

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. : 592
(To be answered on the 22nd July 2021)**

USAGE OF DRONE FOR KOCHI METRO RAIL

592. DR. VISHNU PRASAD M.K.

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION

नागर विमानन मंत्री

be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether conditional permission for drone usage has been granted by the Government to Kochi Metro Rail Project and if so, the details thereof including the factors that necessitated the decision;**
- (b) whether granting of such permission is a step in the legalization of drone usage across the country and if so, the details thereof;**
- (c) whether other infrastructure and development projects may also apply for such permission and if so, the details thereof; and**
- (d) the details of methods to encourage infrastructure and development projects to use drones in useful ways to enhance the efficiency of plan implementation?**

ANSWER

Minister of State in the Ministry of CIVIL AVIATION

नागर विमानन मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री

(GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD))

(a) Yes, Sir. Conditional exemption to Kochi Metro Rail Limited (KMRL) was granted by this Ministry for Integrated Urban Regeneration and Water Transport System (IURWTS) Project. Since 95% of the canal reaches are inaccessible, it was difficult to use conventional topographic survey methods. Therefore, KMRL decided to use drones for the same. As the online Digital Sky Platform of Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) was not fully operational, the necessary conditional exemption for drone usage for this project was granted by this Ministry.

(b) Use of drones was earlier regulated under the provisions of the Aircraft Rules, 1937 and the CAR issued by DGCA in this regard. On 12 March 2021, Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Rules, 2021 have been notified, which

cover various aspects of drone usage viz, registration, ownership, transfer, import, operation of drone traffic management, payment of fees and penalties etc. All civilian drone activities are regulated by the UAS Rules, 2021. The Government, with a view to provide impetus to the drone industry, have published new draft Drone Rules on 15 July 2021.

(c) Yes, Sir. As Digital Sky Platform is not fully operational, conditional exemptions from the provisions of UAS Rules, 2021 have been granted by this Ministry to various entities for projects including infrastructure and development ones.

(d) Drones offer tremendous benefits to almost every sector of the economy, including but not limited to, agriculture, infrastructure, emergency response, transportation, mapping, scientific research etc. by automating dangerous and repetitive tasks and enabling these activities to be performed in a transparent, efficient and cost-effective manner.

Pending the full operationalisation of Digital Sky Platform, necessary conditional exemption for use of drones is granted by this Ministry.
