


## Karnataka's UAV test zone set for takeoff

By Kiran Parashar K M

The country's first of its kind Aeronautical Test Range (ATR) with a mega multi-agency complex for integrating and testing various Unmanned Air Vehicles (UAV) will be unveiled by Defence minister Arun Jaitley on Sunday. The ATR built at a cost of `1,300 crore in Varavoo Kaval near Challakere in Chitradurga district will have technical infrastructure on 4,090 acres and transit and residential facilities on 200 acres. The facility will be housing multiple agencies.

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) of the Ministry of Defence has developed the ATR, which has been partially operating since December 2010.

### Facilities at ATR

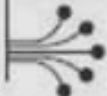


A 2-km long runway along with Taxiways. The runway can be extended to 3-km.

A range control centre houses with an Air Traffic Display system, ATC, RF voice communication system, ground telemetry system, range computer system, mission video distribution and display system and range operational communication system.

Two hangars with an annexe for integration and testing of unmanned aerial vehicles

A radar centre with a primary radar and secondary surveillance radar




Fibre optic network is spread over technical and non technical facilities

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### Other Infrastructure

Management block, technical centre, MI room, cafeteria, tech office, MT yard, SP vehicle parking area, creche, main receiving station with HV DG sets, substations, security, DSC office, DSC accommodation and watch towers.



Community hall, shopping complex and residential accommodations of several types

Residential complex encompasses transit accommodations for senior scientists, scientists and NGOs

With the ATR's inauguration, DRDO can start testing some of the indigenous products being developed, including the naval and trainer versions of the Light Combat Aircraft, unmanned air vehicles Rustom 1 and 2; and the Airborne Early Warning & Control Systems meant for surveillance.

According to the Ministry of Defence, apart from DRDO, the multi-agency complex will house facilities of the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc).

The ATR faced several hurdles before its completion. Local farmers had agitated against land acquisition for the project.

In 2013, work was halted by the National Green Tribunal from 21 August, 2013 to 03 September 2013 after Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) had withheld the 'Consent for Establishment' (CFE) application.

Later, it issued the CFE after which works resumed. In 2015, locals had expressed anxiety after a section of media said that Pakistan had claimed that India was constructing a secret underground Uranium Enrichment Plant near Challakere. Later officials had denied the claims.



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## **DIAT to start course on food technology**

Pune: The Defence Institute of Advanced Technology (DIAT) will offer a two-year master of science (MSc) course in food technology starting this academic year. The deemed university is controlled by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). The course aims to provide trained personnel to secure the quality of food being supplied to troops at different locations, including Jammu and Kashmir as well as Northeast India. The DIAT has tied up with the Defence Food Research Laboratory (DFRL) in a bid to offer the course. A senior DRDO officer told TOI, "The Army headquarter specifically requested DRDO to come up with a special postgraduate course in food technology. Accordingly, the syllabus was selected as per the requirement of the forces." The DFRL has been conducting postgraduate diploma courses in food analysis and quality assurance in collaboration with the University of Mysore. A senior DFRL scientist said, "Officers from the Army Supply Corps (ASC), who inspect the food for the force, would undertake a diploma course at the laboratory.

So far, over 40 officers from the ASC have completed the course."As of now, the intake for the MSc Food Technology course has been restricted to 12 officers. A DIAT professor said, "In the first year of the course, candidates would mainly study theoretical aspects, while practical and research projects will be conducted at the DFRL thereafter."The DFRL would teach 15 different subjects on Food Technology across two semesters. "In the final semester, candidates will have to complete a six-month project that could be based on the troops' field requirement." he added. DIAT professors and DFRL scientists believe the course would help the armed forces to understand the nitty-gritty of food in detail.