

Remarks of H.E. Mr. Vinod K Jacob, Ambassador of India at the talk on Space and the Future of Humanity by Dr. A. Sivathanu Pillai, Former Chief Controller (R&D), DRDO and Former Hon' Distinguished Professor, ISRO held at Embassy of India, Bahrain on 25 November 2023

I am honoured to receive Dr. A Sivathanu Pillai, Former Chief Controller (R&D), DRDO and Former Hon' Distinguished Professor, ISRO at the Indian Embassy in Bahrain today. I thank the Institution of Engineers – Bahrain Chapter for their efforts at organizing this talk on Space and its Future by Dr. A Sivathanu Pillai. I appreciate the interest shown by our Bahraini friends including from Derasat and NSSA in today's talk.

For those of you who know the Indian S&T ecosystem, the ISRO and DRDO are two premier institutions that have served India's aspirations and ambitions in the fields of space and defence research and technologies. The ISRO is known to be an oasis of merit and innovation and the DRDO is at the forefront of the strides India has made towards self reliance in defence. Dr. A Sivathanu Pillai with his achievements in both fields is a true technology leader from India. Let me take this opportunity to state that I am keenly looking forward to his speech.

Friends,

Within a few days of my arrival in the friendly Kingdom of Bahrain, on 5 August 2023, the Chandrayaan-3 mission achieved a crucial milestone with the successful completion of the Lunar Orbit Insertion. You would all recall that was the third time in succession that ISRO had successfully inserted its spacecraft into the lunar orbit, apart from doing so into the Martian orbit. This news was welcomed by the Kingdom of Bahrain with the Cabinet acknowledging this feat. The NSSA, in line with the fraternal links with ISRO issued a series of social media posts on the development.

And then on 2 September, 2023, the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C57) successfully launched the Aditya-L1 spacecraft, from the Second Launch Pad of Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC), Sriharikota. Aditya-L1 became the first Indian space based observatory to study the Sun from a halo orbit around first Sun-Earth Lagrangian point (L1), which is located roughly 1.5 million km from earth. Once again, Bahraini friends shared in our joy and demonstrated that space based advances promote mankind's well being and is not limited to nation states.

So, I therefore consider myself, doubly blessed, first for having been sent by the Government of India on my first Ambassadorial assignment to Bahrain and second for having started by tenure in the backdrop of the quantum leaps by India's space programme.

Friends,

India and Bahrain have an active government to government level cooperation in S&T. The two Governments signed an MOU on Cooperation in the field of Information and Communication Technology in May 2012. Then in August 2019,

both sides signed a Statement of Intent on collaboration of Kingdom of Bahrain with International Solar Alliance and a separate Statement of Intent on collaboration between Indian Space Research Organization and National Space Science Agency in the area of Space Technology.

In terms of next steps, we are keen to explore newer areas for bilateral cooperation in the S&T sector. No doubt this involves the private sector. My Embassy will be happy to play its due role in this regard. With these words, I would like to conclude my speech and wish you all a happy festival season.

Thank you.