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Rocket Launches Record Number of Satellites: 10

India beats Russia in the number of satellites launched during one mission

The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle launched by the India Space Research Organization yesterday at 03:50 GMT from the Sriharikota space station put into orbit no less than 10 satellites in an attempt to overpower the other major competitors in the multi-billion-dollar space market. India benefits from a space program spanning over 45 years and has demonstrated that it is able to put a satellite into a precise orbit although the launcher was carrying multiple payloads. "The initial signals indicate normal health of the satellites. The PSLV repeatedly proved itself as a reliable and versatile workhorse launch vehicle", wrote the ISRO in a press statement published on its official website. The first satellite to be put into orbit during the 13th flight conducted with the PSLV was the 690 kilogram Cartosat-2A, a remote sensing Indian satellite, followed by a mini satellite weight just over 83 kilograms along with a series of nano-satellites with weights between 3 and 16 kilograms, built and owned by a series of research institutions across Europe, Canada and Japan. "The mission was perfect. It is a historic moment for us because it is the first time that we have launched 10 satellites in a single mission", said ISRO chairman G. Madhavan. The previous record was held by the Russian space agency, with a total of eight satellites launched into space with a single launch vehicle. India is now launching foreign satellites into space at a price representing 60 to 70 percent of the one requested by other space agencies for similar services and is struggling to outrun countries such as the US, Russia and the European Space Agency in the commercial satellite launch services. "By launching so many satellites at one go, India has showcased the commercial applicability of its space programme. It wants to market its launch systems and also its capability in Earth imagery. The mission is very significant from a commercial point of view", says space expert at the Institute of Defense and Analyses, Ajay Lele. India entered the commercial launch market last year when it launched into orbit an Italian spacecraft, while this year it carried an Israeli spy satellite. Some three decades ago, India launched into space its first satellite with the help of a home-built rocket. The weather satellite Cartosat-2A was put into an orbit 630 kilometers above Earth's surface, in order to aid land and water resource management so that the annual economic growth of the country would remain at a constant nine percent. India is also expected to launch a lunar orbiter in the following months, thus joining Japan and China in the moon exploration efforts.