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IIT Bhubaneswar director R.V. Raja Kumar at the 13th Foundation Day on Friday

DRDO to tie up with IIT on research

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Bhubaneswar: The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is keen to tie up with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bhubaneswar to take up various kinds of research in the field of defence and turn the institution into a centre of excellence. It has asked the prestigious institute to come out with innovative plans to develop long-term partnership with DRDO.

Addressing the students of the IIT, Bhubaneswar on its 13th Foundation Day in the virtual mode on Friday, chairman, DRDO and scientific advisor to defence minister Dr G. Satheesh Reddy said: "We need to promote research, put up start-ups and have a synchronisation with the industries to make the country prosperous."

Reddy said: "The DRDO wants to actively make partnership with IIT, in many specific research areas. We want to develop it as a centre of excellence in the field of defence research like other

prominent organisations like IIT Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai. It would support their innovation by giving funds to make it a reality."

The head of the country's premier defence research organisation said, "DRDO is releasing funds under Technological Development Funds up to Rs 10 crore to promote start-ups. Besides we have a plan to give Rs 1 crore to the passing out students to set up start-ups if they come up with a plan that is feasible. We are ready to promote such start-ups in large numbers. Lots of youngsters are entering the defence research field."

The DRDO chairman said, "With the collaboration of the Ministry of Higher Education, the DRDO plans to involve more and more students from the reputed institutes in various fields of research. We need to decentralize. We are generally technology followers. Now we have to change the trend and have to be the frontrunners in the field of technology. If the country has to prosper, we have to be technologically advanced. Lots of re-

search and innovation work is to be done. The academic institution should do the fundamental research and then only specialised institutions will take it further."

He said DRDO is working with around 295 academic institutions on different research projects and more than Rs 16,500 crore is involved in these projects.

Stating that India has matured and become self-reliant in many areas of defence like making ballistics of inter-continental ramps, radar, sonar technology, tanks, fighter planes and even space technology, Reddy said, "The Prime Minister will soon dedicate a newer version of Arjun tank."

Director IIT, Prof R.V. Raja Kumar said: "Covid-19 has thrown up many challenges. We need to rise to the occasion. We have decided to open courses on bio-engineering and generate human resources on bio-engineering."

Expressing serious concern on the flash flood disaster in Uttarakhand, Raja Kumar said, "There is a serious gap in the field of disaster studies."