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ISRO's Astronaut Training Hub in Karnataka

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Why in News

The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** has proposed **Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC)** at **Challakere** in Chitradurga district of **Karnataka**.

- The region already houses some facilities of ISRO, the **Defence Research & Development Organisation's** Advanced Aeronautical Test Range, the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre and the Indian Institute of Science. Thus, it is also known as **Science City**.
- Moreover, ISRO has also planned to add a **quarantine facility** at the Sriharikota spaceport.
 - Quarantine is a restriction on the movement of people and goods which is intended to prevent the spread of disease or pests.
 - The quarantine facility would ensure that astronauts who are about to enter the spacecraft before the launch stay unexposed.

Key points

- **All in one facility:** Challakere will be the single-stop consolidating infrastructure and activities related to space travellers.
 - Currently, Human Spaceflight Programme (HSP) work is split across various centres such as the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala and the U.R. Rao Satellite Centre in Bengaluru.
 - Challakere will also host work related to crew and service modules of the spacecraft that carries the astronauts.
- **Reduction of Cost:** The first set of four astronaut candidates for the **Gaganyaan mission of 2022** are to train in Russia. For such programmes, the country pays a large amount of money to avail space training facilities abroad.

Challakere

- Challakere is a city in Chitradurga district in the state of Karnataka, India.
- It is called **Oil city** with numerous edible oil mills around the city.
- Challakere is famous for **kambali (woven blankets)** made by the **local Kuruba people**.
- It is also known as the "**second Mumbai**" of India because it is the second-largest producer/supplier of edible oil after Mumbai. There are as many as 60+ oil industries in Challakere.

Source: TH