CLAWS Newsletter

Space & Disruptive Technologies Review | Volume I | Issue No. 02

by Amita Pilania

INDIA

29 May (*PIB*): MoU Signed to Bring Semiconductor Substrate Manufacturing Technology to India

The Government of Odisha, Intel, and US-based 3D Glass Solutions (3DGS) signed an MoU to establish advanced semiconductor substrate manufacturing capability in India. The proposed facility in Odisha is expected to support the production of glass-core and high-density interconnect substrates, critical components for advanced chip packaging. The project forms part of India's broader semiconductor mission and represents one of the largest high-technology manufacturing investments in the country.

Strategic Assessment: The initiative strengthens India's semiconductor supply-chain resilience and supports technological self-reliance in critical sectors such as AI, defence electronics, telecommunications, and space systems.

01 June (*IDRW*): Bellatrix Aerospace Readying Ultra-Low Orbit Satellites for 180-200 km Altitude Under Project 200

Bellatrix Aerospace announced progress under Project 200, which aims to deploy satellites in Ultra-Low Earth Orbit (ULEO) at altitudes of 180–200 km. The programme leverages advanced propulsion technologies to sustain operations in an orbital regime traditionally considered difficult due to atmospheric drag. ULEO platforms promise higher-resolution Earth observation and lower communication latency while reducing launch costs.

Strategic Assessment: If successful, the programme could provide India with a niche capability in next-generation Earth observation and ISR architectures, with potential applications in defence surveillance and responsive space operations.

2 June (*PIB*): DRDO & IAF conduct successful flight-tests of RudraM-II Air-to-Surface Missile

DRDO and the Indian Air Force successfully conducted flight tests of the indigenous RudraM-II air-to-surface missile under extreme release conditions. The missile accurately engaged a

predefined target, validating all critical subsystems, including guidance, navigation, and control mechanisms. Developed by Research Centre Imarat in collaboration with other DRDO laboratories, RudraM-II enhances India's precision-strike capability.

Strategic Assessment: The successful trials strengthen India's stand-off strike capability and contribute to the growing indigenous missile ecosystem supporting network-centric and precision warfare.

10 June (*PIB*): MoD inks Rs 449 crore contract for 20 Enhanced Capability Global Navigation Satellite System Jammers for Indian Navy

The Ministry of Defence signed a ₹449 crore contract with Accord Software and Systems Pvt Ltd for 20 Enhanced Capability Global Navigation Satellite System (ECGNSS) Jammers for the Indian Navy. With over 75% indigenous content, the systems are designed to degrade adversary satellite-navigation signals and conduct deceptive jamming, thereby improving survivability in contested electromagnetic environments.

Strategic Assessment: The acquisition strengthens India's electronic warfare capability and enhances the Navy's ability to operate in GPS-denied and multi-threat environments.

10 June (*PIB*): TDB-DST Supports TIEA Connectors Pvt. Ltd., Bengaluru, for Commercialization of Indigenous High-Reliability Connector Technologies for Aerospace, Defence, Space and Electric Mobility Applications

The Technology Development Board (TDB), under the Department of Science and Technology, extended support to TIEA Connectors Pvt Ltd for commercialisation of indigenous high-reliability connector technologies. These specialised connectors are intended for aerospace, defence, space, and electric mobility applications, where reliability under extreme operating conditions is essential.

Strategic Assessment: The initiative strengthens India's domestic supply chain for critical electronic components and reduces reliance on imported technologies in strategic sectors.

11 June (Times of India): Three Indian Space Startups Selected Under IN-SPACe Technology Adoption Fund

IN-SPACe selected three space technology companies—two from Bengaluru and one from Hyderabad—for support under its Technology Adoption Fund (TAF) initiative. The programme is designed to assist startups in commercialising indigenous space technologies, accelerating product development, and bridging the gap between innovation and market deployment. The selected firms will receive financial assistance and institutional support to scale technologies relevant to satellite systems, space applications, and downstream services.

Strategic Assessment: The initiative reflects India's continued push to strengthen its private space ecosystem and accelerate indigenous innovation. By supporting the commercial adoption of emerging space technologies, the programme contributes to building a more competitive and self-reliant space industry while enhancing India's long-term technological and strategic capabilities.

