

## 31 July 2019: PIB Summary & Analysis

### MOU between ISRO and Other Space Agencies

#### Context

- The Union Cabinet has given its ex-post facto approval to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between India and Bolivia also India and Bahrain on Cooperation in the Exploration and Uses of Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes".

#### Details of MOUs

- These MoUs shall enable the following potential interest areas of cooperation such as,
  - space science, technology and applications including remote sensing of the earth;
  - satellite communication and satellite-based navigation;
  - Space science and planetary exploration;
  - use of spacecraft and space systems and ground system; and application of space technology.
- The MoU with Bolivia would lead to setup a Joint Working Group, drawing members from ISRO and the Bolivian Space Agency (ABE), which will further work out the plan of action including the time-frame and the means of implementing this MoU.
- The MOU with Bahrain would lead to set up a Joint Working Group, drawing members from DOS/ISRO and the Bahrain National Space Science Agency (NSSA) of the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain, which will further work out the plan of action including the time-frame and the means of implementing this MoU.

#### Impact

- The signed MoU will provide impetus to explore newer research activities and application possibilities in the field of remote sensing of the earth; satellite communication; satellite navigation; space science and planetary exploration.

#### Benefits

- This MoU would lead to develop a joint activity in the field of application of space technologies for the benefit of humanity. Thus, all sections and regions of the country will get benefited.

### ISRO Technical Liaison Unit at Moscow

#### Context

- The Union Cabinet has approved the setting up of ISRO Technical Liaison Unit (ITLU) at Moscow, Russia.

### **Background:**

- Department of Space has instituted technical Liaison Units, namely ISRO Technical Liaison Units (ITLU) at Washington, USA and Paris, France with the prime objective to liaise with various Government and space agencies in USA and Europe, respectively.
- Space cooperation has been one of the major links between India and Russia almost from the beginning of the space era and currently both sides are actively pursuing interactions in diversified areas of space programme
- Apart from intensifying cooperation with Russia, India has expanded its space cooperation with countries near to Russia. This calls for extensive uninterrupted coordination & interface support for increased level international technical collaboration.

### **About the unit**

- The ISRO Technical Liaison Unit (ITLU) at Moscow will enable effective technical coordination for timely interventions on diversified matters with Russia and neighbouring countries for realization of the programmatic targets of ISRO.
- The Liaison Officer, deputed at ITLU from ISRO provides technical information about the developments in research and technology and inputs arising from their meetings with researchers, government agencies and industries in the respective countries.
- They also support the ongoing bilateral programmes of cooperation in space technology and act on behalf of ISRO on the matters referred.

### **Advantages**

- ISRO will be able to collaborate with Space agencies/industries in Russia and neighbouring countries for mutually synergistic outcomes.
- ISRO's Gaganyaan programme requires development of some of the key technologies and establishment of specialized facilities, which are essential to support life in space.
- Keeping in view the 15th August, 2022 timeline for realization of the Gaganyaan human space programme, it is prudent to avail technical cooperation from International space agencies, who have already demonstrated their technical capabilities in specific areas.
- Russia, being one of the space faring nations, it is envisaged to collaborate with Russia extensively in various fields of relevance.

## **International Settlement Agreements**

## Context

- The Union Cabinet has approved the signing of the United Nations Convention on International Settlement Agreements (UNISA) resulting from mediation by the Republic of India scheduled to be held at Singapore

## Background

- The United Nations General Assembly adopted the United Nations Convention on International Settlement Agreements Resulting from Mediation ("the Convention") in 2018.
- The Convention provides a uniform and efficient framework for the enforcement of international settlement agreements resulting from mediation.
- The Convention defines two additional grounds upon which a court may, on its own motion, refuse to grant relief. Those grounds relate to the fact that a dispute would not be capable of settlement by mediation or would be contrary to public policy.

## Benefit

- Signing of the Convention will boost the confidence of the investors and shall provide a positive signal to foreign investors about India's commitment to adhere to international practice on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR).

## Initiatives to promote ADR Mechanisms:

- In order to encourage international commercial arbitration in India, to evolve a comprehensive ecosystem of arbitration the Government is establishing the New Delhi International Arbitration Centre (NDIAC) as a statutory body.
- The Commercial Courts Act, 2015, has been further amended and legislative exercise to further amend the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996, is currently underway.
- These initiatives are being taken with a view to encourage the settlement of commercial disputes, domestic and international, in India through ADR Mechanism of Arbitration, Conciliation and Mediation.
- A new Chapter (IIIA) has been inserted in the Commercial Courts Act, 2015, for mandatory pre-institution mediation and settlement in certain category of cases.
- Therefore, the provisions of the 'Convention' are in line with the domestic laws and the efforts made to strengthen Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanisms.

**Delegation of IAF meets MoS Dr Jitendra Singh**

### Context

- A delegation of International Astronautical Federation (IAF) led by Mr Christian Feichtinger, Executive Director, IAF, met the Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh.

### About IAF

- Founded in 1951, the International Astronautical Federation is the world's leading space advocacy body with 366 members in 68 countries, including all leading space agencies, companies, research institutions, universities, societies, associations, etc.

### Mission of the Federation

- As organizer of the annual International Astronautical Congress (IAC) – world's premier global space event – and other thematic events,
- The IAF actively encourages the development of astronautics for peaceful purposes and supports the dissemination of scientific and technical information related to space.
- The IAF's International Astronautical Congress and various IAF committees provide unique collaborative platforms for experts from space agencies, industry and research
- The IAF is building a future of cooperation, development and international friendship, bringing together experts from experienced and emerging space nations alike
- The Federation has many well-established channels to disseminate information within its global network and the wider space community
- The Federation's prestigious awards are presented annually to individuals and groups who have distinguished themselves in the global space community
- To nurture new talent, the Federation has many activities targeting students and young professionals
- The global network of the IAF, and IAF publications, help promote the public appreciation of space activities worldwide

## WorldSkills International Competition 2019

### Context

Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Government of India announced the 48-member contingent which will represent India at the biggest showcase of skills excellence in the world, called WorldSkills International Competition 2019.

### About the event

- WorldSkills International Competition referred as the 'Olympics for Skills', is scheduled in Kazan, Russia.
- More than 1,500 competitors from 60 countries will compete in 55 skill competitions at

this mega event. India will participate in 44 skills.

- National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) under the aegis of MSDE has been leading India's delegation at this biennial event since 2011
- Through WorldSkills Competition, we aim to provide opportunities to the youth in our country to compete with, and learn from, their peers across the globe.
- Such initiatives also help us benchmark our skills to the international standards and will improve the quality of vocational training in India.

