

Singapore and Japan agree to cooperate in the space sector

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Lim Wei Cheng, Executive Director of Nanyang Technological University's Satellite Research Centre, explains the satellite geostationary operations to researchers and engineers. - Image: NTU Singapore

Singapore and Japan have agreed to cooperate in the space sector. The two sides signed a cooperation agreement on Monday (July 6). They agreed to work together on technological development and research in the space sector.

This is the first agreement between the space departments of the two countries. Singaporean Prime Minister Lawrence Wong and Japanese Prime Minister Sane Takaichi discussed the matter earlier this year.

The Singapore National Space Agency and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency will exchange information and explore opportunities for cooperation in various fields, including space technology, operations, science, research, industrial development, education, policy, regulatory exchanges, etc.

At the 'Spacetime 2026' conference in Tokyo, the two organizations exchanged letters of intent to promote trade and industry under Japan's Joint Finance Business Development Framework. Singapore is the third country to join the framework, after the UK and France.

"Both organizations will support Singapore and Japanese companies through the framework to forge partnerships and strengthen cooperation in areas of common interest," the Space Agency of Singapore said in a statement.

Another Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Nanyang Technological University and Japan's Fusio Software Development Company.

Its aim is to explore how artificial intelligence (AI) can help ground control teams in handling various tasks. Some of the tasks include routine satellite operations, spacecraft planning, ground control station allocation, and early detection of technical issues.

"As the number of satellites increases, the space industry will need new ways to manage space programs safely, efficiently and on a large scale," said Professor Christian Wolfrum, Vice-Chancellor of Nanyang Technological University.

Singapore's National Space Agency was established in April this year. Its aim is to help Singapore seize opportunities in the expanding space sector.