11 June (*Times of India*): India's first 'made-in-India' C295 military transport aircraft has successfully completed its maiden test-flight

India's first "Made-in-India" C295 military transport aircraft successfully completed its maiden test flight. The programme, being executed by Tata Advanced Systems and Airbus, represents a major milestone in India's military aviation manufacturing ecosystem and supports the gradual localisation of aircraft production capabilities.

Strategic Assessment: The development advances India's aerospace manufacturing base and supports long-term goals of defence industrial self-reliance and export competitiveness.

11 June (*PIB*): Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh Calls Upon Industry to Scale Up Investments in India's Space Sector

Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh called upon industry leaders to increase investments in India's space sector, highlighting the rapid growth of the private space ecosystem following reforms. He noted that India now hosts over 400 space startups and announced measures including venture capital and technology adoption funds to accelerate innovation, indigenous

technology development, and commercialisation. The government emphasised stronger industry participation in satellite manufacturing, launch services, and downstream applications.

Strategic Assessment: The initiative reflects India's efforts to build a globally competitive space industry by leveraging private-sector innovation and reducing dependence on foreign technologies.

12 June (*PIB*): Raksha Mantri inaugurates an Advanced Weapon System Complex at DRDL, Hyderabad

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh inaugurated an Advanced Weapon System Complex at DRDO's Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL) in Hyderabad. The facility is intended to support the development of next-generation missile and strategic weapon systems. During the event, the defence minister highlighted the performance of indigenous missile systems and outlined the vision for "Mission Sudarshan Chakra", a multi-layered missile defence architecture for India.

Strategic Assessment: The complex strengthens India's indigenous weapons development ecosystem and supports future advancements in missile technology, air defence, and strategic deterrence capabilities.

13 June (*PIB*): DRDO demonstrates the nation's next-gen defence capabilities

DRDO successfully conducted three consecutive flight tests on 10–11 June 2026, demonstrating key next-generation defence technologies. The trials validated India's multi-layered Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) system, with interceptors successfully engaging designated targets, including capabilities designed to counter emerging long-range missile threats. DRDO also carried out the maiden flight test of the Naval Anti-Ship Missile–Medium Range (NASM-MR), validating its anti-surface warfare capability.

Strategic Assessment: The successful demonstrations mark a significant advancement in India's strategic defence architecture. The BMD trials place India among a select group of nations possessing the capability to counter threats up to intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) class systems, while the NASM-MR strengthens indigenous maritime strike capabilities and enhances naval deterrence.

15 June (*PIB*): DRDO conducts successful flight-test of Long-Range Land Attack Cruise Missile

DRDO conducted a successful flight test of the indigenous Long-Range Land Attack Cruise Missile (LRLACM) from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha. The missile met all mission objectives and validated critical subsystems developed by DRDO laboratories and Indian industry partners. Designed for precision strike missions, the missile features a terrain-hugging flight profile and long-range engagement capability.

Strategic Assessment: The successful trial significantly enhances India's indigenous long-range precision-strike capability and strengthens its ability to conduct stand-off attacks against high-value targets.

14 June (*PIB*): India's Space Economy Poised to Reach USD 45 Billion in Next Decade; over 400 Space StartUps driving the next phase of growth: Dr Jitendra Singh

Speaking at industry engagements, Dr. Jitendra Singh stated that India's space economy is expected to reach USD 45 billion over the next decade, driven by policy reforms and the emergence of more than 400 space startups. The government highlighted increasing private investment, expanding international partnerships, and growing opportunities in satellite manufacturing, launch services, space applications, and downstream markets.

Strategic Assessment: The projection underscores the increasing economic and strategic importance of the space sector as a driver of technological innovation, industrial growth, and national competitiveness.

17 June (*IDRW*): IAF to develop indigenous kamikaze one way attack drones

The Indian Air Force is reportedly working towards developing indigenous one-way attack drones to enhance its precision-strike capabilities. The programme aims to field cost-effective loitering munitions capable of engaging high-value targets while reducing operational risk to manned platforms. The initiative reflects lessons emerging from recent conflicts where loitering munitions have played a decisive role.

Strategic Assessment: The development highlights India's growing focus on autonomous strike systems and unmanned warfare, which are increasingly shaping modern battlefield operations.

