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MAHE, ICMR launch initiative to use drones for oncopathological sample transportation

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The objective of this initiative is to assess the feasibility of transferring materials, such as frozen section samples, from remote locations to peripheral hospitals using aerial means

BY BL MANGALURU BUREAU

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Members of MAHE are seen with the drone used for transporting oncopathological sample.

Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) have launched a programme to utilise drones for transporting oncopathological samples between peripheral and tertiary care hospitals in Karnataka.

The first sample was sent from Dr TMA Pai Rotary Hospital in Karkala of Udupi district to Kasturba Hospital at Manipal on Wednesday.

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A media statement said that intraoperative sample transportation from rural areas presents a significant challenge in India. The project titled 'Deployment of a Robust Need based aerial healthcare delivery system' (DRONE) seeks to explore the feasibility, utility, and cost-effectiveness of utilising drones for this purpose.

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By leveraging drone technology, samples can be transported swiftly, providing immediate access to advanced diagnostics such as frozen section during surgical procedures. If successful, this research could revolutionise healthcare delivery by establishing connections between remote hospitals and laboratory facilities, thereby facilitating complex surgeries for patients in geographically inaccessible regions, it said.

Inaugurating the project, Rajiv Bahl, Secretary, Department of Health Research, and Director General of ICMR, lauded the this innovative approach to healthcare delivery highlighting its potential to revolutionise sample transportation and diagnostic services, particularly in underserved rural areas.

Congratulating the ICMR for spearheading this initiative, Lt Gen MD Venkatesh, Vice Chancellor of MAHE, emphasised the importance of leveraging technology to address healthcare disparities and improve healthcare access for all communities.

H S Ballal, Pro Chancellor of MAHE, appreciated ICMR's collaborative spirit behind this drone project and emphasized the importance of innovation in healthcare. MAHE has always been at the forefront in such innovations, he said.

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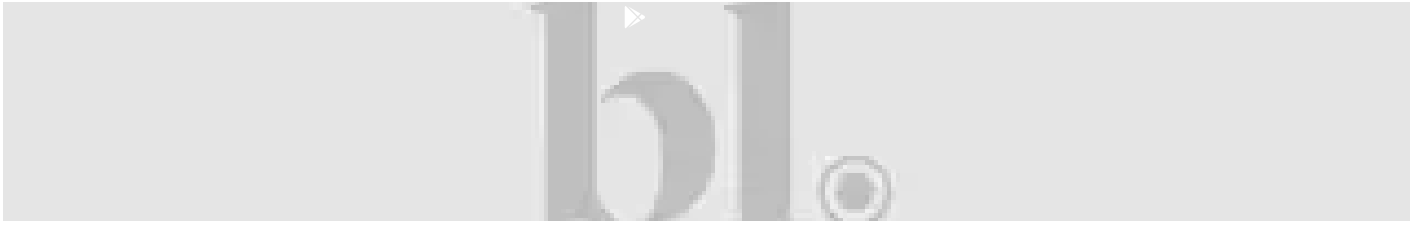
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