

The GALILEO family is further expanding: EU and India seal their agreement

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After intensive exchanges held since January 2004, negotiations on India's participation in Europe's satellite radio navigation programme finally reached approval. The agreement, initialled today in New Delhi at the occasion of the EU-India Summit in the presence of UK Prime Minister Tony Blair as EU Presidency, European Commission President José Manuel Barroso and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, will ensure the availability of highest quality Galileo services in India as well as cooperation to establish regional augmentation systems based on EGNOS and GALILEO. Welcoming the outcome of the negotiations, Vice-President of the European Commission Jacques Barrot said: "This is another important step for the development of GALILEO as an international programme, but also a major milestone in the EU/India partnership".

The agreement was initialled by Mr Francisco Da Camara Gomes, Head of the EC Delegation in India, representing the European Union, and Mr G. Madhavan Nair, Secretary, Department of Space, representing India. Considering that India has well proven capabilities in space, satellite and navigation related activities, the agreement will provide a positive impulse for India and European industrial cooperation in many high tech areas.

India is the fourth country joining the GALILEO programme, after the signature of agreements with China, Israel and Ukraine. Discussions are also under way with Argentina, Brazil, Morocco, Mexico, Norway, Chile, South Korea, Malaysia, Canada and Australia.

The ever growing interest of third countries to participate in the GALILEO programme represents a big boost for the GNSS market which is indeed potentially considerable: 3 billion receivers and revenues of some €275 billion per year by 2020 worldwide, and the creation of more than 150.000 high qualified jobs in Europe alone.

Background

GALILEO is Europe's satellite radio navigation programme. It was launched on the initiative of the European Commission and developed jointly with the European Space Agency (ESA). It heralds the advent of a technological revolution similar to the one sparked off by mobile phones. It will also make for the development of a new generation of universal services in areas such as transport, telecommunication, agriculture or fisheries. To date, this technology, which promises to be highly profitable, is only mastered by the United States' GPS system and Russia's GLONASS system, both of which are financed and controlled by the military authorities. The GALILEO programme will be administered and controlled by civilians and offers a guarantee of quality and continuity which is essential for many sensitive applications. Its complementarity with current systems will increase the reliability and availability of navigation and positioning services worldwide.

For more information about Galileo, please visit:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/energy_transport/galileo

<http://www.esa.int/export/esaSA/navigation.html>

<http://www.galileoju.com>