21 June (*PIB*): Indigenous Naval Platforms Boost India's Maritime ISR and Oceanographic Capabilities

Prime Minister Narendra Modi commissioned three frontline naval platforms—INS Dunagiri, INS Sanshodhak, and INS Agray—in Kolkata on 21 June 2026. INS Dunagiri is a stealth-guided missile frigate equipped with advanced indigenous weapons and sensors, INS Agray is a survey vessel designed to enhance hydrographic and maritime domain awareness capabilities, and INS Sanshodhak is a specialised ocean survey platform supporting underwater and navigational data collection. The commissioning marks another milestone in India's indigenous shipbuilding programme and maritime modernisation efforts.

Strategic Assessment: The induction of these platforms strengthens India's maritime surveillance, operational readiness, and blue-water capabilities while advancing the objectives of Aatmanirbhar Bharat in the naval sector.

21 June (*PIB*): DAE Inaugurates Deuterated Compounds Production Plant and Commissions Prototype Sodium Cell at HWBF, Vadodara

The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) inaugurated a deuterated compounds production facility and commissioned a prototype sodium-ion cell at the Heavy Water Board Facility in Vadodara. The deuterated compounds plant will support scientific research and advanced industrial applications, while the sodium-ion battery initiative seeks to advance indigenous energy-storage technologies.

Strategic Assessment: The development strengthens India's capabilities in strategic materials, advanced energy technologies, and scientific research infrastructure, with potential applications in defence, space, and clean-energy sectors.

23 June (*The Hindu*): BRICS Space Agencies Meet in Bengaluru to Expand Multilateral Space Cooperation

Representatives from BRICS member states' space agencies met in Bengaluru to discuss avenues for strengthening cooperation in space exploration, Earth observation, satellite applications, and data sharing. The meeting focused on expanding collaborative initiatives under the BRICS framework, including remote sensing cooperation, disaster management

support, and the peaceful use of outer space. The discussions also reviewed progress on existing joint projects and explored opportunities for future multilateral space partnerships.

Strategic Assessment: The meeting underscores the growing role of BRICS as a platform for space diplomacy and technological cooperation. Enhanced collaboration among BRICS space agencies could strengthen collective capabilities in Earth observation, satellite services, and space governance while providing an alternative framework for international space cooperation beyond traditional Western-led partnerships.

USA

27 May (*Air and Space Forces Magazine*): House Panel Proposes Eliminating SDA, Space RCO

A US House Armed Services Committee panel proposed eliminating the Space Development Agency (SDA) and the Space Rapid Capabilities Office (Space RCO) as part of broader defence acquisition reforms. The proposal seeks to transfer SDA's responsibilities for the Proliferated Warfighter Space Architecture (PWSA) and other programmes directly to the US Space Force. Supporters argue the move would streamline management and reduce bureaucratic overlap, while critics warn it could slow innovation and rapid capability development in the space domain.

Strategic Assessment: The proposal highlights ongoing debates within the United States over the most effective organisational model for military space acquisition. Any restructuring could influence the pace of development of next-generation space capabilities critical for missile warning, communications, and joint all-domain operations.

2 June (*CGTN*): US in talks to expand nuclear weapons deployments in Europe- reports

Reports indicate that the United States is discussing the possibility of expanding the deployment of nuclear weapons in Europe amid growing security concerns and evolving deterrence requirements within NATO. The discussions reportedly focus on strengthening the alliance's nuclear posture in response to changing strategic dynamics and perceived threats in the Euro-Atlantic region. While no official deployment decisions have been announced, the reports have generated debate regarding strategic stability and arms control.

Strategic Assessment: The reported discussions underscore the continuing importance of nuclear deterrence in European security architecture. Any expansion of forward-deployed nuclear assets could influence NATO-Russia strategic calculations and further shape the evolving deterrence landscape in Europe.

16 June (*Air Technology*): USSF awards $514m contract to Lockheed Martin for GPS IIIF SV23 & 24

The US Space Force awarded a contract worth approximately USD 514 million to Lockheed Martin to produce GPS IIIF Space Vehicles 23 and 24. The GPS IIIF programme represents the latest generation of Global Positioning System satellites, featuring enhanced accuracy, improved anti-jamming capabilities, increased cybersecurity resilience, and support for both civilian and military users. The satellites form part of ongoing efforts to modernise the US positioning, navigation, and timing (PNT) architecture.

