

Statement: About the release of the first Myanmar micro-satellite from international space station

The first Myanmar micro-satellite (Lawkanat-1) stored at international space station was released into space at 17:30 on Monday, March 22, Japan time, and was inserted into low earth orbit. This satellite was developed in Japan with the budget of the Myanmar government based on the contract agreement between Myanmar Aerospace Engineering University and Hokkaido University. With payloads, it is possible to grasp the state of vegetation and the ocean more accurately than before, and it is possible to contribute to agriculture, forestry and fisheries in Myanmar, and to monitor torrential rainfalls and typhoons by three-dimensional imaging of clouds and grasping the growth of plants.

The purpose of the satellite stated in the contract is to observe the earth for the following peaceful uses.


- i. Agriculture
- ii. Forestry
- iii. Towns and Urbanization
- iv. Marine & Oceanography
- v. Soil, Mineral and Geomorphology
- vi. Hydrology & Water Resources
- vii. Environment
- viii. Disaster Management

In view of this agreement, we will do our utmost to prevent this satellite from being used for military purposes. On the other hand, in preparation for the future full-scale operation of the satellite, and in order to suppress the degradation of the satellite performance, only the Japanese staff will carry out the test operation. In case of image acquisition, in consideration of the unexpected emergency situation, we will capture images only for countries / regions where there is no risk of military use, and would disclose information such as shooting locations on request.

Currently, there are no ground facilities such as antennas and transmitters / receivers that can operate this satellite in Myanmar, and there are no human resources who can operate it. For the time being, Myanmar students currently studying space development and utilization in Hokkaido University will not be educated other than the general content described in the textbooks, and even if they return to Myanmar, it will not be possible to operate satellites or to develop a satellite independently. In addition, satellite information related to communication and operation, which is indispensable for the operation of this satellite, will be strictly managed by a limited number of Japanese staffs. In the future, if the Myanmar side requests the delivery of satellite and satellite image data, we will respond only if the political and social conditions surrounding Myanmar are stable and peaceful use is guaranteed in a way that is widely convinced by the international community, including the United Nations.

The ground resolution and observation frequency of imaging by this satellite are equal to or less than those of commercial satellites that are currently available at low cost to everyone, and, therefore, are of no value in terms of military use. On the other hand, in terms of agriculture and environmental measurement, this satellite is designed to make the world's most advanced and significant contributions.

We strongly hope that the day will come as soon as possible when this satellite will be used for the safety and improvement of the lives of all Myanmar people and the promotion of industry in Myanmar.



Yukihiro Takahashi
Project leader of Myanmar micro-satellite program in Japan
Professor at Hokkaido University