

# 'Medicines from Sky' project

May 20, 2021

**In news-** The **Telangana State government** has selected **16 primary healthcare centres (PHCs)** spread around **Vikarabad area hospital** for pilot testing the ambitious 'Medicine from the sky' project.

## ***More about the project-***

- It is the first-of- its-kind project **involving delivery of medicines through multiple drones.**
- A consortium of seven operators headed by **Blue Dart Med-Express** had been selected.
- The permission has been granted for conducting experimental delivery of Covid-19 vaccines within **Visual Line of Sight (VLOS) Range, normally about 500 meters** and will be **scaled up gradually to 9 km range.**
- The permission exemption is **valid for one year.**
- The project would be launched in **three waves** starting with a pilot followed by mapping the route network for operation of drones for delivering vaccine/medicine in the desired community health centres and PHCs.
- **The Civil Aviation Ministry** granted approval to the state on its request under the **Unmanned Aircraft System Rules 2021** for conducting experimental BVLOS drone flights for delivery of vaccines.
- The project is **aimed at** assessing alternative logistics routes in providing safe, accurate and reliable pick up and delivery of health care items like medicines, COVID-19 vaccines, units of blood and other lifesaving equipment from the distribution centre to specific locations and back.
- The consortium of companies selected for the implementation of the project has been asked to submit

standard operation protocol along with the risk mitigation plans to the **Directorate General of Civil Aviation** for its approval.

- It has been decided to constitute teams comprising health experts and representatives from the regulator as also the Air Traffic Control (ATC) at Shamshabad airport for monitoring the implementation of the project in phases.
- Blue Dart, one of the major logistics service providers in the country, recently formed '**Blue Dart Med-Express Consortium**' to streamline delivery of vaccines and emergency medical supplies to the remote parts of the country with drones.
- The consortium is part of the 'Medicine from the Sky' project, in **collaboration with the Government of Telangana, World Economic Forum, NITI Aayog and Healthnet Global.**

