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‘हर काम देश के नाम’

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**iDEX-DIO signs 250th contract, first under Mission DefSpace &
100th SPRINT (Navy) contract in New Delhi**

Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX), the flagship initiative of Ministry of Defence, has reached a milestone with the signing of its 250th contract - first under Mission DefSpace - and 100th SPRINT (Navy) contract in New Delhi on May 15, 2023. The contracts were signed in the presence of Defence Secretary Shri Giridhar Aramane and other senior civil & military officials.

Mission DefSpace contract

The first iDEX contract of Mission DefSpace was exchanged between Additional Secretary (Defence Production) & CEO Defence Innovation Organisation (DIO) Shri T Natarajan and CEO, InspeCity Shri Arindrajit Chowdhary, one of the winners of the challenge ‘Micropropulsion system for cubesats’. This challenge is being led by the Defence Space Agency.

Cubesats are a class of smallsats, which are modular; low-cost; easy to manufacture, integrate, and launch; and form a critical component for launch-on-demand capabilities. For imagery/Intelligence Surveillance & Reconnaissance/communication purposes, cubesats need to be precisely aligned, hence there is a requirement of a compact micropropulsion system for precise manoeuvring and orbit correction. InspeCity is developing a gas-based system for this purpose. This technology, once developed, can be integrated with other satellites, including the cubesat swarm being developed under Mission DefSpace.

Recognising the strategic significance of the space domain, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi had launched Mission DefSpace with 75 Defence Space Challenges to be addressed by the private sector during

DefExpo at Gandhinagar in October 2022. It aims to nurture the Indian Private Space industry through challenges addressing every stage of a space mission – from mission planning to satellite data analytics.

100th SPRINT (Navy) contract

The 100th SPRINT (Navy) contract was exchanged between AS (DP) & CEO-DIO and CEO, Siliconia Technologies Pvt Ltd Shri Sushil Eknath Ghule. Siliconia Technologies Pvt Ltd is the winner of the Challenge which envisaged the development of a prototype that is a lightweight ASIC (Application-Specific Integrated Circuit) based communication system using software defined antenna for Low Earth Orbit, Medium Earth Orbit and Geostationary satellite communication. The solution by Siliconia can provide multiple independent receiver/transmitter sources that are essential in phased-array radars, typically used in satellite tracking.

It may be recalled that under the ‘SPRINT’ initiative, a total of 75 Challenge statements for the Indian industry were unveiled by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi during the Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO) seminar ‘Swavlamban’ on July 18, 2022. The initiative aims at inducting at least 75 technologies/products into the Indian Navy by August 2023 as part of ‘Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav’.

The iDEX achieved the milestone of signing its 1st and 50th iDEX SPRINT contracts under DISC-7 in October 2022 and January 2023 respectively and within a few months the 100th SPRINT (Navy) contract was exchanged.

About iDEX

Till date, iDEX has received more than 7,500 applications from individual innovators, MSMEs and start-ups under various categories of challenges like DISC, Prime and Open Challenge. iDEX has also been able to generate thousands of jobs and attract India’s talent back to the country.

The iDEX is working at a path-breaking pace to ensure that its agreements with the start-ups and innovators reach logical conclusions timely, eventually opening a myriad of options for the budding, soon to be unicorns and at the same time addressing the requirement of Services.

The iDEX framework was launched by the Prime Minister in 2018 with the objective to provide the platform of co-creation & co-

development in the defence sector. It aims to engage start-ups to contribute to the defence sector and develop defence and aerospace setup in the country. iDEX is being implemented by DIO, established under the Department of Defence Production, MoD.

In his address, the Defence Secretary exuded confidence that the iDEX will help India become the biggest defence innovation ecosystem in the world in the times to come. He also appreciated the continuous efforts and support from all the stakeholders, including the Services, start-ups, partner incubators and the iDEX team in reaching the milestone.

ABB/Anand/Savvy