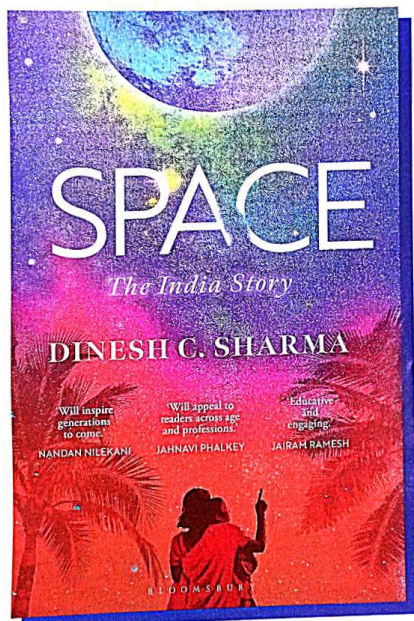


BOOK REVIEW

## India's Incredible Space Journey

Reviewed by Hasan Jawaid Khan



**SPACE — THE INDIA STORY** by Dinesh Sharma  
Pages: 240  
Price: Rs 599/-  
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ONE of the most spectacular successes that India has notched up after independence is its space programme. Beginning on a modest scale with the launching of a small American Nike-Apache rocket from the Thumba launching pad on 21 November 1963, India's space programme has today grown into a vibrant and dynamic industry thanks to an intricately developed and synchronised effort across the small, medium and large public, as well as private sectors, spread throughout the country. This is in addition to pathbreaking research in space technology being conducted in several of the country's academic institutions.

Dinesh Sharma's book, *Space — The India Story*, traces the initiation and evolution of India's space programme — riddled with early failures, but always learning and striking back, eventually making the country proud with its stellar achievements over the years. Dinesh traces the triumphs and tribulations of India's space journey through historical accounts and often through his own personal accounts when he managed to witness history being made during his role as a reporter for *PTI* and subsequently at various other media organisations.

As Dinesh recounts, the foundations of the stellar achievements of India in the space arena were laid down by visionaries, planners and thinkers of a newly independent India grappling with problems like poverty, illiteracy, and lack of industrial infrastructure. He talks about how the blueprint for taking India on to the path of industrialisation and development through the use of science and technology was initiated with the formation of a National Planning Committee in 1938, comprising political leaders, scientists, and industrialists. Subsequent developments led to the setting up of a string of research laboratories throughout the country catering to various sectors.

India's participation in the celebrations of the International Geophysical Year from July 1957 to December 1958 triggered a series of developments that eventually facilitated India's foray into the space arena with the creation of a dedicated organisation to oversee space research — the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).