Tapping the Space potential

What is the issue?

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- India is being watched for its space feat especially with the recent launch of a record-breaking 104 nano-satellites into orbit from a single rocket.
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- Experts however feel that India can do a lot more, given its potential.
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What are India's strengths?

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- Scientists attribute much of ISRO’s success and prolific output to the way the **organization** is run.
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- Tight cost-control driven by the **organization’s ability to do everything in-house** – including building rockets, satellites, propulsion systems, and sensors – has helped.
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- Cheaper Indian labour — scientists, engineers, technicians, support staff — as compared to those in the U.S. or Europe is another plus.
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- ISRO is now recognized as a reliable source by many countries to outsource their launches to.
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- Apart from commercial space activities and for agricultural purposes, India is also augmenting its capacity to pursue diplomatic and security objectives.
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What are the opportunities at present?

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- The recent achievements have helped strengthen India's place in the burgeoning **private space market**.
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- With surging demand for **telecommunication services** India’s primacy in the field of space exploration and space-based services will skyrocket further.
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- Demand for **small, inexpensive satellites**, like the ones ISRO fired off, is especially expected to boom.
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- ISRO now has its eyes set on **interstellar missions** (travelling between stars or planetary systems) which is expected to set the template for future interstellar missions.
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- There are a **range of other missions** under way such as Aditya-1 (first Indian space mission to study the sun), Chandrayaan-2 mission, an orbiter to Venus, etc.
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Where to focus now?

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- Indian government has been augmenting ISRO’s **budget** year on year. Even so, the organization’s current annual budget of $1 billion is just 5 percent of NASA’s.
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- ISRO’s average annual **revenue** over the last three years is approximately $200 billion which is very low in comparison with the global launch services market.
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- ISRO has to fully **leverage its capacities and talents** to earn more profits, which can help expand its operations.
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- Despite its successes, India needs to claim a larger share of the global space economy pie. It should fully tap the potential and earn substantial **profits for its commercial launch services**.
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- Indian government should formulate policies to optimally use its scientific and technological expertise to **nurture home-grown enterprises**.
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- This can help expand a range of products and services for the domestic

market as well as increase the participation in the global space industry.
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Source: The Diplomat

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