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**Guidelines for using drones for healthcare: ICMR**



## **Guidelines for using drones for healthcare: ICMR**

The Indian Council of Medical Research ICMR has released guidelines for the usage of drones in the healthcare industry. The drones shall be used to fare medical supplies to remote areas of the countries. These guidelines were developed after the body successfully used drones to deliver vaccines to the northeastern states of Manipur and Nagaland.

The guidance document mentions the equipment such as Covid-19 vaccines and serums that require temperature between 2AoC and 8AoC, different kinds of tablets and capsules, syrups in bottles, gloves, syringes, blood bags, diagnostic biological tissues, urine, blood, sputum, saliva or frozen specimens can only be transported by drone.

Prof Dr Balram Bhargava, Director General of ICMR, said, "As a nation with 1.3 billion, we have faced several challenges in upgrading our healthcare system. The Covid pandemic further added to this challenge but also gave us an opportunity to revisit some of the issues and fix them. With the advent of Covid-19 vaccines, ICMR envisaged the delivery of these vaccines to hard-to-reach-terrains in India. This guidance document will assist in understanding different nuances involved in planning and execution of drone-based delivery of medical supplies,"

Different government institutions such as the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), and Airport Authority of India had collaborated to develop the guidelines to comply with the New Drone Rules -2021, which defines the rules for selection. Take offs and landing of drones in the country.

The document outlines procedures to obtain regulatory approvals from different authorities and how to utilise airspace to deliver medical supplies. It also highlights the selection of drone models and the criteria for selecting landing and take-off points for drones.



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