Highlights of India’s Drone Regulations

What is the issue?

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- Drones are a classic example of technology overtaking regulation and this problem will likely recur.
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- To address such issues India has formulated restrictive drone regulation when compared with other nations.
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What is the ubiquitous nature of Drones in the present world?

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- **Administration purposes -** Geographical Information Systems use drones for mapping and municipal agencies survey power lines, sewage systems and buildings, even Crop spraying is done via drones.
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- **Surveillance and Security-** There are also multiple uses for military and security agencies, which range from surveillance to tear-gas spraying on crowds, to missile and bomb delivery.
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- **Business Prototypes -** which include package and food delivery, short-range air taxi services and emergency air-ambulance services.
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- **Disaster Management -** Japan used drones to assess damage in and around the Fukushima nuclear plant after the tsunami.
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- Drones have been used in California, to fight forest fires, spraying water.
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What are the threats posed by drones globally?

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- In 2018, the number of dangerous incidents when civilian drones put passenger flights at risk shot up 168 per cent.
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- Drones could also be used by terrorists to bomb targets and carry out assassinations.
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- Explosive drones are said to have been used to attempt the assassination of Venezuela's president, and also supposed to attack Abu Dhabi airport.
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- Recently UK’s busiest airports were shut down due to flying drones into critical airspace.
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- Regulating the drones for effective and legitimate use, while minimizing chances of accidental disaster, or deliberate misuse, is hard for governments.
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- Regulators are drafting rules, which will inevitably need updating as usage grows and technology improves.
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What is India’s plan for drone regulation?

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- Indian drone regulations are very restrictive when compared to other nations.
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- Where US civilian drones have a no-license limit of under 25 kg, in India, registration is required if the drone is over 250 gm and operator licenses are also required and Drones can't be flown at over 200 feet (60 meters).
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- According to recent notifications, every flight must be cleared by a “No Permission, No take off” app and local police stations informed (this can apparently be done via the Digital Sky Platform on the DGCA website), Click here to know more.
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- Few significant areas of drone regulation are as follows
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1. In India Foreigners can’t operate drones and nor can any non-adult.
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2. High traffic airports have a 5 km buffer no-go zone, while smaller airports have a 3 km buffer, Drones may not operate within 3 km of military bases.
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3. Drones cannot fly within 25 km of international borders, (including Line of Control and Line of Actual Control).
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4. Other sensitive locations have a 2-3 km buffer this includes state legislative assemblies and secretariats.
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5. In addition, drones can’t be flown from mobile platforms like from a car, ship or aircraft.
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6. The flight may only be conducted during the daytime or within well-lit indoor premises, given the operator must maintain a visual line of sight.
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7. A remote pilot may operate only one drone and Payloads may not consist of humans, animals or hazardous objects.
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Source: Business Standard

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