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## Process to allow private players to make rockets has begun: ISRO chief

After a lull following a rare failure in August 2017, the [Indian Space Research Organization \(Isro\)](#) has a packed schedule this year, with the first launch scheduled for Friday, also taking the [100th indigenous satellite](#) into orbit.

As he oversaw last-minute preparations of the launch in Sriharikota, Isro's new chairman, Sivan K, pegged as the 'rocket man', took a few minutes off to speak with TOI, about Isro's future launches, role of private players in building rockets and exploratory missions.

While the department of space has been speaking about allowing private players to build rockets in future, which is expected to increase the frequency of launches, Sivan said: "We're already in the process of moving it to the industry and it will take some time for it to materialize."

One of the key challenges that Sivan would face is to increase the number of transponders, while also ensuring that Isro launches more missions every quarter.

Isro is now reaching a stage where it can launch one satellite a month, but that must be increased to at least two launches a month which means the space agency can do 18-24 launches a year to meet the demand, immediate past chairman of Isro A S Kiran Kumar had told TOI.

Sivan's appointment also comes at a time when Isro is staring at multiple big launches, and he says it has yet to sink in as he has been kept busy by the PSLV C-40 launch. "Though I learnt about it yesterday, I've been too busy with the (PSLV) C40 launch. I'm still focused on the launch which is the first priority as I've been part of it even before my appointment. But yes, it is a huge responsibility as I'll be occupying a position that so many eminent people have held and will be taking on responsibilities that come with huge expectations," he said.

Among the big-ticket missions that Isro has lined up in Sivan's tenure are Chandrayaan-2, which will see India put a lander on the Moon and a rover in its orbit, and the planned mission to the Sun — Aditya L1 — which former Isro chairpersons A S Kiran Kumar and K [Radhakrishnan](#) said is a high-profile one that will open up new doors in science for India.

"Yes, we have high-profile missions, including exploratory ones (Chandrayaan-2, Aditya-L1), in the pipeline and I'll be able to comment in detail once I assume office after the launch," Sivan said.