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## UT may put brakes on UAV purchase

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SUCHET ATTRI : Chandigarh, Thu Feb 02 2012, 01:37 hrs

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The much-debated Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) might not take off in Chandigarh. The Chandigarh Administration said that before purchasing the gadget, its “efficacy” needs to be determined. While the Chandigarh Police is keen to acquire the UAV, the Administration has decided to put brakes on its “immediate” purchase.

According to sources, the Administration is also not keen to shell out a big amount (around Rs 43 lakh) for the UAV and is likely to scrap the project.

When contacted, UT Home Secretary Anil Kumar said, “We need to see the efficacy of the technology over a period of time and do not want to take our decision in a haste as a considerable amount of public money will be involved in the purchase.”

He added that the administration would like find out how the UAV has fared over a longer duration from any organisation which has used it. The police had initially had claimed to have become India’s first force to possess a UAV. However, those UAVs had been brought only for demonstration and police said the issue had been misrepresented.

Tipping the scales at 1.5 kg, Netra is a collaborative project between DRDO and IdeaForge, a company formed IIT (Powai) alumni. Netra was to be procured for policing and surveillance especially for maintaining law and order during VIP visits, rallies, demonstrations and in case of any disaster or calamity by providing a bird’s eye view for law enforcement officers.

Last year, the police had conducted trial flights of two UAVs — Netra and Golden Hawk — during UP Chief Minister Mayawati’s rally. Both the UAVs were deployed at Sector 29-31 roundabout and were later used for surveillance of the rally venue in Sector 25. The police also saw a demo of a Israel-made UAV —Micro B, but never considered it due to high cost.

According to police, the acquisition process had previously been delayed as “propriety certificate” and “rate-reasonability certificate” from the DRDO arrived late. Since then, the project file has been pending with the Administration, which has not shown interest .




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company can also hamper the proposed purchase. As per government rules at least three companies are needed for the tender process.”

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