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SATELLITE LAUNCH ON SPACEX ROCKET TO BE HELD IN 2ND QUARTER: ISRO ARM

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NEW DELHI: The NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), the commercial arm of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), will launch its second "demand-driven" commercial satellite GSAT-20 - renamed GSAT-N2 - on-board SpaceX's Falcon-9 in the second quarter of this year.

In a statement, the NSIL said that it is "gearing up to undertake its second demand driven communication satellite mission involving GSAT-20 during the second quarter of 2024". "GSAT-20 satellite will be fully owned, operated and funded by NSIL," it said.

It will be for the first time that the Indian space PSU will be using a SpaceX rocket to launch its satellite, under a launch service contract between NSIL and US's SpaceX, which is owned by Elon Musk. SpaceX's Falcon-9 is a reusable, two-stage launcher, for reliable and safe transport of people and payloads into the Earth's orbit and beyond.

"This satellite has been specifically designed to meet the demanding service needs of remote and unconnected regions," the statement said.

The GSAT-20 is a high-throughput Ka-band satellite, which will be fully owned, operated and funded by NSIL. The satellite offers Ka-Ka band HTS capacity with 32 beams, having pan-India coverage, including Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep islands, according to NSIL. The satellite aims to address India's broadband connectivity issues.