

1. With the increment in the space initiatives in India formulation of National Space Act for regulating space activities in India is a must. Illustrate the contemporary issues for handling of which Space Act is needed.

Answer:

- ISRO's legacy of the last 55 years can be attributed to its visionary leadership, non-interference of politics, checks and balances at every stage, flexibility in an otherwise inelastic bureaucracy, innovation and the spirit of bouncing back from failures, and the attitude of taking criticism constructively.
- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has initiated a process of formulating a National Space Act for India for regulating space activities in India, to facilitate enhanced levels of private sector participation and to offer more commercial opportunities.
- With growing activity in the space sector and the resulting increase in funding, a law will be required for ethics to keep pace. The second reason for a national space law is for the protection of space assets. The third and the biggest reason is to genuinely fulfil international obligations and to have a long-term vision. The fourth reason is to encourage private participation, given the need for the nation to technologically empower itself as a whole against the rising global competition.
- Compensation and liability aspects are only a part of it. There are also some of the contemporary issues which have to be given special importance like space debris issue, space insurance matters and intellectual property in space.
- Space debris is nothing but collection of objects around the earth that were created by human but they no longer serve any useful purpose. It can be anything from useless rocket to non-operational satellites to paint flakes. These space debris possess a huge danger: if they collide with any spacecraft, damage is unavoidable.
- Space insurance matters are still dealt with domestic insurance regulations which have been proved to be inadequate till now. Intellectual property in space is also a vital issue as which needs to be looked in to separately for the Indian space programme has been encouraging transfer of technologies to Indian industry to support various space projects.
- A number of space technologies have been transferred to the Indian industries in the areas of electronics, communication, optical and remote sensing data utilisation. In this regard the protection of intellectual property is an important safeguard.
- Our space legislation should incorporate (i) the legal issues connected to launching services (space transportation systems); (ii) the legal issues connected to satellite telecommunications, including satellite broadcasting; (iii) issues associated to earth observation services as well as data processing and distribution; (iv) satellite navigational systems and (v) the intellectual property rights (IPR) regime and transfer of technology.
- To conclude, after the International Space Station retires, China may be the only country having an operational space station and the rest of the countries will be fighting to have one of their own. However, the space industry alone can achieve nothing without support in capacity building and, to an extent, some handholding from the government. This evolving market scenario, rising global competition, and the need for private players and the government to work together all explain why a space law is needed.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Answer the following Questions

1. The spirit of the constitution of India represents a synthesis of Indian values, democratic and socialist movements in west and our independence movement. Elucidate. (150 words)
2. What is the importance of an independent judiciary in a democracy? Highlight the safeguards in our political constitutional setup to ensure the independence of judiciary. (150 words)

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