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MAGAZINE NOTES

Bharatiya Antariksh Station: India's Space Station Programme

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GS3

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Bharatiya Antariksh Station: India's Space Station Programme

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India has formally approved the first module of its indigenous space station — the **Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS)** — with a ₹20,193 crore budget and a 2028 launch target, positioning India alongside the US, Russia, and China as a space station operator.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

PARAMETER	DETAIL
Name	Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS)
Full design	5-module space station
First module (BAS-01)	Approved; development and launch by 2028
Budget	₹20,193 crore
Orbit	Low Earth Orbit (LEO)
Purpose	Scientific research + deep-space mission foundation
Agency	ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation)

WHY A SPACE STATION?

Scientific Value:

- Microgravity research (materials science, biology, medicine)
- Earth observation from LEO
- Astronomy without atmospheric interference
- Long-duration human spaceflight capability

Strategic Value:

- Reduces India's dependence on ISS (International Space Station — US/Russia led)
- Demonstrates full-spectrum human spaceflight capability (after Gaganyaan)

- Supports future lunar and deep-space ambitions (Chandrayaan, Mangalyaan follow-ons)

Sequencing with Gaganyaan:

- Gaganyaan (crewed Earth-orbit mission) → BAS-01 (first module) → Full BAS (5 modules)
- Gaganyaan astronauts will eventually dock with BAS

GLOBAL SPACE STATION CONTEXT

STATION	OPERATOR	STATUS
ISS	NASA/Roscosmos/ESA/JAXA	Operational; retiring ~2030
Tiangong	China	Operational (fully Chinese)
BAS	ISRO/India	Under development; BAS-01 by 2028
Lunar Gateway	NASA-led Artemis partners	Planned (2030s)

INDIA'S SPACE ECOSYSTEM (BUDGET 2026-27 CONTEXT)

AREA	DEVELOPMENT
Space sector FDI	100% FDI allowed (2020)
IN-SPACe	Regulator for private space activity
NewSpace India Ltd	ISRO's commercial arm
Private launch vehicles	Agnikul Cosmos, Skyroot Aerospace active
Data centre investments	Budget raised limit: ₹300 cr → ₹2,000 cr

UPSC RELEVANCE

GS3 — Science & Technology:

- India's space programme: from PSLV/GSLV to human spaceflight to space stations
- Gaganyaan → BAS sequencing
- Space diplomacy: India in Artemis Accords; ISS collaboration; Axiom Space MoU
- Commercial space: IN-SPACe, NewSpace India, private launch vehicles
- Space applications: Earth observation, remote sensing, telemedicine, disaster management

Key Distinctions:

- BAS ≠ ISS: BAS is indigenous; ISS is multinational (16 countries)
- IN-SPACe ≠ ISRO: IN-SPACe is the regulator; ISRO is the national agency
- Tiangong (China) is a precedent India points to — national space station as strategic independence
- LEO ≠ GEO: BAS is in Low Earth Orbit (~400 km); communication satellites are in Geostationary Orbit (~36,000 km)

FACTS CORNER

- Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS): 5-module design; BAS-01 by 2028
- Budget: ₹20,193 crore approved
- Orbit: Low Earth Orbit (LEO)
- India becomes 3rd country with indigenous space station (after Russia/US via ISS, China's Tiangong)
- Gaganyaan: prerequisite human spaceflight mission before BAS operations
- IN-SPACe: India's space sector regulator (under Dept. of Space)
- ISS retiring: ~2030; BAS timing is strategic



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