Japan-Singapore Space Pact Could Unlock New Opportunities for Satellite, Launch and Space-Tech Firms

By Lakshmi Prabha

July 9, 2026 02:15 +08

The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and Singapore's National Space Agency (NSAS) signed their first bilateral Memorandum of Cooperation on July 6 during the Spacetide 2026 conference in Tokyo, marking a step toward deeper commercial collaboration between the two countries' growing space industries.

The agreement goes beyond government cooperation. Alongside the memorandum, the agencies exchanged letters allowing Singapore to join JAXA's Co-funded Business Promotion Framework, making it only the third overseas partner after Britain and France.

The framework enables JAXA to co-fund commercial projects involving Japanese and foreign space companies, creating new opportunities for startups, satellite firms and technology developers seeking cross-border investment and market access.

The agreement comes just three months after NSAS was established under Singapore's Ministry of Trade and Industry. While Singapore's space ecosystem remains relatively small, with around 70 companies and about 2,000 professionals, the city-state has positioned itself as a regional hub for finance, research and deep-tech investment, making it a natural commercial partner for Japan's more mature space industry.

Singapore Gains Access to JAXA's Commercial Investment Framework

JAXA's Co-funded Business Promotion Framework is designed to support commercial collaboration between Japanese companies and international partners through joint investment and project funding.

The announcement follows Japan's latest national space strategy. On June 20, the Japanese government identified space as a strategic growth industry and outlined plans to mobilize ¥14 trillion (about S$112 billion) in combined public and private investment by 2040, according to government documents.

NSAS Chief Executive Ngiam Le Na said companies from both countries are already working together and that the new framework is expected to accelerate commercial partnerships.

According to NSAS, "We expect significant breakthroughs in the years ahead," Ngiam said during the signing ceremony, pointing to existing collaborations between Singaporean and Japanese companies.

Companies Announce Commercial Partnerships

Several organizations also announced new agreements alongside the government memorandum during Spacetide 2026.

The Society of Japanese Aerospace Companies and the Association of Aerospace Industries (Singapore) signed an agreement to strengthen cooperation across aerospace, unmanned aerial vehicles and space technologies.

Japanese satellite communications company Warpspace partnered with Singapore-based Transcelestial Technologies to explore optical wireless communications for satellite networks.

The collaboration combines Warpspace's satellite relay infrastructure with Transcelestial's laser communication technology to support growing demand for high-bandwidth connectivity in low Earth orbit.

Meanwhile, Japanese cloud Technology Company Fusic and Singapore's Nanyang Technological University agreed to jointly develop an artificial intelligence-powered satellite constellation management system.

The project aims to automate satellite operations as the number of spacecraft in orbit continues to grow. NTU's Satellite Research Centre, which has designed, built and operated 13 satellites since launching Singapore's first locally developed satellite in 2011, will provide operational data to support AI model development.

Quantum Satellite Security Emerges as Key Growth Area

Quantum-secure satellite communications remain one of the fastest-growing commercial segments for both countries.

Singapore startup SpeQtral partnered with Japanese satellite operator SKY Perfect JSAT in January to test quantum-encrypted satellite communications designed to strengthen cybersecurity for governments and enterprise customers.

Speaking at Spacetide 2026, SpeQtral founder Lim Chune Yang said advances in computing are increasing pressure on existing encryption technologies, creating demand for quantum-based communications that can better protect sensitive data transmitted through satellite networks.

Government agencies and financial institutions across Asia-Pacific are expected to be among the primary users of quantum-secure satellite communications because of their reliance on critical communications infrastructure.

Why the Agreement Matters

The latest agreement builds on the Japan-Singapore Strategic Partnership announced on March 18, when Prime Ministers Sanae Takaichi and Lawrence Wong elevated bilateral relations during celebrations marking 60 years of diplomatic ties.

The joint statement issued at the time identified space cooperation as a priority area and committed both governments to establishing closer collaboration between JAXA and the newly formed NSAS.

For satellite operators, launch providers and space technology startups, Singapore's entry into JAXA's commercial investment framework creates a formal pathway for joint research, co-development projects and investment opportunities that previously did not exist.