

IMPLEMENTATION OF DRONE DIDI SCHEME

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The Government has approved 'Namo Drone Didi' as Central Sector Scheme for providing 15,000 drones to the Women Self Help Groups (SHGs) with an outlay of Rs. 1261 Crores for the period from 2023-24 to 2025-26. The major objectives of the scheme is to promote advance technology in agriculture for improved efficiency, enhanced crop yield & reduced cost of operation and to empower SHGs as drone service providers for increasing their income and providing livelihood support to them. Under this scheme, Central Financial Assistance (CFA) @ 80% of the cost of drone package up to a maximum of Rs. 8.00 lakhs is provided to the selected women SHGs. 15 days drone pilot training for one of the members of SHGs and 5 days drone assistant training to other member/family member of SHGs is provided as a part of drone package.

Lead Fertilizer Companies (LFCs) have distributed 1094 drones to drone didis of SHGs in 2023-24 using their internal resources. Out of these 1094 drones, 500 drones have been distributed under the Namo Drone Didi Scheme. The State-wise distribution of 1094 drones is attached at Annexure - I. Members of these SHGs have been trained as drone pilots at various Remote Pilot Training Organizations (RPTOs) authorized by Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). The allocation of remaining 14500 drones has been informed to the State Governments as indicated in Annexure-II.

Agricultural Development and Rural Transformation Centre (ADRTC), Bangalore have carried out a study on economics and business viability of drone operations on the 500 drones distributed by LFCs under Namo Drone Didi scheme. The findings indicates that kisan drones cover an area of one acre in 7-8 minutes and the flight time on a single battery charge of the kisan drones of various manufacturers ranged from 5-20 minutes. The drone package under Namo Drone Didi scheme include one standard battery set and additional four battery sets.

The study report also indicate that, where the utility vehicles were not provided with the drones supplied by LFCs, 42.68 per cent of the Drone Didis faced transportation-related issues, with the South (78.82%) being the most affected. 68.66 per cent drone didis also reported that hiring a transport vehicle was costly. To address the drone transport issue, a provision has been made under Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM) to provide financial assistance @ 80% to the Women SHGs identified under Namo Drone Didi scheme for purchase of Multi-utility machines, which are also used as drone transport. The study also indicate that the SHGs were primarily engaged in agriculture and allied activities and the drones provided to them has expanded their niche to modern agricultural practices through drone technology, enhancing their efficiency and productivity. Overall, the adoption of drones has diversified SHG activities, improved agricultural practices, and increased income opportunities for women in rural communities.

Annexure-I

State-wise number of drones distributed to SHGs by the LFCs in 2023-24 and the members of SHGs given drone pilot training

S. No	State Name	No. of Drones distributed	No. of members of SHGs given drone pilot training
1.	Andhra Pradesh	108	108
2.	Assam	28	28
3.	Bihar	32	32

4.	Chhattisgarh	15	15
5.	Goa	1	1
6.	Gujarat	58	58
7.	Haryana	102	102
8.	Himachal Pradesh	4	4
9.	J&K	2	2
10.	Jharkhand	15	15
11.	Karnataka	145	145
12.	Kerala	51	51
13.	Madhya Pradesh	89	89
14.	Maharashtra	60	60
15.	Odisha	16	16
16.	Punjab	57	57
17.	Rajasthan	40	40
18.	Tamil Nadu	44	44
19.	Telangana	81	81
20.	Uttar Pradesh	128	128
21.	Uttarakhand	3	3
22.	West Bengal	15	15
Total		1094	1094

Annexure-II

State-wise Allocation of 14500 Drones under Nam0 Drone Didi Scheme

S. No.	States	Allocation of Drones (Numbers)
1	Andhra Pradesh	440
2	Arunachal Pradesh	10
3	Assam	183
4	Bihar	999
5	Chhattisgarh	361
6	Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	10
7	Goa	10
8	Gujarat	1024
9	Haryana	583
10	Himachal Pradesh	75
11	Jammu and Kashmir	134
12	Jharkhand	168
13	Karnataka	824

14	Kerala	82
15	Madhya Pradesh	1066
16	Maharashtra	1612
17	Meghalaya	23
18	Mizoram	10
19	Nagaland	10
20	Odisha	457
21	Puducherry	10
22	Punjab	1021
23	Rajasthan	1070
24	Tamil Nadu	479
25	Telangana	381
26	Tripura	27
27	Uttar Pradesh	2236
28	Uttarakhand	102
29	West Bengal	1093
	Total	14500

This information was given by Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shri Ramnath Thakur in a written reply in Lok Sabha today.

RC/ KSR/AR

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