



Innovations for Defence Excellence

Why in News

Recently, the Defence Minister has approved the budgetary support of Rs. 498.8 crore to [Innovations for Defence Excellence \(iDEX\)](#) challenge under the **Defence Innovation Organisation (DIO)** for the next five years.

- Earlier, the Defence Minister released an E-booklet titled '20 Reforms in 2020' highlighting the major [reforms undertaken by the Ministry of Defence \(MoD\) in 2020](#).

Key Points

▪ About:

- The iDEX initiative was launched by the **Prime Minister in April 2018**.
- It aims to achieve **self - reliance and foster innovation and technology development in Defence and Aerospace** by engaging Industries including Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises ([MSMEs](#)), start-ups, individual innovators, R&D institutes and academia.
- iDEX is **funded and managed by the DIO**, and functions as the executive arm of DIO.
- DIO is a '**not for profit**' company registered under [Section 8 of the Companies Act 2013](#).
- Its two founding members are **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) & Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)** - Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs). HAL and BEL are [navratna companies](#).
- It will provide the engaging industries with **funding and other support to carry out Research & Development**.
 - Self-reliance in manufacturing of defence equipment is a crucial factor for **maintaining India's strategic autonomy**.
 - **India's arms imports fell 33% between 2011-15 and 2016-20**, said a report released by the [Stockholm International Peace Research Institute \(SIPRI\)](#).
- iDEX has partnered with leading incubators in the country to provide hand holding, technical support and guidance to the winners of iDEX challenges.

▪ Other Related Initiatives:

◦ Defence Industrial Corridors:

- To support the growth of the Defence sector and enhance manufacturing capacity in the sector, two [Defence Industrial Corridors](#) are being set up in India, one in **Uttar Pradesh** and another in **Tamil Nadu**.

◦ Strategic Partnership (SP) Model:

- It identifies a few Indian private companies who would initially tie up with global **Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs)** to seek technology transfers to set up domestic manufacturing infrastructure and supply chains. It is a part of [Defence Acquisition Procedure \(DAP\) 2020](#).

- Under DAP 2020, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has also notified a '[positive](#)

[indigenisation list](#)' of 108 items.

◦ **Artificial Intelligence in Defence:**

- **N Chandrasekaran Task Force** was set up in 2018 to study implications of AI in national security.
- **Defence Artificial Intelligence Project Agency (DAIPA)** was created in March, 2019.
- DAIPA aims for greater thrust on **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** in Defence, formulation of an AI roadmap for each Defence PSU and Ordnance Factory Board to develop AI-enable products.

Source:TH

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