

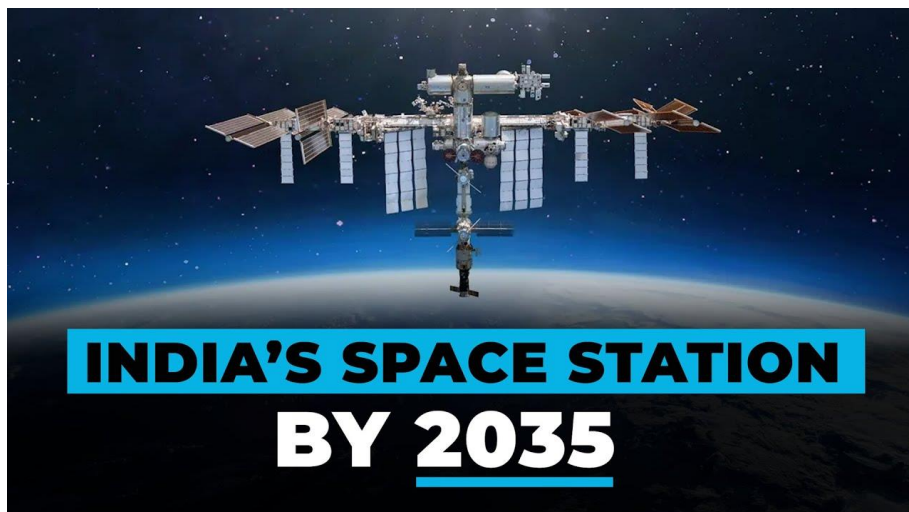
NASA To Train An Indian Astronaut For ISS Mission

Why In News?

- US space agency NASA **will train an Indian astronaut** for a mission to the **International Space Station** by the end of 2024, said the organisation's administrator Bill Nelson during his Delhi visit.



- Terming India as a **“great future partner”**, Nelson said that US would be open to collaborate on an Indian Space Station.
- The Prime Minister called on Isro scientists to set up an Indian Space Station by 2035 and send an Indian to the moon by 2040.



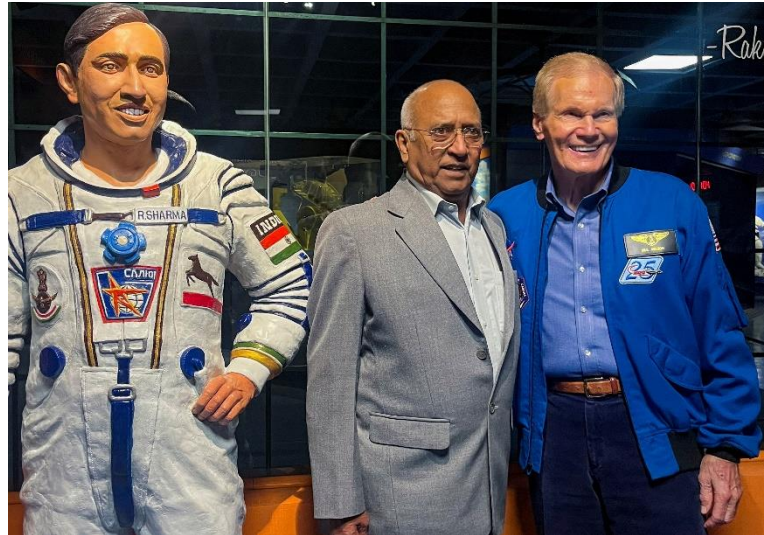
What It Is All About

- “We are going to **de-orbit our space station in 2031**. We expect by that time to have commercial space stations. If India wants us to counsel or collaborate with them, of course we would be willing to,” he said.
- Nelson said another major programme emerging from India-US collaboration would be the **NISAR satellite to be launched** in the first quarter of 2024.
- “It was **part of the agreement that NASA** will help train an Indian astronaut and that astronaut will fly to the International Space Station at the end of 2024,” said Nelson, adding that the astronaut **would be selected by ISRO**.



- The selection will likely be from among the four persons who have undergone **basic space astronaut training** in preparation for the **Gaganyaan mission**.
- The science objectives for the two-week long mission will be decided by India.
- A statement from the department of space — after a meeting between Nelson and Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh — said a **joint working group of both the space agencies** were exploring collaborating on radiation impact studies, micro meteorite and orbital debris shield studies, space health and medicine aspects.
- NASA Administrator **Meets Rakesh Sharma**, The First Indian To Fly To Space
- Bengaluru (Karnataka): National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Administrator Bill Nelson expressed delight at meeting students at the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), and the first Indian to fly to space, Rakesh Sharma on Wednesday.
- Sharing on his social media X, NASA Administrator stated, "It was a great honor to speak with students in Bengaluru today with Rakesh Sharma, the first Indian to fly to space. His story lit up the room! To the **Artemis Generation** in India and

beyond: Work hard, dream big, and reach for the stars. The universe is the limit!"



- Rakesh Sharma went on to become the **first Indian citizen to reach outer space** on **April 2, 1984**, when he flew aboard the Soviet rocket Soyuz T-11 launched from Baikonur Cosmodrome in the **Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic**.
- He spent **7 days, 21 hours and 40 minutes** in space and took India to become the 14th nation to travel to outer space. Sharma's work was mainly in the fields of bio-medicine and remote sensing.