Drone-Based Vaccine Delivery Model: i-Drone

Why in News

Recently, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has launched a Drone-Based vaccine delivery model named, **Drone Response and Outreach in North East (i-Drone)**.

- Drone is a layman terminology for **Unmanned Aircraft (UA)**. There are three subsets of Unmanned Aircraft- Remotely Piloted Aircraft, Autonomous Aircraft and Model Aircraft.

Key Points

- **About:**

    - **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** has devised the model to make sure that life-saving vaccines reach everyone.
    - It has been designed to facilitate vaccine delivery **to tough and hard-to-reach terrains** of India.
    - Currently, the drone based delivery project has been granted permission for implementation in **Manipur and Nagaland**, as well as union territory of **Andaman and Nicobar Island.**

        - The permission was granted to the **ICMR** for conducting feasibility study of **Covid-19 vaccine** delivery using drones, in collaboration with IIT-Kanpur.

- **Significance:**

    - It will help in **overcoming the gaps in current vaccine delivery mechanisms** and can be used in delivering important **life-saving medicines**, collecting blood samples etc.
    - This technology can also be **used in critical situations**. It can be a game changer **in addressing the challenges in health care delivery**, particularly health supplies in difficult areas.

- **Other Projects Using Drones**:

    - Telangana government has selected 16 Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs) for pilot testing the ambitious **'Medicine from the sky', the first-of- its-kind project**.

- The **International Crops Research Institute (ICRISAT)** was permitted to deploy **drones for agricultural research activities**, apart from some agriculture universities and educational institutions.

Indian Council of Medical Research

- It is the apex body in India for the **formulation, coordination and promotion of biomedical research.**
- Its mandate is **to conduct, coordinate and implement medical research** for the benefit of the Society; translating medical innovations into products/processes and introducing them into the public health system.
- It is **funded by the Government of India** through the Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

Source: PIB

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