Newspaper Clips

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Pune University VC set to be new director of IIT Delhi

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NEW DELHI: Pune University vice-chancellor RK Shevgaonkar is set to take over as the new director of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi, picked by a human resource development ministry selection team.

Shevgaonkar's selection needs to be approved by President Pratibha Patil before he can be appointed, sources close to the VC said. An electrical engineer, Shevgaonkar taught at IIT Bombay for several years before taking over as VC of Pune University.

Shevgaonkar will replace outgoing director Surendra Prasad, who was also in the race for a second term at the helm of IIT Delhi.

PUBLIC APPLICATIONS WERE INVITED FOR THE POST OF IIT DIRECTORS IN 2010 AND THIS PROCESS WAS USED TO SELECT SHEVGAONKAR

IIT Directors have traditionally been selected through a secretive internal process, in which an HRD ministry selection team invites recommendations from IIT directors and board chairmen.

This process was, however, slammed by the Madras High Court for creating conditions of conflict of interest.

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VC may take up IIT director's post

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Pune: University of Pune vice-chancellor Raghunath Shevgaonkar is tipped for a move as the new director of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi.

Shevgaonkar

A top official from the VC's core group at the university told TOI on Thursday that Shevgaonkar's name has figured among the candidates shortlisted for the key post after interviews for the same were held last week at IIT Delhi.

The official, however, said that a formal announcement on Shevgaonkar's move may come only after the President, who is the visitor to the IITs, puts a seal of approval on one of the shortlisted candidates.

Shevgaonkar, who was deputy director at IIT Bombay before taking charge as the UOP VC in March 2010, could not be reached for the better part of Thursday after a section of the local media published reports that he was moving as director of IIT Bombay.

The director's post at IIT Bombay is unlikely to fall vacant for the next three years. The Human Resource Development (HRD) ministry, which oversees the IITs, too has not released any advertisement inviting applications for the key post at IIT Bombay.

The TOI made repeated calls on Shevgaonkar's cell phone but the same drew no response. An SMS seeking the VC's comment on the issue drew the same result.

A few months ago, the HRD ministry had released advertisements in newspapers for the director's post at IIT Delhi and IIT Roorkee. This, after the IIT Council, which is the highest decision-making body of the premier technology schools, resolved that apart from inviting nominations from eminent persons, applications would also be invited by way of advertisements and posting of information on the websites of the ministry and the IIT alumni bodies.

The IIT Act provides that after the search-cum-selection committee shortlists the candidates, the director is appointed by the IIT Council with prior approval of the President.

Hindu, ND 16/07/2011 P-13

"PSLV a proud symbol of ISRO's self-reliance"

This is the third time it is putting a satellite in a geo-synchronous transfer orbit

T.S. Subramanian

SRIHARIKOTA: India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle proved its versatility and reliability once again when the PSLV-C17 put the communication satellite GSAT-12 in a perfect orbit on Friday.

The rocket roared off the second launch pad from the spaceport here on the dot at 4.48 p.m. and effortlessly lobbed the 1,310-kg satellite in orbit after a 20-minute eventless flight.

This is the 18th successful flight of the PSLV in a row and this is the third time that it is putting a satellite in a geo-synchronous transfer orbit (GTO), which is a tricky business. And the PSLV proved its versatility because it is the more powerful XL version of the PSLV that put the GSAT-12 in orbit.

There are three versions of the PSLV — the standard, the core-alone without the six strap-on booster motors, and the XL version, which carries more solid fuel in its strap-on motors than the standard version. All the three versions have proved to be unalloyed successes. An XL version had successfully put Chandrayaan-1 in a GTO in October 2008.

There were thick clouds as the PSLV-C17 lifted off majestically and disappeared into the clouds after a few seconds. It was a flawless mission with the four stages of the PSLV-C17 igniting and separating on time and the fourth stage putting the satellite accurately in orbit.

"Important mission"

K. Radhakrishnan, Chairman, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), called it an "important mission, both from the technological angle and for the people of the country." The mission was so perfect that the rocket put the satellite in a sub-GTO with an apogee of 21,020 km against the planned 21,000 km and a perigee of 284 km against a targeted 281 km. The GSAT-12 with its 12 extended C-band transponders would be used in tele-medicine, tele-education, village resource centres and supporting disaster management. Though putting the GSAT-12 in a sub-GTO was "a tricky mission," Dr. Radhakrishnan said, the ISRO was successful in doing it with the experience gained from the Chandrayaan-1 mission.

