit and the Moon.

Development of Modern Launch Vehicles:

- 1. Saturn V (USA):
 - Developed during the Apollo program, Saturn V remains the tallest, heaviest, and most powerful rocket ever used for crewed missions. It successfully propelled astronauts to the Moon.

2. Delta and Atlas Series (USA):

• These rockets evolved from military programs and were adapted for satellite launches and interplanetary missions, becoming mainstays in the US launch vehicle fleet.

Evolution of Indian Launch Vehicles:

- 1. SLV (Satellite Launch Vehicle):
 - **SLV-3**: India's first experimental satellite launch vehicle, launched in 1980. It demonstrated India's capability to develop and launch satellites into orbit.
- 2. ASLV (Augmented Satellite Launch Vehicle):



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- ASLV-D1 to ASLV-D4: Developed in the 1990s, it aimed to augment payload capacity compared to SLV-3 and laid the foundation for subsequent launch vehicle development.
- 3. PSLV (Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle):
 - PSLV-G: Introduced in 1993, PSLV has become ISRO's workhorse, with multiple variants (PSLV-CA, PSLV-XL) capable of launching a variety of payloads into polar and geostationary orbits. It has a record of successful launches and is renowned for its reliability and versatility.
- 4. GSLV (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle):
 - GSLV Mk I to GSLV Mk III: Developed to meet India's growing demand for launching heavier payloads into geostationary orbits. GSLV Mk III, India's most powerful launcher, has successfully launched Chandrayaan-2 and GSAT-29 among others.

Advanced Launch Vehicle Technologies:

1. Reusable Launch Vehicle Technology Demonstrator (RLV-TD):

 HX-01: ISRO's initiative to develop a reusable spaceplane prototype to reduce launch costs and enhance operational efficiency. It aims to make space access more economical and sustainable.

Future Directions:

- 1. Small Satellite Launch Vehicles:
 - ISRO is developing Small Satellite Launch Vehicles (SSLVs) like the SSLV-D1 for dedicated launches of small satellites. These vehicles aim to provide cost-effective and flexible access to space for smaller payloads.
- 2. Human Spaceflight:



 India's ambitious Gaganyaan mission aims to send Indian astronauts into space aboard an Indian spacecraft, marking a significant milestone in India's space exploration capabilities.

Global Cooperation and Collaboration:

1. Commercial Launch Services:

 ISRO's Antrix Corporation facilitates commercial satellite launches using Indian launch vehicles, fostering international partnerships and revenue generation.

2. International Collaborations:

India collaborates with international space agencies and 0 organizations on satellite launches, joint missions, and technology exchanges, contributing to global space exploration efforts.

Advancements in Launch Vehicle Technology

Reusable Launch Vehicles (RLVs):

India, like other leading spacefaring nations, is investing in reusable launch vehicle (RLV) technology to reduce the cost of access to space and increase launch frequency. Reusable rockets are designed to land safely after launch, allowing them to be refurbished and flown again, similar to aircraft. This technology promises significant cost savings by eliminating the need to build new rockets for each mission.

• ISRO's RLV-TD Program: ISRO's efforts in developing reusable launch vehicle technology are encapsulated in the RLV Technology Demonstrator (RLV-TD) program. The program aims to validate technologies such as autonomous landing, thermal protection systems, and aerodynamic control for future reusable launch vehicles.



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• **HX-01**: The first prototype under the RLV-TD program, designated HX-01, conducted its maiden flight in 2016 as a scaleddown version of a reusable spaceplane. This marks a crucial step towards realizing fully reusable launch vehicles in the future.

Heavy Lift Launch Vehicles:

As satellite payloads grow larger and missions become more ambitious, the development of heavy lift launch vehicles (HLLVs) becomes essential. HLLVs are capable of lifting heavier payloads into orbit, including large communication satellites, scientific payloads, and components for future lunar and planetary missions.

 GSLV Mk III (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle): Developed by ISRO, GSLV Mk III is India's most powerful launch vehicle. It is capable of lifting payloads up to 4 tons to geostationary transfer orbit (GTO) and up to 10 tons to low Earth orbit (LEO). GSLV Mk III's successful launches, including Chandrayaan-2 and GSAT-29, demonstrate India's capability to handle complex missions requiring heavy lift capabilities.

Small Satellite Launch Vehicles (SSLVs):

In response to the growing demand for launching small satellites, ISRO has developed the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV). SSLVs are designed for dedicated launches of small payloads into specific orbits, providing cost-effective and flexible access to space for smaller satellite operators.

 SSLV-D1: The SSLV-D1 mission marked ISRO's entry into the small satellite launch market. It is capable of delivering payloads weighing up to 500 kg to sun-synchronous orbit (SSO) and 300 kg to geosynchronous transfer orbit (GTO). SSLVs offer rapid



turnaround times between launches and cater to the increasing demand for dedicated rideshare missions.

Future Prospects:

- Gaganyaan Mission: India's human spaceflight program, Gaganyaan, aims to send Indian astronauts to low Earth orbit (LEO) aboard an Indian spacecraft. The successful development and execution of this mission will elevate India's stature in human space exploration and pave the way for future crewed missions.
- Aditya-L1: ISRO's upcoming mission to study the Sun's corona and solar processes from a unique vantage point in orbit around the first Lagrangian point (L1). Aditya-L1 will provide crucial insights into solar variability and its impact on space weather.