Strategic Assessment: The contract underscores the strategic importance of resilient space-based PNT infrastructure in modern warfare. Enhanced GPS capabilities strengthen military navigation, precision-guided weapons, and network-centric operations while improving resistance against electronic warfare and signal disruption.

17 June (*NASA*): A private company will build and launch NASA's next Mars orbiter in 2028

NASA selected Relativity Space under a new public-private partnership to build, launch, and operate the Aeolus Mars orbiter, scheduled for launch in 2028. The mission will carry NASA's Aeolus instrument suite to provide the first daily global measurements of Martian winds, temperatures, dust, and cloud activity. Relativity Space will be responsible for spacecraft development, launch services, and mission operations, while NASA will provide the scientific payload. The mission is intended to support future robotic and human exploration of Mars by improving understanding of the Martian atmosphere.

Strategic Assessment: The selection marks a significant expansion of commercial participation in deep-space exploration beyond Earth orbit. NASA's reliance on a private company for an interplanetary mission reflects the growing role of commercial space firms in scientific exploration and space infrastructure. The mission also demonstrates how public-private partnerships are increasingly being used to accelerate planetary exploration while reducing costs and development timelines.

18 June (*DefenseNews*): NNSA Delivers First W76/Mk4B Nuclear Reentry Body Nearly Three Months Ahead of Schedule for Ohio-Class Ballistic Missile Submarines

The US National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) delivered the first production unit of the W76/Mk4B nuclear reentry body nearly three months ahead of schedule for deployment aboard Ohio-class submarine ballistic missile submarines. The Mk4B upgrade incorporates enhanced safety, reliability, and effectiveness features, supporting the long-term sustainment of the United States' sea-based nuclear deterrent. The programme forms part of broader efforts to modernise the US nuclear arsenal while extending the operational life of existing warhead systems.

Strategic Assessment: The early delivery highlights the priority being accorded to nuclear modernisation amid intensifying major-power competition. Strengthening the survivability and credibility of sea-based deterrent forces remains central to maintaining strategic stability and second-strike capability.

CHINA

29 May (*CGTN*): China's Shenzhou-21 astronaut crew returns to Earth

China's Shenzhou-21 astronaut crew successfully returned to Earth after completing a six-month mission aboard the Tiangong Space Station. During their stay, the crew conducted a range of scientific experiments, technology demonstrations, station maintenance activities, and extravehicular operations. The mission contributed to the continued development and utilisation of China's permanently crewed orbital platform and supported preparations for future deep-space exploration initiatives.

Strategic Assessment: The successful completion of Shenzhou-21 underscores China's growing proficiency in long-duration human spaceflight and reinforces its ambition to establish itself as a leading space power. Sustained operations aboard Tiangong provide valuable experience for China's planned lunar exploration and future crewed Moon missions.

31 May (*CGTN*): China launches new test satellite for internet technology

China successfully launched a new experimental satellite to test and verify advanced internet and communications technologies. The satellite was placed into its designated orbit aboard a Long March launch vehicle and is expected to support research related to next-generation communications, data transmission, and network technologies. The mission forms part of China's broader efforts to expand indigenous space-based communications infrastructure and strengthen technological capabilities in the digital domain.

Strategic Assessment: The launch reflects China's continued investment in space-based communications architectures and emerging digital infrastructure. Advances in satellite internet technologies have significant dual-use applications, supporting both civilian connectivity and military communications, intelligence, surveillance, and network-centric operations.

05 June (*CGTN*): China launches new satellite group for commercial constellation

China successfully launched a new group of satellites into orbit as part of a commercial satellite constellation programme. The satellites were carried aboard a Long March rocket and are intended to support the expansion of China's commercial space infrastructure, including communications, remote sensing, and data-service applications. The launch forms part of broader efforts by Chinese commercial and state-backed entities to deploy large-scale satellite networks and strengthen the country's presence in the rapidly growing commercial space sector.

Strategic Assessment: The mission highlights China's continued investment in satellite constellation architectures that can provide communications, Earth observation, and data services at scale. Such constellations have significant dual-use potential, contributing to both commercial development and strategic capabilities in areas such as ISR, navigation, and resilient communications.

