

# Simpler drone rules in the offing

Govt. releases Draft Drone Rules, 2021, for public consultation until August 5

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Simplified drone rules, which abolish the need for a large number of approvals and give impetus to research and development, are in the offing in the country.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation on Thursday released the Draft Drone Rules, 2021, for public consultation until August 5.

The rules will replace the Unmanned Aircraft System Rules, 2021, notified on March 12, 2021.

“The intent is to make the rules user-friendly and to encourage drone research and development. This is another important step towards realising the vision of India as a drone hub,” said Amber Dubey, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, and head of the drones division.

“Drones are bringing the next big tech revolution around the globe with reduced costs, resources and time taken for operations. It is upon us to ride on the new



**Giving a lift:** Fresh regulations abolish the need for large number of approvals. ■ REUTERS

wave and facilitate its uptake, especially among our start-ups,” tweeted Minister for Civil Aviation Jyotiraditya Scindia.

The number of forms to be filled to seek authorisation before operating a drone has been reduced from 25 to six, according to a statement issued by the Ministry.

While most drones will need a unique identification number, a certificate of airworthiness, a remote pilot licence for the person controlling the drone and prior permission, no such appro-

vals will be required for drones used for research and development by entities and educational institutions recognised by the Union government, State governments or Union Territory Administrations, start-ups recognised by Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade and drone manufacturers having a Goods and Service Tax Identification Number.

Unlike the previous rules, which required drone operators to have a principal place of business within India, there are no such restric-

tions for foreign-owned companies registered in India in the new proposed rules.

Drones will also not need security clearance before registration or licence issuance.

The Quality Council of India and certification entities authorised by it will issue airworthiness certificates for drones, instead of the Directorate-General of Civil Aviation.

In order to encourage indigenous manufacturing, import of drones and drone components will be regulated by the Directorate-General of Foreign Trade. Moreover, the Union government may specify certain standards for obtaining a certificate of airworthiness for drones, which will promote the “use of made-in-India technologies, designs, components and drones; and India’s regional navigation satellite system named Navigation with Indian Constellation [NavIC],” according to the draft rules.