

India plans policy to tackle space threats

By Ajay Banerjee

New Delhi: Twenty years after the Kargil conflict, India's strategic planners, after a two-day brainstorming session among several agencies, have decided to lay down new "policy and rules" for future use of space for military and non-military purposes.

"IndSpaceEx" session was conducted by the Ministry of Defence on July 25-26. The exercise assessed threats in space from a military perspective and India's current capability. It took stock of the military space assets of the US, Russia and China.

The country's armed forces, along with Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), ISRO, academia from IIT-Mumbai, think-tanks like ORF and private industry were part of the event. The exercise came four months after the successful testing of an anti-satellite (A-Sat) interceptor missile that destroyed a low-earth orbit satellite. Within the community of strategic thinkers, Beijing poses a major threat to India's security interest – satellites and other assets.

An internal study within the Army points to how future wars could be different, asymmetric and dominated by the use of cyber and space assets. Already the government has set up separate division-level formation Defence space agency (DSA). It is headed by an IAF officer and is headquartered at Bangalore, expected to be operational any time now.

It will command all space assets of the three services, including the A-SAT capability, which can be used to destroy enemy space-based satellites and other assets. Bangalore was chosen as the headquarters of ISRO, which manages all types of space programmes, are also located there.

Defence space agency to be operational soon

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