07 Jun (*CGTN*): World's first prefabricated computing base begins operation in East China

China commenced operations of the world's first prefabricated computing base in eastern China, designed to rapidly deploy high-performance computing infrastructure through modular construction techniques. The facility integrates advanced computing, artificial intelligence, cloud services, and data-processing capabilities while significantly reducing construction timelines compared to conventional data centres. The project forms part of China's broader strategy to expand national computing power and digital infrastructure to support emerging technologies and industrial innovation.

Strategic Assessment: The development highlights the growing importance of computing power as a strategic resource in the AI era. Enhanced high-performance computing infrastructure will support advancements in artificial intelligence, big data analytics, autonomous systems, and other emerging technologies with potential civilian and military applications.

15 June (*CGTN*): China's Lijian-1 rocket sends 8 satellites into orbit

China successfully launched eight satellites into orbit aboard the Lijian-1 (Kinetica-1) carrier rocket from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre on 15 June 2026. The mission carried a mix of commercial and experimental payloads supporting Earth observation, communications, and technology verification objectives. Developed for the commercial launch market, the solid-fuel Lijian-1 has emerged as one of China's key launch vehicles for deploying small and medium-sized satellite constellations.

Strategic Assessment: The mission highlights China's expanding commercial space launch capability and its growing capacity to rapidly deploy satellite constellations. Such capabilities support both civilian and strategic objectives, including communications, remote sensing, and resilient space-based infrastructure critical for future space competition.

Russia

07 June (*Tom's Hardware*): Russia's new 'Starlink-Style' Rassvet fleet loses its first satellite after weeks — Object 4 drops out of orbit, but 15 others remain

Russia's emerging Rassvet satellite constellation, often described as a "Starlink-style" low Earth orbit communications network, experienced its first setback after one satellite (Object 4) reportedly dropped out of orbit only weeks after launch. Despite the loss, 15 satellites from the initial deployment remain operational. The Rassvet programme is intended to provide broadband communications and support Russia's efforts to develop an indigenous satellite internet architecture amid growing competition in the commercial space sector.

Strategic Assessment: The incident highlights the technical challenges associated with deploying and sustaining large satellite constellations. Nevertheless, Russia's continued pursuit of indigenous satellite internet capabilities reflects the growing strategic importance of resilient space-based communications infrastructure for both civilian and national security applications.

19 June (*POLITIKO*): The Philippines and Russia are eyeing a possible cooperation in nuclear energy, space technology, and artificial intelligence.

The Philippines and Russia have identified space technology, artificial intelligence, and nuclear energy as potential new areas for bilateral cooperation following talks between Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and Russian President Vladimir Putin during the ASEAN–Russia Commemorative Summit in Kazan. While no formal agreements were signed, both sides highlighted emerging technology sectors as promising avenues for future collaboration and investment. Philippine officials noted that the discussions reflected efforts to expand engagement beyond traditional areas such as trade, agriculture, and energy.

Strategic Assessment: The discussions signal a growing interest among middle powers in leveraging international partnerships to build capabilities in emerging technologies. For Russia, cooperation in space and AI supports broader efforts to expand technological engagement beyond traditional partners. For the Philippines, access to expertise in space systems, satellite applications, and advanced technologies could contribute to the development of its nascent space programme and digital innovation ecosystem.

22 June (*Ukrainska Pravda*): Ukraine Strikes Russian Space Communications Facility and Key Transport Infrastructure

Ukraine's General Staff announced that Ukrainian forces conducted strikes against several Russian military and logistics targets, including the Dubna Space Communications Centre in Moscow Oblast and a bridge near the Russian-controlled Zaporizhzhia sector. According to Ukrainian authorities, the Dubna facility—used to support satellite communications as well as television and radio broadcasting networks—was hit, with visible smoke reported at the site. The operation was part of a broader campaign targeting Russian command, communications, and logistical infrastructure.

Strategic Assessment: The strike highlights the increasing importance of space-related infrastructure as a target in modern warfare. Attacks on satellite communications facilities can disrupt military command-and-control networks, communications resilience, and information operations. Combined with strikes on transport infrastructure supporting Russian logistics, the operation reflects Ukraine's strategy of degrading Russia's operational sustainment and battlefield connectivity through precision long-range attacks.

