

## DRDO's Tech Development Fund driving innovation

*By YV Phani Raj*

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is working closely with the industry-both large and medium enterprises as well as startups. DRDO is roping in industry to be its develop partner to produce systems for the country's armed forces. The Technology Development Fund of DRDO is helping innovators turn their ideas and prototypes into commercial products. Sharing the initiatives, DRDO chairman Dr G Satheesh Reddy told Telangana Today, "We are inviting good companies and innovators with good idea and technologies to work with us where we can jointly come out with successful products. We realise there is a need to develop defence technologies the way Indian young technology professionals have developed multiple Information and Communication Technologies." DRDO is encouraging innovators to develop products so that they can be deployed by the Indian Defence as well as exported to other overseas markets.

While Niti Aayog has rolled out Tinkering Labs, Department of Science and Technology is supporting industry and Ministry of Defence has rolled out Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) initiative, DRDO from its side through its technology development fund is financially supporting industry. Reddy informed that the funding has already started and it can fund any number of innovators and startups. DRDO is actively supporting innovation. Through its another initiative 'Dare to Dream' announced on October 15 last year, ideas and innovations of innovators in six specific segments are being funded. He said, "We don't want to do what industry can do. DRDO and companies can work together on niche technologies and systems. The focus should be on reducing imports and increasing exports from India."

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