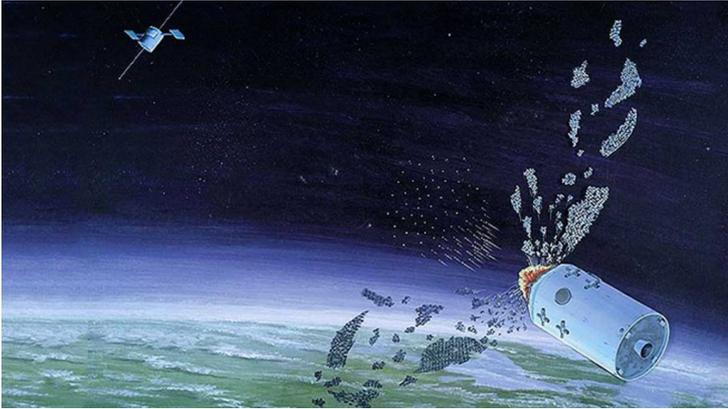


Indian ASAT debris will burn up in atmosphere: Pentagon



Following criticism from the NASA about the space debris created by India's ASAT missile test last week and the US had been tracking the 400 piece of debris. On Tuesday, Pentagon affirmed that the Indian ASAT debris would eventually burn up in atmosphere, despite NASA's concerns about the risks.

India test-fired their first anti-satellite missile on March 27th, shooting down their own live satellite at an altitude of 300 kilometres from earth surface - venturing into space defence and becoming the fourth country to have achieved the feat. Earlier this week, Pentagon had also confirmed that the US Strategic Command's Joint Force Space Component Command (JFSCC) has been actively tracking the orbital debris to create "public space situational awareness" and was sharing the data on <http://www.space-track.org>.

While this was a booster for Indian defence and reaching to the par with China, the US space agency NASA had critical opinions for the space debris created by Indian ASAT test. NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine had said on Monday that around 400 pieces of space junk were created due to the test and were creating threat for the astronauts in the International Space Station - something he called a "terrible, terrible thing". The American space agency also claimed that the orbital space debris was creating threats to the safety of astronauts in International Space Station, although they were free from risks as of now.

Indian administration has assessed that the debris created during Mission Shakti will disperse into the atmosphere within 45 days since the test. In a sharply contrasting claims with NASA, the Pentagon stated on Thursday that they stood by the Indian space agency's assessment and their previous claims that the ASAT debris will eventually burn up in Earth's atmosphere. On the other hand, White House cautiously stated that they are aware of Indian government's efforts to mitigate the ASAT debris, and that the US will "continue close engagements with India on shared interests in space".