

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

In last 7 years, ISRO activities expanded to undertake development activities: Jitendra Singh

05 July 2021

The activities of the ISRO have not been restricted to just launching of satellites, but the space agency has been constantly enlarging its role in development activities in the last seven years, Union minister Jitendra Singh said on Monday.

ISRO scientists briefed Singh about the application of space technology in agriculture, soil, water resources, land use, land cover, rural development, earth and climate studies, geosciences, urban and infrastructure, disaster management support, forestry, ecology and using geospatial technology for enabling decision support systems.

Interacting with officials of the Indian Space Research Organisation and the Department of Space, he said, "ISRO is no longer confined only to the launching of satellites, but it has been constantly enlarging its role in development activities in the last seven years, thus contributing to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's mission of 'Transforming India'."

Singh is the Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

He recalled that over five years ago, on the intervention of the PM, representatives of different ministries and departments were engaged in an intense interaction with scientists from ISRO and Department of Space to work out how best space technology could be used for supplementing, improving and expediting infrastructural development and implementing welfare schemes.

Singh said space technology is now being used in diverse sectors, including railways, roads and bridges, medical management and telemedicine, procurement of timely utilisation certificates, disaster forecast and management.

In agriculture, satellite-driven seasonal cropping pattern, experiments on yield estimation, estimation of net-sown crop area and agricultural drought assessment studies are being conducted, Singh said. Similarly, in the area of soils, land degradation maps were generated and are useful for planning soil conservation and reclamation programmes, land use planning, for bringing additional areas into cultivation and also to improve productivity levels in degraded lands.

Singh said in the field of forestry, analysis of forest cover change, spatial biomass estimation, community biodiversity characterisation, forest fire alert system, inputs to working plan and wildlife plan preparation, forest carbon sequestration, inputs to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change are being carried out in collaboration with the Environment Ministry, Department of Biotechnology, Forest Survey of India and state forest departments.

On rural development, Singh said there are several initiatives/projects, which are taken up by state and central government departments at micro and macro level to enrich the assets required in the rural sector. The minister said that it is not a widely known ISRO had been providing liquid oxygen on a large scale to several state governments from their own manufacturing facilities or from the existing stock during the COVID pandemic.

"Not only this, ISRO is also engaged in repurposing existing resources, scaling up of capacity of their facilities and also transferred technology to supplement the country's fight against the second wave of COVID-19, when it was at its peak," Singh stressed.

Source: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/science/in-last-7-years-isro-activities-expanded-to-undertake-development-activities-jitendra-singh/articleshow/84150564.cms>