

## USISPF Statement

# USISPF to Lead Largest U.S. Industry Delegation as Official Partner of the India AI Impact Summit 2026; Announces the Launch of AI Board Task Force

February 12, 2026 | Bengaluru

The U.S.-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) in partnership with the U.S. Consulate General in Chennai, the United States Mission in India, and the U.S. Department of Commerce co-hosted the U.S.-India Space Business Forum, on February 10-11 in Bengaluru, Karnataka.

A first of kind dedicated space business forum brought together an powerful gathering of scientists at the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), US and Indian policymakers, space entrepreneurs and industry leaders, media, think-tanks, and even India's acclaimed astronauts Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla and Group Captain Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair.

Among the attendees over both days, also included 23 executives from 14 space companies from the United States, led by the Business Council for International Understanding (BCIU), on a first of the kind delegation and its 'maiden' space-themed trade mission to India. Leading American companies in the space sector such as Amazon, Axiom Space, Apex, Black Sky, Elve, Kayhan Space, Park Aerospace, Planet Lab, Resecurity, SpaceX, Vast Space, Umbra Space, Viasat, and Vantor, were also accompanied by officials from Washington on behalf of the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. Department of State.

Indian space companies and startups included Dhruva Space, Inspace, Galaxeye, Kaleido, Skyroot, Ananth Technologies, Planet labs, Pixxel, Digantara. The burgeoning space sector has seen a boom since the reforms of the past few years, initiated by the Government of India, unlocking the space sector for increased private participation.

The dedicated space conclave was the culmination of sustained efforts through decades of policy planning to move the needle on U.S.-India space dialogue through the Civil Space Joint Working Group.

The event featured a keynote address from Dr. V Narayanan, Secretary, Department of Space (DoS), Government of India and special remarks from the co-chairs of the U.S. India Civil Space Joint Working Group (CSJWG). Swarnashree Rao Rajashekar, Joint Secretary, Department of Space (DoS), presented the India Co-Chair perspective, while Janice Starzyk, Deputy Director, Office of Space Commerce, at the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) at U.S. Department of Commerce presented the U.S. Co-Chair perspective. Also on the inaugural session was a special recorded special address by Joel Graham, Associate Administrator for Legislative & Industry Affairs, at NASA.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, the event convened a mix of expert panels, which discussed a wide gamut of issues, from FDI in the Indian space sector to space policy, to growing the space startup ecosystem in India. Some of the dedicated U.S.-India space collaboration panels touched on themes such as "The Road so far and Future Areas of Cooperation", "Prospects for Start-ups and Entrepreneurs in India and the U.S. and "U.S.-India Defense Synergy in the Space Domain"

“Space today is no longer a distant frontier. It is a critical economic and strategic domain. It underpins our goals for growth and national security, climate resilience, disaster response, infrastructure planning, and global connectivity. Increasingly, it is being shaped not only by governments, but largely by private enterprises, entrepreneurs, and global capital,” said Nivedita Mehra, Managing Director, of USISPF’s India office in New Delhi.

"India’s space reforms, the evolving FDI frameworks, and the rapid growth of its private sector have transformed the ecosystem. At the same time, the US continues to lead in commercial innovation and advanced technologies. Together, our strengths are complementary — and the opportunity before us is not simply cooperation, but co-creation," she added.

As part of the Official Summit Program at Bharat Mandapam, USISPF will host a flagship session titled “Scaling Trusted AI for 8 Billion+”, featuring senior global industry leaders and policymakers, focused on building inclusive, secure, and globally interoperable AI ecosystems.

A few years ago, much of the U.S.–India space conversation took place in conference rooms and in joint statements. Today, many of those conversations have been actualized in terms of joint space missions, shared platforms, and growing commercial partnerships between ISRO, NASA, industry, and many Indian start-ups.

The highlight of the conclave came on the second day of the summit, with a specialized fireside chat between Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla and Group Captain Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair, who engaged with policymakers, companies, and students. Captain Shukla made history in June 2025 by becoming first Indian to visit the International Space Station (ISS) via the Axiom-4 mission, and only the second Indian in space since the famed Rakesh Sharma who went to the stars back in 1984 with Russian cosmonauts in the Soviet spacecraft Soyuz T-11.

Both Group Captain Shukla and Group Captain Nair touched on their recent experience on the Ax-4 Mission to the International Space Station; training with NASA astronauts in Houston, the lessons learned, and the way forward from the mission. Both astronauts regaled the audience, answering questions and press bytes touching on the future of space research, the importance of ethics in space, and building international consensus, how humanities majors play an equally important role as do the STEM graduates, complementing them in their unique skill sets in the fields of space research and exploration.

USISPF presented both Group Captains with our coffee table book "We The People", which touched on 75 years of the U.S.-India partnership, and touched on the origins of India's space research program and contributions of NASA during ISRO's formative years.

One small step for space conclaves, one giant leap for the U.S.-India space partnerships.