



Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology

Valiamala, Thiruvananthapuram - 695 547, Kerala

SPACE: Where Art and Science are One

A Colloquium by

Group Captain Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair

IAF & ISRO Astronaut



3:30 PM



24 SEPTEMBER 2025



SAC
Multipurpose Hall

Abstract: Space has always been a realm where human imagination and human ingenuity meet. On the one hand, it is the most precise laboratory we have ever built—where physics, engineering, and life sciences converge to keep human beings alive in the most unforgiving environment. On the other, it is a canvas that has inspired poets, painters, and dreamers for centuries, awakening in us a sense of awe and belonging that transcends boundaries.

As an astronaut, I experience firsthand how the disciplines of science and art are not opposites but reflections of the same quest - to explore, to understand, and to give meaning to the infinite. This talk will explore how spaceflight training, engineering design, and mission execution resonate with the same creativity and intuition that fuel artistic expression. From the choreography of spacewalks to the imagery captured from orbit, from the architecture of spacecraft to the philosophy of cosmic perspective, space invites us to see art and science as one continuum.

By weaving together personal experiences from astronaut training, insights from India's Gaganyaan program, and the cultural imagination that space has ignited globally, I will argue that our exploration of space is not just a scientific enterprise, but also a deeply human and artistic endeavor.

About the Speaker: Group Captain Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair is a fighter pilot with the Indian Air Force and goes by the fighter pilot callsign "PapaNair". He has been the Commanding Officer of a front line Sukhoi 30 MKI fighter squadron of the Indian Air Force. He is presently an Astronaut, Gaganyaatri, with ISRO.

Group Captain PB Nair is a graduate of 93rd course of the National Defence Academy, Pune and the 162nd Pilots Course of Air Force Academy, Dindigul, Hyderabad. He received the President's Plaque and the Sword of Honor for standing first in the overall order of merit. He was commissioned into the IAF in 1998 and has close to 3000 hours of flying experience on a variety of military fighter and transport aircraft, such as the MiG 21, Jaguar, MiG 29, Sukhoi 30 MKI, Iskra, Hawk etc.

Gp Capt PB Nair is also a distinguished graduate of the US Air Force from Air Command and Staff College in Montgomery, Alabama and top the 'international officers' class in their Master's Degree program. He obtained his second master's in strategic studies from Madras University and completed his M Phil in Defense and Strategic Studies from the same university. In July 2025, he received his M Tech (Research) in Aeronautics from IISc, Bengaluru.

He was the President of the International Officers body at the USAF Staff College. He has been the recipient of AGNI excellence award by DRDO. His research paper on "Artificial Intelligence & War" has been published by Springer Publication. He has been trained with NASA, Space X, European Space Agency, and Japanese Space Agency. The Honorable PM of India, Shri Narendra Modi pinned India's Astronaut Wings on Group Captain Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair.



Live Stream: <https://tinyurl.com/2p8c4wmx>