

China to launch 156 mini-satellites for global broadband coverage

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Aerospace giant China Aerospace Science and Industry Corporation (CASIC) today announced that it plans to launch a network of 156 mini-satellites to facilitate broadband coverage.

Chinese satellite

The CASIC further said that this is the first low orbiting networked satellite project, which will orbit 1,000 km above the ground.

The project has been undertaken by China as part of its wider push for commercial space development.

"The network is a general satellite platform," said Bei Chao, a CASIC engineer, who added that add-ons and upgrades were being explored next.

Small satellites are easy to mass produce and upgrade at low cost, Xinhua news agency reported.

Low orbit helps avoid signal delay -- and satellite communication services with frequencies from 26.5 to 40 hertz will improve internet access.

The project plans to send up the first satellite before 2018, and launch four more by 2020 to form a constellation.

By the end of the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025), all 156 satellites will be in operation.

CASIC launched an experimental satellite "TK-1" in early March, featuring high-carrying efficiency and adaptability.

- (With IANS inputs)