GOVERNMENT OF KERALAM

Higher Education (G) Department
Phone No: 0471-2518213
Email Id: hedngdept123@gmail.com

ACB/ACA

No.HEDN-G2/378/2026-HEDN 28-09-2026,Thiruvananthapuram

8/10/26

From
The Principal Secretary to Government

To
The Director of Technical Education
Thiruvananthapuram.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION
07 OCT 2026
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM-23.

Registrar
APJ Abdul Kalam Techological University
Thiruvananthapuram

Sir,

Sub: Higher Education Department- Request for Encouraging Students to Participate in NIDAR 2026-27 2nd Edition of India's Largest Student Drone Competition hosted by Drone Federation India & Ministry of Electronics & IT, Govt of India-reg

Ref: Letter dated 27.07.2026 of Drone Federation of India

I am to enclose herewith a copy of the letter cited for information and further necessary action.

Yours Faithfully,
PRIYA CYRIL
UNDER SECRETARY
For Principal Secretary to Government.

Approved for Issue,

Digitally signed by
Deepa N S
Date: 28-09-2026
17:10:16

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DRONE FEDERATION INDIA (DFI)

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27th July 2026

To,
Dr. B Ashok IAS
Principal Secretary, Department of Higher Education
Govt of Kerala

Address: Department of Higher Education, Room No. 301, 3rd Floor, Secretariat Annexe, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, 695001 | **Phone:** 0471 2517371

Subject: Request for Encouraging Students to Participate in NIDAR 2026-27 2nd Edition of India's Largest Student Drone Competition hosted by Drone Federation India & Ministry of Electronics & IT, Govt of India

Respected Sir/Madam,

Drone Federation India (DFI) is a non-government, non-profit, industry-led body working to build and promote India's drone and counter-drone ecosystem. **DFI represents over 550 drone startups and over 5,500 drone pilots**, and works with industry, academia, government, and civil society to support policy, skilling, adoption, and innovation.

DFI, in partnership with the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY), has launched the **2nd edition of the National Innovation Challenge for Drone Application & Research**. The Problem Statements and Official Rulebook of the competition were launched on 13th July 2026 by **S. Krishnan, Secretary, MeitY,** in the presence of senior officials from Government, Industry & Academia.

The **1st edition saw participation of 3,448 students from 109 cities across 22 States & 4 Union Territories.** Student teams built drone solutions for solving real-world problem statements in Disaster Management and Precision Agriculture and competed for **cash prizes worth ₹40 lakh.**

This year's edition features 3 new problem statements for development of: **(a) autonomous swarm drones for disaster management, (b) GPS-denied indoor navigation drones, and (c) indigenous flight controller powered by India's VEGA processor**.

Participants will also benefit through various industry mentorship sessions and technical workshops being planned. **Winners shall receive cash prizes worth ₹65+ lakh along with drone components, internship opportunities, incubation support, and software and cloud credits.**

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DRONE FEDERATION INDIA (DFI)

We request your office to circulate this communication to all relevant technical colleges and institutions from your state and encourage them to participate in this competition.

NIDAR offers a unique opportunity for students to enhance their technical capabilities, gain industry exposure, and contribute to India's vision of **Viksit Bharat** by advancing indigenous drone innovation.

Thank you for your attention and support in this regard.

Attachments:

1. Concept Note for Circulation
2. Competition Posters

Warm Regards,

Smit Shah

Smit Shah
President
Drone Federation India (DFI)

Competition Details:
www.nidar.org.in

Address: 116, Air India Building, Sri Aurobindo Marg, Safdarjung Airport Area, New Delhi - 03
Phone: 011 20819809 | **Email:** team-nidar@dronefederation.in | **Website:** www.nidar.org.in

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MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

SwaYaan

DRONE FEDERATION INDIA (DFI)

NIDAR
NATIONAL INNOVATION CHALLENGE FOR DRONE APPLICATION AND RESEARCH

Concept Note for NIDAR 2026-27

National Innovation Challenge for Drone Application & Research Under the SwaYaan initiative of MeitY, the Government of India

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Background:

The National Innovation Challenge for Drone Application & Research 2025–26 (NIDAR 2025–26) is organised by Drone Federation India (DFI) in collaboration with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) under Project SwaYaan, as a national platform for student-led innovation in drone technologies.

The first edition of NIDAR was launched by the Secretary, MeitY, in the presence of the Chairman, AICTE, and leading industry stakeholders, and attracted **participation from 3,448 students across 22 States and 4 Union Territories, spanning 109 cities.**

The problem statements of the 1st Edition of the competition focused on **Disaster Management and Precision Agriculture** and successfully demonstrated the importance of hands-on innovation, indigenous capability development, and real-world problem-solving through drones.

