

Defence Ministry gives in-principle nod for 31 projects under 'Make-II scheme'

Bengaluru leg of start-up challenge gets 120 entries

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The Department of Defence Production under the Ministry of Defence has cleared 31 projects and has given them in-principle approval under the Make-II scheme.

"Make-II is an industry-funded scheme. It offers easier clearance and faster scaling-up of production. Make-II has seen faster development than any of the 'Make projects' that have happened so far," Ajay Kumar, Secretary-Production, Ministry of Defence, told *BusinessLine*.

"In the last 6-8 months, we have given in-principle approval to 31 projects and are moving forward in assurance of firm orders," he added.

Under Make-II, the Ministry of Defence has a sub category of suo motu submission of proposals. "Here, we got two such proposal and 12 more are under consideration. The proposal cleared is for night vision solution and the other is related to missiles," explained Kumar.

Another scheme — SPARK (Support for Prototype & Research Kick-start) — supports development of prototypes after selection under various programmes.

"For this, we have funds up to ₹1.5 crore per project funded and handheld by iDEX (Innovations for Defence Excellence). Here the money is disbursed in a phased manner with milestone achievements," said Kumar.

On indigenisation, Kumar said: "We at the macro level are still playing catch-up. We import technology and try to indigenise it. But, by the time we in-

digenise, new products have already come."

"It is here we need to change the mindset and go for total indigenisation," he added and pointed to how production of T-72 and T-90 tank engines of horse-power 760 and 1000, after indigenisation, led to prices coming down.

"To our shock prices came down to 40 per cent of import price," he explained.

Sanjay Jaju, Joint Secretary and CEO, iDEX, said the Bengaluru-leg of Defence India Start-up Challenge held here on Monday saw 120 start-up registrations. Of these, 30 start-ups made presentation to defence companies.

New ideas, solutions

iDEX has identified 11 areas to get new ideas and solutions to speed up productions—protection system with inbuilt sensors, see-through armour, active protection system, and secure hardware based offline

encryption device, advanced technology-based desalination system and bilge oily water system etc.

Jaju further said defence challenges are being held in multiple cities with the partnership of Forge, T-Hub, IIM-Ahmedabad, IIT-Madras and Bombay to identify start-ups to work for the defence sector.