

Ninja Drone for Railways

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The Mumbai Division of Central Railway has recently procured two 'ninja' UAVs for **better security and surveillance in railway areas such as station premises, railway track sections, yards, workshops.** The **Railway Protection Force (RPF)** has planned extensive use of drones for the purpose of railway security. Nine drones have been procured by RPF so far at a cost of Rs 31.87 lakh at South Eastern Railway, Central Railway, Modern Coaching Factory, Raebareli and South Western Railway.

Drone Surveillance for Railways

A team of four staff of RPF, Mumbai has been trained for drone flying, surveillance and maintenance. These drones are capable of **real-time tracking, video streaming and may be operated on 'automatic fail-safe mode.** The purpose of the drone deployment is to provide a **force multiplier** and aid to the effectiveness of the security personnel deployed. It can help in the inspection of railway assets and safety of yards, workshops, car sheds.

It is further proposed to procure 17 more drones in future at a cost of Rs 97.52 Lakh. **Nineteen RPF personnel have so far been trained in operation and maintenance of drones out of which four have received licenses for flying drones. Six more RPF personnel are being trained.** It can be used to launch surveillance on criminal and anti-social activities like gambling, throwing of garbage, hawking, etc. in railway premises. It may be deployed for data collection. Analysis of such data collected may prove to be extremely useful in vulnerable sections for safe operations of trains.

Moreover, **at disaster sites, the drone may be pressed into service for helping in recovery, rescue, restoration as well**

as coordinating the efforts of various agencies. Also, to assess the encroachments on railway property, the drones are helpful while undertaking mapping of railway assets. The drones can also give **vital inputs such as crowd magnitude, probable time of arrival, and dispersal during large scale crowd management efforts,** based on which efforts on crowd regulation may be planned and executed. During the COVID-19 lockdown, drones were utilized to enforce lockdown and monitor the migrants' movement. The drone-based surveillance system acts as an "Eye in the sky" and monitors the whole area.