Other Nations

02 June (*JAXA*): Japan and Philippines Expand Space Cooperation Through New JAXA–PhilSA Declaration

The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency and Philippine Space Agency signed a Joint Declaration of Interest (DOI) to explore expanded cooperation in the space sector. Signed during Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s state visit to Japan, the declaration builds upon an existing 2021 Memorandum of Cooperation and aims to initiate dialogue on future collaborative activities, including partnerships involving Japanese industry. Both agencies expressed interest in deepening cooperation in space technology, applications, and capacity-building initiatives.

Strategic Assessment: The agreement reflects Japan's growing use of space diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific and supports efforts to strengthen regional space capabilities through international partnerships. Enhanced Japan–Philippines cooperation could contribute to greater collaboration in Earth observation, satellite applications, disaster management, and space industry development, reinforcing the strategic importance of space partnerships in the region.

08 June (*Air Technology*): Denmark seeks to procure 200 AGM-158 JASSM-ER missiles, along with other non-major defence equipment

Denmark has requested the acquisition of approximately 200 AGM-158 Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile–Extended Range (JASSM-ER) systems, alongside related support equipment and logistics packages. The JASSM-ER provides long-range precision strike capability against heavily defended targets while allowing launch platforms to operate outside hostile air-defence envelopes. The procurement is part of Denmark's broader efforts to modernise its armed forces and strengthen NATO interoperability.

Strategic Assessment: The acquisition would significantly enhance Denmark's long-range precision-strike capabilities and reflects a broader European trend toward strengthening deterrence and stand-off attack capacities amid evolving regional security challenges.

10 June (Thales Alenia Space): Thales Alenia Space Awarded Contract for Two Copernicus Sentinel-1 Next Generation Satellites

Thales Alenia Space has been selected as the prime contractor for the development of two Copernicus Sentinel-1 Next Generation (Sentinel-1 NG) satellites. The spacecraft will succeed the current Sentinel-1 radar imaging constellation and provide enhanced Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) capabilities for Earth observation. The satellites are expected to deliver higher-resolution imagery, improved revisit rates, and advanced monitoring of environmental changes, maritime activity, infrastructure, and disaster events, supporting the long-term objectives of the European Copernicus programme.

Strategic Assessment: The Sentinel-1 NG programme strengthens Europe's autonomous Earth observation capabilities and highlights the growing importance of space-based SAR systems for environmental monitoring, maritime domain awareness, disaster response, and strategic intelligence. Enhanced radar imaging capabilities will support both civilian applications and dual-use security requirements across Europe.

10 June (Airbus): Airbus Defence and Space sovereign space intelligence consortium with Rohde & Schwarz, constellr, Orbint and HPS

Airbus Defence and Space has formed a sovereign space intelligence consortium with Rohde & Schwarz, constellr, Orbital Insight Germany (Orbint) and HPS GmbH to develop integrated space-based intelligence solutions for European customers. The consortium aims to combine Earth observation data, geospatial analytics, signal intelligence, AI-enabled processing, and secure space infrastructure to provide sovereign intelligence capabilities. The initiative is designed to reduce dependence on external providers and strengthen Europe's strategic autonomy in space-derived information services.

Strategic Assessment: The consortium reflects a broader global trend towards sovereign space intelligence architectures that integrate satellite imagery, AI analytics, and secure data processing. Such capabilities are increasingly critical for ISR, crisis monitoring, military planning, and strategic decision-making, highlighting the growing convergence of space technologies and data-centric warfare.

13 June (The Indian Express): Japan's H3 rocket returns to flight with successful launch after earlier setback

Japan's H3 rocket successfully returned to flight operations, placing its payload into the intended orbit after overcoming earlier developmental setbacks. Developed by Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, the H3 is Japan's next-generation flagship launch vehicle designed to provide cost-effective and reliable access to space for government, commercial, and security missions. The successful mission demonstrated improvements made following previous launch challenges and marked another step toward establishing a stable launch cadence for the programme.

Strategic Assessment: The successful flight reinforces Japan's efforts to maintain independent access to space and strengthen its domestic launch industry amid increasing competition in the global launch market. A reliable H3 capability will support Japan's national security, Earth observation, satellite communications, and future lunar exploration objectives while enhancing the resilience of its space infrastructure.

