# Concerns on drone regulations

Click here to know more on the guidelines for drone operations.

\n\n

## What is the issue?

\n\n

Lack of clarity on the recently published drone regulations might affect competitiveness on this nascent field.

\n\n

## What are the concerns?

\n\n

\n
- India’s regulations separate drones into five categories — nano, micro, small, medium and large.
\n
- There is very little regulation for flying a nano up to 50 metres height, except for not flying near airports, military sites or in segregated airspace.
\n
- From the micro category, every drone must obtain a unique identification number (UIN) from the aviation regulator.
\n
- It will be followed by a long list of documentation including security clearances from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in several cases.
\n
- Once the UIN is obtained, drone operators have to apply for an Unmanned Aircraft Operator Permit (UAOP) which includes more forms, more annexures and more submissions.
\n
- Even for the micro drones that climb only up to a height of 200 feet, users have to intimate the local police station 24 hours prior to the flight.
\n
- Manufacturers of drones, technologists and researchers making applications using drones have to test fly drones frequently, often several times a day.
\n

- This makes the structure of these regulations paving the way for possibility of red tapism.
  \n
- With so many government authorities involved in allowing permission, it is inevitable that operators could be slapped easily with real and perceived violations.
  \n
- To avoid this, the regulation provides a list of identified areas for testing and demonstration so that flying drones in these areas comes with less paperwork.
  \n
- However, the locations provided are far from technology and development hubs that further complicates practical testing of these drones.
  \n
- For example, in Karnataka, the identified areas are Chitradurga, Coorg and Ganimangala village, all of which are around 200 km from Bengaluru entailing nearly four hours of travel one way.
  \n

\n\n

## What is the case with other countries?

\n\n

\n

- According to Global Market Insights, China’s drone economy, including manufacturing and development, will be worth $9 billion in 2020.
  \n
- The commercial drone market of US is also expected to be $2.05 billion by 2023.
  \n
- Switzerland has an enormous number of people interested in flying drones and developing drone-based applications.
  \n
- One of their drones helps analyse which plants are deficient in nitrogen, enabling farmers to add corrective fertilizer only where necessary.
  \n
- This has resulted in higher yield and significantly lower usage of fertilizers and herbicides, which attracts customers all around the world.
  \n

\n\n

## What should be done?

\n\n

\n
- The security and privacy risks of allowing drones to fly in an unregulated manner are high.
\n
- However, if India is to reach even the fraction of the $1 trillion potential, it needs to figure out a more balanced manner of regulation.
\n
- India made a good start by freeing all drones from their previous illegality.
\n
- However, the real impact of drones will only be seen in the many applications they will be put to.
\n
- They are likely to be used in agriculture, disaster prevention systems, rescue operation leaders, and even public transport providers in the distant future.
\n
- This should not be affected by filing a series of applications in multiple copies and waiting for various government departments to respond.
\n
- Hence any hectic regulations will create serious repercussions and affects India’s future competitiveness in the field.
\n

\n\n

**Source: The Hindu**

\n\n

\n\n

\n

