India launches IRNSS-1D; set to operationalise navigational system - The Hindu

India is set to operationalise its own navigational system with the successful launch of IRNSS-1D, the fourth in the series of seven navigational satellites, onboard PSLV-C27 on Saturday.

With this launch, the country is poised to operationalise the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS), having put into orbit four of the seven satellites.

At the end of the 59.5 hour countdown, PSLV-C27, the time-tested launch vehicle of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), lifted off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at 5.19 p.m. and injected the satellite into orbit about 21 minutes later.

A beaming ISRO Chairman A.S. Kiran Kumar, for whom this is the first project after taking charge of the space agency, said the mission was successful and the satellite had been placed in precise orbit.

&#8220;I congratulate the entire ISRO team for the 28th straight successful PSLV mission which has put the IRNSS-1D, the fourth of the navigation constellation satellite successfully,&#8221; Mr. Kumar said.

IRNSS-1D, which will provide navigation, tracking and mapping service and have a mission life of 10 years, is the fourth in the constellation of seven satellites, planned by ISRO to constitute IRNSS, which would be on par with U.S.&#8212;based GPS once the full complement of spacecrafts are launched.

&#8220;This mission has got significance because we are completing the minimum essential requirement of four satellites in the orbit to start the navigation process,&#8221; Project Director P. Kunhikrishnan said.

While four satellites would be sufficient to start operations of the IRNSS system, the remaining three would make it more accurate and efficient.

The IRNSS system, planned to be completed by this year at a total cost of Rs. 1,420 crore, will be targeted at South Asia and is designed to provide accurate position information services to users in the country as well as the region extending up to 1,500 km from its boundary.

Its applications include terrestrial and marine navigation, disaster management, vehicle tracking and fleet management, navigation aide for hikers and travellers, visual and voice navigation for drivers.

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