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STATE EDITIONS

ARDH KUMBH MELA: COPS TO HIRE 3 DRONES FOR SECURITY

Thursday, 07 January 2016 | PNS | Dehradun | in Dehradun



Uttarakhand police has decided to hire unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) from a private company to enhance security in the ongoing Ardh Kumbh Mela in Haridwar.

Three drones are expected to be put to use from mid January with police officers giving final shape to the procurement deal. Crores of devotees are likely to arrive here for the Ardh Kumbh Mela which will continue for a period of four months.

The drones will cover the entire Kumbh area especially on special occasions when large numbers of people are expected to reach Haridwar to bathe in the Ganga river, said additional director general of police (administration) Ram Singh Meena.

IG (Kumbh) GS Martolia said, "We are in talks with some firms to procure three UAVs on rent with some companies applying in the tender process. We are in the final stage of procuring UAVs on rent and expect to complete the process in the next couple of days."

The three UAVs are slated to be rented for 40 days during the Ardh Kumbh. The drones will be rented for four days at a time during a big snan- two days before and a day after the main snan. As part of the deal, a team of engineer and technicians from the company would operate the drones. Renting the three drones is estimated to cost about `10 lakh. These drones are expected to be pressed into service from January 14, he added.

Martolia said, "As Haridwar shares its border with 'sensitive' districts of Uttar Pradesh – Saharanpur and Muzaffarnagar- we are going the extra mile to strengthen security arrangements. We are trying to get drones with night vision and battery backup of about 40 minutes. If we exclude the landing and take off time, the drone will operate for about 20 minutes. We are looking for drones with long battery life and night vision."

It should be noted that the police has been dependent solely on the newly formed State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) as far as use of drones is concerned. The SDRF had planned to procure two drones costing up to `3,00,000 with fund received from the World Bank. However, no firms applied in response to the bids invited by the department for this purpose.

SDRF SSP VK Krishan Kumar said, "We had planned to purchase two drones last month but could not do so due to procedural delay. Re-tender process for UAV is now underway. We are in talks with some firms to purchase UAV and expect to make a deal soon."

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