

Project NETRA

April 22, 2020

Context: A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) for establishing **optical telescope facilities under NETRA Project**

- ISRO's NETRA (Network for Space Objects, Tracking, and Analysis) project is early warning system to secure its satellites and other assets in space
- ISRO plans to put up many observational facilities: connected radars, telescopes; data processing units and a control centre. They can, among others, spot, track and catalogue objects as small as 10 cm, up to a range of 3,400 km and equal to a space orbit of around 2,000 km

Importance

- India has 15 communication satellites active in the geostationary orbit, 13 remote-sensing satellites active in low-earth orbit (2,000 km radius) and eight navigation satellites in medium-earth orbit. Apart from these, there are a number of smaller satellites present in the space which needs to be protected
- It will give India its own capability in space situational awareness (SSA) like the other space powers – which is used to 'predict' threats from debris to Indian satellites. It also goes so far as to serve as an unstated warning against missile or space attack for the country

Other

DRDOs airborne early warning and control system for the Indian Air Force is termed NETRA