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ICMR Begins Vaccine Delivery By Drones In Manipur; 10 Doses Sent Across 23 KMs In 15 Min



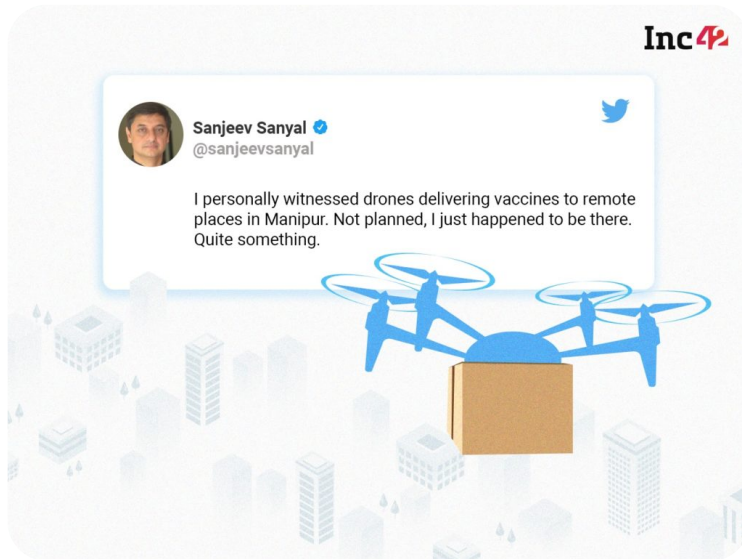
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05 Oct'21 • 3 min read

- In a South Asia-first move, ICMR delivered 10 Covid doses over an aerial distance of 15 Km, health minister Mansukh Mandaviya
- India's principal economic advisor Sanjeev Sanyal also took to Twitter to announce that he was an "accidental" witness to one of ICMR's vaccine delivery

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covering a road distance of 23 Km in 15 minutes



On August 25, 2021, the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) had notified the liberalised **Drone Rules, 2021** to allow wider use of drones while balancing safety and security considerations in drone operations.

Less than a month later, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) was **granted conditional exemption** from the Drone Rules to use drones up to 3,000 metres [about 9,843 feet] in Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Manipur and Nagaland for conducting experimental — Beyond the Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) vaccine delivery — especially for remote areas.

Health minister Mansukh Mandaviya launched ICMR's Drone Response and Outreach in North

The move has made India the first nation in Southeast Asia to send vaccines in an unmanned aerial craft covering an aerial distance of 15 KM.

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In a press statement, Mandaviya said, "Today, 10 beneficiaries will receive the first dose and 8 will receive the second dose at the PHC. This initiative will further help us achieve the highest possible immunization coverage for Covid-19. Incorporating such drone technologies into the national programs would help deliver other vaccines and medical supplies as quickly as possible."

After spotting the experimental flight test in Manipur, India's principal economic advisor Sanjeev Sanyal, took to Twitter to announce that he was an "accidental" witness to one of ICMR vaccine delivery via drone experiment, which he called — "Quite something".

I personally witnessed drones delivering vaccines to remote places in Manipur. Not planned, I just happened to be there. Quite something.

Govt Experiments With Drones For Healthcare Delivery

In April 2021, the Telangana government also **received permission** to use drones within the visual line of sight (VLOS) for the experimental delivery of Covid vaccines. The state government, in partnership with the World Economic Forum, **tied up with hyperlocal delivery app Dunzo** to pilot drone-based deliveries of medicines in the state for 6 days — September 20 to 25.

In August 2021, the government also **granted** drone usage permission to 10 organisations — mostly for vaccine delivery, agricultural surveillance and remote pilot training.

Answering a question on the use of drones and the administration of the vaccine sent via it, Sanyal said that many locations have a local compounder or health worker who is trained to administer the vaccine and the drones only work

unavailability of a health worker to administer the vaccine is a setback to such an experiment.

Meanwhile, drones have been effectively proven helpful during medicine delivery, sanitisation etc., amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Market For Drone In India

As per the PWC [report](#), the drone market in India is predicted to grow to \$885 Mn by 2021 and to \$9.96 Bn by 2027, growing at a CAGR of 25.05% between 2020 and 2027.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) has also predicted that the drones and drone components manufacturing industry may see an investment of over INR 5,000 Cr over the next 3 years while the annual sales turnover of the drone manufacturing industry may grow from INR 60 Cr in FY 2020-21 to over INR 900 Cr in FY 2023-24. The drone manufacturing industry is expected to generate over 10,000 direct jobs over the next three years, it added.

According to the Inc42 Plus report titled [Drone Technology India Opportunity report 2019](#), drone startups had only a 2.26% share among the deeptech investments between 2014 and 2018.

players such as Cron Technology, Detect Systems, Drones Tech Lab etc. Several Indian startups such as [SenseHawk](#), [TechEagle](#), Ideaforge, among others have been offering drone solutions to increase better efficiency in various sectors.

[Deeptech](#) [Drones](#) [Government Policies](#)

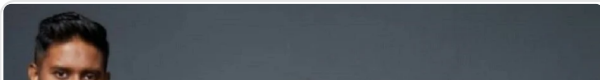
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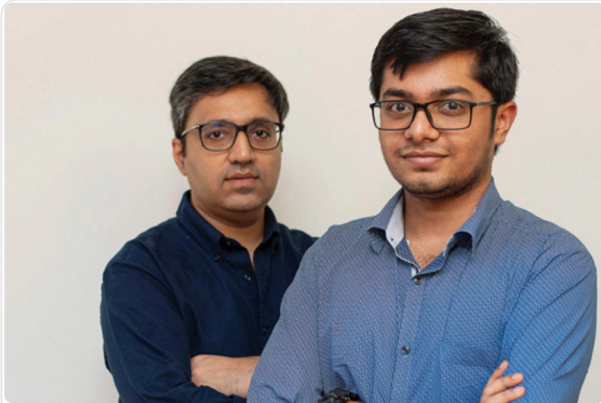
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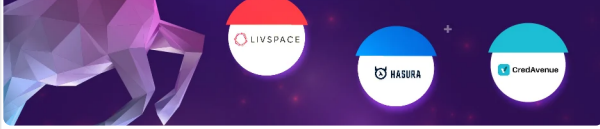
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