

# 'UP govt should launch policy to become space-tech devpt hub'

**I**ndian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is planning to set up space labs in all 75 districts of the state and launch Village Vaigyanik programme to help students gain knowledge about space technology and get a chance to visit ISRO. In an interview with **Mohita Tewari**, director of Space Application Centre (SAC), a research facility under ISRO, **Nilesh M Desai**, discussed UP's potential in space technology development. Excerpts:

## How do you see the potential of Uttar Pradesh in space technology?

■ Uttar Pradesh must have an ISRO space centre. Like the state has a defence corridor, it should have one for space. A space industry should also be established to develop space-related equipment. Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla recently took a historic journey to the International Space Station (ISS) as part of the groundbreaking Axiom Mission-4. He is from the state and has become an inspiration for young students. Hence, a human space flight station with an astronaut training station should be made with the support of ISRO, and in this, Shukla's guidance can be taken.



## What specific initiatives will ISRO undertake to promote space education, research, and development in the state?

■ UP has a lot of potential for research, development, and education in space. ISRO has launched the 'Village Vaigyanik' programme under which

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space laboratories will be established in all 75 districts. It's a ground-breaking outreach programme bringing space science and STEM education to students in the remotest corners of UP. One such laboratory has already been established, which is India's first space lab in a rural school, in Hasudi Ausanpur village in Siddharth Nagar. We met Governor Anandiben Patel, and on her recommendation, we will establish another lab in a school which is within the premises of the Governor

House. We also have the IS-TRAC (ISRO Telemetry Tracking and Command Network) centre in Lucknow, which is a ground station facility that plays a crucial role in supporting ISRO's satellite and launch vehicle missions. Lucknow ISTRAC is a secondary unit, and the main centre is in Bengaluru. We can further strengthen Lucknow's IS-TRAC.

## What role can private companies play in advancing space technology in UP?

■ The UP govt, like other states like Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh, should launch a space technology policy to establish itself as a hub for space-tech development. Incentives should be given so that it attracts private players.

## Tell us about ISRO's upcoming projects.

■ Development of a dedicated satellite to provide timely alerts related to lightning strikes is proposed, as lightning has been a reason for the death of farmers, especially in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. ISRO is working on quantum communication, which is secured application through quantum and optical technology, satellites to create unbreakable encryption for data, banking, and health records.