93 teams qualified for the Grand Finale in the 1st Edition, culminating in the recognition of 24 winners, who received prizes worth ₹40 lakh and several other goodies.

NIDAR 2026-27:

Building on the success and national response, this year's competition is envisioned as a **larger national innovation platform to advance autonomous drone systems, indigenous avionics, autonomous navigation, and critical drone components.**

The **next phase of drone innovation will be shaped not only by airframes but also by autonomy stacks, embedded avionics, flight controllers, secure communication, mission software, and indigenous electronic subsystems.**

With the rapid growth of India's drone ecosystem and the increasing strategic importance of autonomous systems, **there is a strong need to encourage student-led innovation in areas such as GPS-denied navigation, collaborative drone operations, indigenous flight-control systems, and core electronic design.**

Objectives of NIDAR 2026-27

- To create a national innovation platform for student-led research and development in autonomous drone systems and indigenous avionics.

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- To promote innovation in collaborative drone systems, GPS-denied navigation, indoor autonomy, and mission planning technologies.
- To encourage indigenous design and development of drone flight controllers, processors, and critical electronic subsystems.
- To strengthen collaboration between academia, government, defence, and industry.
- To provide students with hands-on exposure to real-world operational and strategic challenges in drone operations.
- To support India's vision of technological self-reliance and indigenous capability development in emerging technology sectors.

Mission 1 - NIDAR RescueSwarm

Under this challenge, teams will be required to develop **two or more fully autonomous collaborative drones capable of identifying survivors, geotagging locations, and delivering medical or survival kits within a disaster-affected area without relying on external communication networks**. The challenge focuses on multi-drone coordination, autonomous mission execution, collaborative scouting, and aid delivery in time-critical emergency scenarios.

Mission 2 - NIDAR AirMouse

This challenge focuses on **autonomous indoor drone navigation in GPS-denied environments**. Teams will **develop autonomous aerial systems capable of navigating confined indoor spaces, generating 2D or 3D maps, detecting survivors, and tagging survivor locations inside damaged or collapsed structures**. The challenge promotes innovation in indoor autonomy, mapping, obstacle avoidance, and localisation technologies for disaster response and industrial inspection applications.

Mission 3: NIDAR VEGAPilot

Under this challenge, teams will be required to **design and develop an indigenous drone flight controller and autopilot system built around the VEGA Processor platform**. The challenge aims to encourage innovation in integrating indigenous processors, autopilot architectures, embedded systems, mission planning, and reliable drone control systems, all using **non-Chinese electronic components**. Teams will demonstrate stable flight, mission execution, telemetry integration, and autonomous operations on standard multirotor platforms.

As part of the selection process, teams will submit detailed technical proposals and participate in online technical evaluations before a jury panel. Based on this evaluation, only the **top 100 teams across the country will be shortlisted and provided with two VEGA Processors** each for development, testing, and final integration.

This mission is expected to significantly strengthen India's indigenous drone electronics ecosystem and advance domestic capabilities in flight control systems, embedded avionics, and semiconductor-linked drone technologies.

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DRONE FEDERATION INDIA (DFI)

NIDAR

NATIONAL INNOVATION CHALLENGE FOR DRONE APPLICATION AND RESEARCH

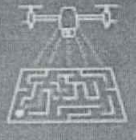
REGISTER NOW FOR INDIA'S LARGEST STUDENT DRONE COMPETITION

Mission 1
RescueSwarm



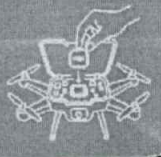
Build autonomous drones. Find survivors. Deliver critical aid.

Mission 2
AirMouse



Build an indoor navigation drone. Map the unknown. Find survivors.

Mission 3
VEGAPilot



Build indigenous drone autopilot powered by India's VEGA Processor.

Win prizes worth

INR 65+ LAKHS

Get mentorship, industry access, incubation opportunities, and national recognition.

REGISTER NOW

www.nidar.org.in

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DRONE FEDERATION INDIA (DFI)

NIDAR

NATIONAL INNOVATION CHALLENGE FOR DRONE APPLICATION AND RESEARCH

REGISTER NOW FOR INDIA'S LARGEST STUDENT DRONE COMPETITION

Mission 1
RescueSwarm



Build autonomous drones. Find survivors. Deliver critical aid.

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Endn No :9041/2026-C2 (ACA) **01-11-2026**

Copy of the Government letter is enclosed for the information and further necessary action to all heads of the institutions under this office.

ANI ABRAHAM

SENIOR JOINT DIRECTOR (PS)

Digitally signed by
ANI ABRAHAM
Date: 01-11-2026
18:13:59