

ISRO to launch back up nav-sat

Launch is tentatively fixed for August 31 on board PSLV-C39

Bengaluru: India will launch its eighth navigation satellite this month-end as a spare or back-up for its constellation in the geo-orbit, a top space agency official said on Thursday.

"We are preparing to launch the eighth Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS-1H) at the end of this month as a standby for the Navigation Indian Constellation (NavIC), which is operational for services," ISRO Satellite Centre Director M. Annadurai told IANS here.

The 1.4-tonne satellite will be launched from the state-run Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) spaceport at Sriharikota off the Bay of Bengal in Andhra Pradesh, about 80 km northeast of Chennai.

"The satellite is ready to move from our centre to Sriharikota on August 12 on a special vehicle for integration with the rocket at the space centre," said Annadurai on the margins of a technology event.

The launch authorisation board will decide on the date and time



NEARING TAKE-OFF

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The space agency, however, will use a medium Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV C39) with four strap-on motors to deploy the satellite first in the geo-transfer orbit and later in the geo-stationary orbit, about 36,000 km above the earth, where the NavIC is orbiting over the last four years.

Clarifying that the spare satel-

lite (IRNSS-1H) would augment the NavIC's operations, Sivan said IRNSS-1A would continue to orbit and provide the services it is programmed for the intended users as part of the system.

"We are not going to abandon the first one (1A) as it working well with all its functions except the atomic clocks being normal. In the other satellites, we are using only one clock, as other two are for redundancy," said Sivan.

The clocks provide precise locational data for the users.

The first one was launched in July 2013 and the seventh one (IRNSS-1G) in April 2016.

The multi-purpose satellite-based positioning system, akin to the American GPS, Glonass of Russia, Galileo of Europe and China's Beidou, supports vehicle tracking, fleet management, disaster management and mapping services.

—Agencies