P.S. Veeraraghavan, Director, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, Thiruvananthapuram, called the PSLV "a proud symbol of ISRO's self-reliance."

T.K. Alex, Director, ISRO Satellite Centre, Bangalore, said the GSAT-12's solar panels were deployed, they started rotating and commands were given to turn the panels towards the Sun to generate power.

A MOMENT TO CHERISH: *It's celebration time for the team behind the successful launch of the PSLV-C17 at Sriharikota on Friday. From left are S. Ramakrishnan, Director, Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre; P.S. Veeraraghavan, Director, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, Thiruvananthapuram; K. Radhakrishnan, ISRO Chairman; P. Kunhikrishnan, Mission Director; T.K. Anuradha, GSAT-12 Project Director; and T.K. Alex, Director, ISRO Satellite Centre, Bangalore.* – PHOTO: M. VEDHAN

Hindu, ND 16/07/2011 P-13

ISRO-developed computer helped PSLV-C17 put satellite in orbit

T.S. Subramanian

SRIHARIKOTA: "One of the achievements" of the successful Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C17) mission that put the communication satellite GSAT-12 in orbit on Friday was that it used an indigenous computer, Vikram, with advanced software in the rocket's navigation, guidance and control systems, said K. Radhakrishnan, Chairman, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). This advanced mission computer helped the rocket put the satellite accurately in orbit.

Mr. Radhakrishnan told a press conference here that the ISRO-developed Vikram had indigenous processors both in the primary and standby mode. The ISRO had tested the indigenous software and only after it was found flight-worthy, was it used in the mission.

T.K. Alex, Director, ISRO Satellite Centre, Bangalore, said the coming days would be "interesting" because commands would be given from the Master Control Facility (MCF) at Hassan, Karnataka, to the liquid apogee motor (LAM) on board the GSAT-12 to take the satellite from its present sub geo-synchronous transfer orbit (GTO) to a circular geo-synchronous orbit at an altitude of 36,000 km. Dr. Alex was confident that the ISRO would do this with the experience gained from the Chandrayaan-1 mission in 2008, "which was almost similar" to the GSAT-12 mission.

S. Ramakrishnan, Director, Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre, ISRO, called Friday's success "yet another feather in the cap of the PSLV and the ISRO."

A GSLV with an indigenous cryogenic stage would be launched from Sriharikota by June 2012, said P.S. Veeraraghavan, Director, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, Thiruvananthapuram.

Asked whether the PSLV-XL version would be used more often to put the ISRO's communication satellites in orbit than India's Geo-Synchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) or the Ariane vehicle of Arianespace, Dr. Radhakrishnan said the GSLVs were "more efficient and powerful" than the PSLVs. The GSLVs could put a 2.2-tonne communication satellite in a GTO but the PSLV-XL version could put only a 1.4 tonne communication satellite in a sub-GTO.

The GSAT-12, with its 12 extended C-band transponders, would boost ISRO's transponder capacity from 175 to 187. The ISRO had 211 transponders from its communication satellites at the beginning of the 11th Plan but it went down to 141 by April 2011 because of a series of failures with the GSLV flights. Dr. Radhakrishnan was confident that the ISRO's transponder capacity would go up to 215 by April 2012 with a series of launches of communication satellites from India and abroad. For instance, the GSAT-10, with 30 transponders, would be launched by an Ariane vehicle from Kourou island in French Guiana in April 2012.

Arbitration process

An arbitration process would get under way between Antrix Corporation, the commercial arm of the Department of Space, and the Devas Multimedia Private Limited if the negotiations between the senior officials of the ISRO and Devas did not fructify, the ISRO Chairman said. (The ISRO annulled the allocation of 3G spectrum to Devas after allegations were made that the spectrum was sold to Devas at a low price). If arbitration was resorted to, the ISRO and Devas would each name an arbitrator of their own and these two would name another arbitrator. During the arbitration, which would take place in New Delhi, the Indian laws apply, he added.

"Good progress" had been achieved in realising the orbiter, lander and rover of the Chandrayaan-2 mission, slated to take place in 2014, said Mr. Alex. While India would make the orbiter and the rover, Russia would contribute the lander. The rover was undergoing tests in Bangalore on how to cross the obstacles on the lunar soil. Its engineering model would soon be ready.

