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UAV from 3 Idiots now part of defence forces

The Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) that awed viewers in the Bollywood hit 3 Idiots has been officially inducted into the paramilitary forces. The Border Security Force (BSF) and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) are using the drone, titled 'Netra', in counter-insurgency operations.

The autonomous UAV for surveillance and reconnaissance was inducted into the paramilitary forces last month while the army, navy and several state police forces have shown a keen interest in acquiring it, say its makers.

It was developed by Ideaforge Technology Pvt Ltd, a company floated by a group of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Mumbai alumni, and the Pune-based Research and Development Establishment (Engineers) laboratory of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

DRDO, after watching the film, tied up with IdeaForge to refine the Netra. It is designed specifically for anti-terrorist and counter-insurgency operations in forested areas. It can be used in hostage situations, border infiltration monitoring, local law enforcement operations, search and rescue operations, disaster management and aerial photography.

“Ten units of Netra have already been taken by the DRDO for research related works in their laboratories like Snow and Avalanche Study Establishment (SASE) in Manali while less than a dozen have been provided to paramilitary forces,” IdeaForge vice-president (marketing and operations unmanned systems) Amardeep Singh said. “We have given the right of production to IdeaForge and those interested in buying it can get in touch with the company,” Alok Mukherjee, head of DRDO's robotics division said

The company is now working on the next version of Netra in order to increase the flight time from the present 30 minutes per battery charge. It can fly within a radius of 1.5 km at an altitude of around 200 metres.

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