17 June (*ESA*): Ariane 6 launches with more powerful boosters: a new record for Europe

Europe's Ariane 6 heavy-lift rocket achieved a new performance milestone with the successful launch of 36 Amazon Leo broadband satellites using upgraded P160C-based boosters. The mission marked the first operational use of the more powerful boosters, each carrying 14 tonnes more solid propellant than the previous P120C version. The enhanced configuration enabled Ariane 6 to deliver its heaviest payload to date, further increasing the rocket's lift capacity and competitiveness in the global launch market. The launch also demonstrated Europe's ability to support large-scale satellite constellation deployments.

Strategic Assessment: The successful deployment highlights Europe's efforts to strengthen independent access to space and enhance the performance of its indigenous launch infrastructure. Increased payload capacity will enable more efficient deployment of satellite constellations, supporting communications, Earth observation, and security-related space missions. The achievement also reinforces Europe's strategic autonomy amid growing competition in the global launch sector.

18 June (*Innovation News Network*): UKSA and ESA launch €7.2m InCubed funding call to accelerate Earth observation commercialisation

The UK Space Agency (UKSA), in partnership with the European Space Agency (ESA), launched a new €7.2 million funding call under the InCubed (Investing in Industrial Innovation) programme to support the commercialisation of Earth observation technologies. The initiative targets market-ready products and services across the Earth observation value chain, including satellite systems, ground infrastructure, geospatial analytics, and downstream applications. Successful projects can receive between €300,000 and €4 million in co-funding to accelerate operational deployment and market adoption.

Strategic Assessment: The programme highlights Europe's growing emphasis on translating space-based Earth observation capabilities into commercially viable services. By reducing technical and financial risks for industry, InCubed strengthens the European Earth observation ecosystem and supports the development of dual-use technologies relevant to climate monitoring, geospatial intelligence, disaster response, and strategic decision-making.

21 June (*DefenseNews*): Italy Demonstrates Full-Scale Reactor Systems Without Nuclear Fuel Using Molten Lead Coolant

Italy successfully demonstrated full-scale reactor systems using molten lead coolant without loading nuclear fuel, marking a significant milestone in the development of next-generation nuclear reactor technologies. The demonstration focused on validating thermal-hydraulic performance, safety mechanisms, and operational characteristics of lead-cooled fast reactor designs. Such reactors are being explored for their enhanced safety, fuel efficiency, and reduced nuclear waste generation compared to conventional reactor systems.

Strategic Assessment: Lead-cooled reactor technology represents a promising avenue for advanced nuclear energy systems with potential applications in civilian energy security, naval propulsion, and future strategic power-generation infrastructure. The development highlights growing international interest in next-generation nuclear technologies.

22 June (*Air Technology*): Australia clinches $1.75bn Canada radar deal in largest defence export

Australia finalised a USD 1.75 billion agreement with Canada for the supply of advanced over-the-horizon radar technology, marking the largest defence export in Australian history. The agreement involves the provision of long-range surveillance capabilities designed to improve early warning and domain awareness across vast geographic areas. The deal further strengthens defence-industrial cooperation between the two countries and supports Canada's modernisation of its surveillance infrastructure.

Strategic Assessment: The agreement underscores the increasing importance of advanced sensing and early-warning systems in modern defence planning. Long-range radar capabilities are critical for monitoring air, maritime, missile, and emerging threats in increasingly contested operational environments.

22 June (*Times of India*): UAE looking to buy India's BrahMos, Akashteer air defence systems

Reports indicate that the United Arab Emirates is exploring the potential acquisition of India's BrahMos supersonic cruise missile and Akashteer air-defence command-and-control system. Discussions reportedly occurred during high-level defence engagements aimed at expanding bilateral defence cooperation. BrahMos is among the world's fastest operational cruise missiles, while Akashteer provides integrated air-defence network management and real-time battlefield situational awareness.

Strategic Assessment: Potential UAE procurement would represent a major boost for India's defence exports and demonstrate growing international confidence in indigenous defence technologies. Such a deal could further strengthen India's position as an emerging supplier of advanced military systems in the Middle East.

About the Author

Amita Pilania is currently serving as a Research Assistant at the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), New Delhi. Her research focuses primarily on Space and Disruptive Technology. Prior to joining CLAWS, she completed her Master's degree in Defence and Strategic Studies from Amity University, Noida, Uttar Pradesh. She also holds a B.Sc. (Hons.) in Physics from Kalindi College, affiliated with University of Delhi.