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## Medical Drones Take Flight at AIIMS Bibinagar

Telangana

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29 October 2024 10:37 PM



AIIMS Bibinagar became part of the nationwide pilot project aimed at speedy delivery of medical supplies to remote areas via drones on Tuesday — cutting short the delivery time and bridging the gap between the patient and healthcare. (DC)



**Hyderabad:** AIIMS Bibinagar became part of the nationwide pilot project aimed at speedy delivery of medical supplies to remote areas via drones on Tuesday — cutting short the delivery time and bridging the gap between the patient and healthcare.

A live demonstration of drones was conducted after the virtual inauguration of the programme by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

As the crowd eagerly waited for the flight of the drones from AIIMS to the nearest health centre and back, patients and locals wondered how an unmanned aerial vehicle could fly to provide services to the most vulnerable population.

What is the purpose of the drone pilot project at AIIMS Bibinagar?

- To deliver food supplies
- To provide speedy delivery of medical supplies
- To transport patients
- To conduct medical research

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Drone operations in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri are part of the research project on 'Feasibility study on the use of drone in the transportation of sputum samples and drugs' under National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme, which aims to collect samples from tribal and hilly areas of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri.

The team at AIIMS was led by director Dr Vikas Bhatia, with other members including Dr Neeraj Agarwal, HOD, CFM; Dr Rashmi Kundapur as nodal person; Dr Bhushan Kamble as additional nodal person cum PI of the project, Dr Meely Panda and Dr.Vidya Ganji.

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The drone used at AIIMS Bibinagar was manufactured in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research. It was a small unmanned aerial vehicle which can carry a payload of up to eight kgs and cover an area of up to 60 km. It was operated by the MoCA-licensed drone operator agency TSAW Drone Pvt Ltd.

Two drones took flight to the nearest centre 10 km away. The drone could cover the distance to and fro in just within five minutes. The sample was kept inside the cabin and remote-control devices were used to control the flight. Staff was pre-informed to collect the samples sent at the receiving centre, which were then taken up for TB testing.

Executive director Dr Vikas Bhatia wanted the drone services to be extended to serve the tribal and vulnerable population who still face challenges in having access to the health services. The AIIMS drone team also interacted with ASHA workers and Drone Didis, who were nominated for the drone operations.

**( Source : Deccan Chronicle )**

AIIMS Bibinagar

PM Narendra Modi

Yadadri Bhuvanagiri

Dr Vikas Bhatia

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