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BITS Pilani Dubai launches ground station for space research

Facility received first image from NOAA 19 satellite, capturing weather data

DUBAI
BY ANJANA KUMAR
Senior Reporter

In a move towards advancing satellite communication and space research, BITS Pilani Dubai Campus (BPDC) has announced the successful installation and launch of its ground station.

Tailored to track amateur and educational satellites, the ground station received its inaugural image from the NOAA 19 satellite, capturing weather data. Fitted with two high-gain cross-polar-



Attendees being briefed on the first data received by the BPDC ground station from the NOAA 19 satellite.

ised yagi antennas operating in VHF and UHF bands, the station facilitates real-time communication with satellites traversing the BPDC campus horizon.

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Dr Srinivasan Madapusi | Director, BITS Pilani Dubai Campus

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The ground station can autonomously track satellite passes using digitally controlled rotors, enabling precise monitoring and data collection crucial for educational and research endeavours. An omnidirectional antenna enhances the station's utility in meteorologi-

cal research by facilitating the reception of weather data from satellites like NOAA.

The ground station plays a pivotal role in the ambitious Mahasat project, mentored by Padma Shri-awardee Mylswamy Annadurai, the visionary behind India's successful Moon and Mars missions. Collaborating with UAE's leading online space education hub, Edutech4Space, this project aims to "propel BPDC to

the forefront of space exploration and education".

Mahasat, envisioned as a multiphase endeavour, seeks to "revolutionise" space technology through incremental advancements. Beginning with the development and testing of a picosatellite using drones, the project has progressed to the establishment of the ground station. This strategic trajectory will culminate in the construction and launch of an engineering model of the CubeSat.

Shrisudha Viswanathan, Founder and CEO of EduTech4Space, said: "The establishment of this ground station marks a pivotal moment for our organisation and the student community of UAE. It opens doors to a multitude of research opportunities."