Women power to the fore at Hassan MCF

Special Correspondent

SRIHARIKOTA: It will be women power to the fore at the Master Control Facility (MCF) at Hassan when T.K. Anuradha, Pramodha Hedge and K.S. Anuradha lead the critical activities that would help in taking the GSAT-12 from its present sub-geosynchronous transfer orbit to the circular geosynchronous orbit at an altitude of 36,000 km.

Commands will be given from the MCF to the satellite for circularising its orbit, which at present is elliptical. The PSLV-C17 put GSAT-12 in orbit on Friday.

Ms. T.K. Anuradha, Project Director, GSAT-12, said every launch was a challenge but this mission was a bigger challenge because the Indian Space Research Organisation needed 12 C-band transponders immediately. "We could not afford to go wrong or allow any system to malfunction in this mission."

Moreover, her team had to pack the power systems and reaction control systems, among others, in a small bus in the satellite. "We had to put everything in a small area. It is like building a big bungalow on a small plot of land."

Next 5 days crucial

The coming five days would be crucial. Commands would be given to circularise the GSAT-12's orbit. "The satellite's antenna will also be deployed. It will be a major event," she said.

The Mission Director at the MCF will be Ms. Pramodha Hegde and the Operations Director, Ms. K.S. Anuradha.

Business Line ND 16/07/2011 P-10

GSat-12 gives small boost to ISRO capacity

New communications satellite for societal use

Our Bureau
Bangalore, July 15

GSat-12, the nation's latest communications satellite, was put in orbit on Friday, adding a small number to the space agency's total transponder capacity.

QUICK-FIX SOLUTION

The 1,400-kg spacecraft is ISRO's quick-fix solution to fill a part of its never-before capacity gap - almost 33 per cent - in a small way. It will mainly support societal applications.

Conceived and assembled quickly after the loss of a large communications satellite, the GSat-5P, in December 2010, it is 30 per cent smaller than regular Insats that weigh over 2,000 kg.

GSat-12 will have about half their life, or some 5-8 years, because of the fuel that will be spent in moving it to greater distances.

It was also flown on a smaller PSLV vehicle instead of on the GSLV.

(The PSLV was used for a similar 'equatorial launch' two other times but not as a contingency: It launched the Kalpana-1 weather satellite in 2002; and then for the Chandrayaan-1 of 2008.)

TRANSPONDERS

The satellite was likely to start functioning in a month. Its 12 transponders in the extended C band would be used for search and rescue communications during disaster management, tele-medicine or video-conferenced-health consultations from remote villages; and tele-education besides supporting the numerous digitised VRCs (village resource centres), the ISRO Chairman, Dr K. Radhakrishnan, said after the launch from the Sriharikota spaceport in coastal Andhra Pradesh.

Currently, the domestic fleet of eight communications satellites provides 175 transponders; another 86 have been hired on foreign satellites, to support television and DTH operators, broadband and telephone services.

Recently, Dr Radhakrishnan said ISRO planned to nearly double capacity to 500 transponders during the 11th Plan period (2007-12). But successive launch mishaps had set it back.

A hunt is on to hire a suitable foreign satellite for a short time.

TAKE-OFF

ISRO said the 20-minute, pre-dusk flight around 5 p.m. was near-perfect, taking the satellite into a 'sub-geostationary' orbit.

The spacecraft initially goes round the Earth in an elliptical path that is 276 km X 21,000 km.

Soon, scientists from the Master Control Facility at Hassan in Karnataka will start rounding the ellipse into a 36,000 km, 24-hour orbit; the operations done by firing the satellite's engines from the ground are called 'orbit-raising' manoeuvres.

GSat-12 needs five such firings before it reaches its intended slot and starts working - in about a month, according to Dr Radhakrishnan. In 2010, arguably ISRO's annus horribilis, two GSLV rockets each carrying a precious communications satellite failed. ISRO lost nearly 40 transponders.

The experimental GSat-4 on April 15; GSat-5P with 24 transponders on December 25; and a dozen transponders or half of Insat-4B that went cripple in July.

Dr Radhakrishnan had told *Business Line* before the launch that even if there are several foreign satellites that can readily lease out their capacity, hiring them for a short term was no easy job.

Users' requirements needed to have the satellite in a particular location in orbit; in the right frequency. "You cannot expect the users to move their antennas ..."

Friday's PSLV-C17 – in a rejigged version called XL - was the 19th indigenous flight and the 32nd to be launched from Sriharikota's Satish Dhawan Space Centre.