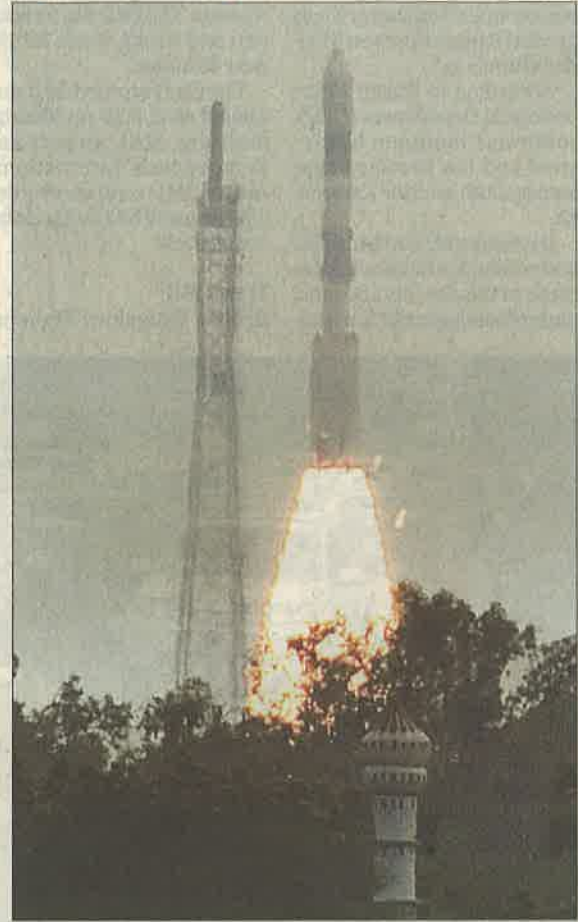


Up in the sky



Isro's PSLV C 30 carrying multi wavelength Space Observatory Astrosat, lifts off from Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota on Monday. PTI Reports, Page 12

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Racing into space

Isro launches India's first Astrosat

CHENNAI, DHNS: Scripting another new chapter in its space technology, India on Monday moved a step forward by successfully launching Astrosat, the country's first dedicated multi-wavelength space observatory, along with six other foreign satellites at Sriharikota spaceport.

The 49.1-m-tall PSLV-C30, Indian Space Research Organisation's (Isro) most trusted rocket, weighing 320.2 tonne, took off precisely at 10 am from the first launch pad at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC), in this island in the Bay of Bengal, about 90 km north of Chennai.

This is the PSLV's 10th mission in its "XL" configuration. It placed all the satellites, including the Astrosat that has a five-year life span, into a 650-km orbit of 6° inclination to the equator soon after takeoff.

This mission assumes more

Saarc satellite launch soon

The Isro on Monday said it would launch more than 20 satellites, including a satellite dedicated to the Saarc nations, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's pet project, very soon, reports *DHNS* from Chennai.

Isro Chairman Kiran Kumar said Sri Lanka has given its consent to the configuration of Saarc satellite.

In June 2014, Modi asked Isro to develop a Saarc satellite that can be dedicated as a "gift" to the neighbouring nations.

significance as the successful flight of PSLV rocket will give the Indian space programme the much needed booster to understand the universe and also enables the simultaneous multi-wavelength observations of various astronomical objects with a single satellite.

Isro scientists, including its Chairman A S Kiran Kumar at the mission control centre, were jubilant and hugged each other when the rocket successfully placed the satel-

lites into the required orbit.

"Today is one of the very eventful days. I congratulate the entire Isro team for their success," said Kiran Kumar.

Astrosat will observe universe in the optical, ultraviolet, low and high energy X-ray regions of the electromagnetic spectrum, whereas most other scientific satellites are capable of observing a narrow range of wavelength band.

In addition, multi-wavelength observations of As-

trostat can be further extended with coordinated observations using other spacecraft and ground-based observations.

All the major astronomy institutions and some universities in India will participate in these observations.

After injection into Orbit, the two solar panels of Astrosat automatically deployed in quick succession.

The spacecraft control centre at Mission Operations Complex (MOX) of Isro Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC) at Bangalore will manage the satellite during its mission life.

Along with Astrosat, six satellites from international customers such as 76 kg LAPAN-A2 of Indonesia, 14 kg NLS-14 (Ev9) of Canada and four identical LEMUR satellites of the US together weighing about 28 kg have been launched in this PSLV flight.

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