International Collaboration:

 Commercial Launch Services: ISRO's commercial arm, Antrix Corporation, offers cost-effective launch services to international customers using its reliable PSLV and GSLV vehicles. Collaborations with foreign space agencies and private companies further enhance ISRO's capabilities and contribute to global space exploration efforts.

India's advancements in launch vehicle technology reflect its commitment to innovation, cost-effectiveness, and expanding capabilities in space exploration. With ongoing developments in reusable rockets, heavy lift vehicles, small satellite launchers, and ambitious missions like Gaganyaan and Aditya-L1, India is poised to play a significant role in shaping the future of space exploration and utilization.



Satellite and Launch Vehicle Technology with India's Space Observations

As of my last update in January 2022, India's space program has seen significant developments in satellite technology and launch vehicles. Here's an overview based on recent advancements:

7.1 Development of Satellite Technology

India has made notable progress in satellite technology, with advancements in communication, remote sensing, and navigation satellites. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has been instrumental in developing various types of satellites for different purposes:

- **Communication Satellites:** India has launched several communication satellites like GSAT series to enhance telecommunication and broadcasting services across the country.
- Earth Observation Satellites: Satellites such as the Cartosat series provide high-resolution images for urban planning, rural development, and disaster management.
- Navigation Satellites: The NavIC (Navigation with Indian Constellation) system is India's regional satellite navigation system, providing accurate positioning services over India and the surrounding region.

7.2 Indian Satellites and Their Missions

Recent missions have showcased India's capabilities in space exploration and application-based satellite deployments:

- Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan): Launched in 2013, this mission made India the first Asian country to reach Martian orbit and the fourth space agency globally to do so.
- Chandrayaan Missions: Chandrayaan-1 (2008) and Chandrayaan-2 (2019) aimed at lunar exploration, with





Chandrayaan-2 including a lander and rover component (Vikram and Pragyan).

• Recent Satellite Deployments: ISRO continues to deploy satellites for various purposes, including weather monitoring (INSAT series), scientific research, and surveillance.

7.3 Launch Vehicle Evolution

India has developed several generations of launch vehicles, each enhancing payload capacity, reliability, and cost-effectiveness:

- **PSLV (Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle):** Known for its reliability, PSLV has been used extensively for launching satellites into polar orbits, including foreign payloads.
- **GSLV (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle):** GSLV Mk III, India's heaviest and most powerful launcher, is capable of carrying heavier payloads into geostationary orbits.
- **Reusable Launch Vehicle Technology:** ISRO has been working on developing reusable launch vehicle technology to reduce the cost of access to space.

Current Developments

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Since developments in space technology are rapid and ongoing, recent updates might include advancements in:

- Small Satellite Launch Vehicles: ISRO's efforts in developing small satellite launch vehicles (SSLV) like the SSLV-D1 mission to provide cost-effective solutions for launching small satellites.
- Gaganyaan Mission: India's human spaceflight program aiming to send astronauts to space, demonstrating advanced capabilities in manned space missions.



Development of Satellite Technology

1. Communication Satellites:

The GSAT series continues to be deployed to enhance communication infrastructure across India.

2. Earth Observation Satellites:

The Cartosat series has been instrumental in providing high-0 resolution imagery for urban planning, agriculture, and disaster management.

3. Navigation Satellites:

• ISRO has further developed the NavIC (Navigation with Indian Constellation) system, expanding its coverage and accuracy.

Indian Satellites and Their Missions

1. Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan):

• Continues to operate and gather data from Mars since its successful insertion into Martian orbit in 2014.

2. Chandrayaan-2:

• Launched in 2019, it included an orbiter, lander (Vikram), and rover (Pragyan). While the lander lost communication during descent, the orbiter continues to provide valuable lunar data.

3. Recent Satellite Deployments:

• ISRO has launched satellites for various purposes, including weather forecasting, environmental monitoring, and scientific research.





Launch Vehicle Evolution

- 1. PSLV (Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle):
 - Continued reliability in launching satellites into polar orbits, both for domestic and international customers.

2. GSLV (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle):

• GSLV Mk III, India's heaviest launcher, has been used for missions requiring heavier payloads and higher orbits.

3. Reusable Launch Vehicle Technology:

ISRO is actively developing reusable launch vehicle 0 technology to reduce costs and increase launch frequency.

Recent Developments and Future Plans

1. Small Satellite Launch Vehicles (SSLV):

 ISRO successfully tested SSLV-D1 in 2022, demonstrating its capability to provide cost-effective launches for small satellites.

2. Gaganyaan Mission:

• India's ambitious human spaceflight program aiming for crewed missions to low Earth orbit, targeting launch readiness in the near future.

3. Technology Demonstrations:

• ISRO has conducted technology demonstrations for in-orbit servicing, satellite propulsion, and advanced communication systems.

4. International Collaborations:

• ISRO continues to collaborate with international space agencies and commercial entities for joint missions and satellite launches.

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