



PRESS RELEASE

SkyDrive Inc.

## SkyDrive to Collaborate with Indian Institutes of Technology Hyderabad to Create Logistics Drone Market in India

**TOYOTA, Japan, December 26, 2023** - SkyDrive Inc. ("SkyDrive"), a leading Japanese eVTOL aircraft (\*1) manufacturer based in Japan, is pleased to announce that the company has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Technology Innovation Hub on Autonomous Navigation (TiHAN) Foundation, Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad ("TiHAN") to collaborate on unmanned drone technology to expand the drone market in India.



With the mission of "taking the lead in the once-in-a-century mobility revolution," SkyDrive is developing accessible eVTOL aircraft for daily passenger transportation and heavy-lift drones for cargo transportation.

Indian Institutes of Technology Hyderabad ("IITH") has been consistently ranked in the top 10 institutes in India for Engineering according to the National Institutional Ranking Framework (\*2) issued by the Ministry of Education, Government of India, and top-notch engineers conduct research on cutting-edge technologies. SkyDrive will be collaborating with TiHAN, India's first autonomous navigation testbed facility at IITH for developing and carrying out activities related to heavy-lift drones.

Explaining TiHAN-IITH efforts in Autonomous Navigation, Professor P. Rajalakshmi, Project Director, said, "TiHAN IIT Hyderabad is excited to announce a strategic partnership with SkyDrive Inc. to collectively develop and execute activities about heavy lifting drone technology. This partnership marks a significant step forward in the advancement of drone capabilities, focusing on the design, development, and deployment of innovative heavy-lifting drone solutions."

India faces various challenges in its land-based logistics system and the development of drones as a new means of logistics holds significant meaning. With a shared goal of

creating a market for logistics drones in India, the two parties will be sharing expertise and exploring the market opportunities.

This collaboration was possible with the support of Suzuki Innovation Centre (SIC), a collaborative initiative between Suzuki Motor Corporation Japan (SMC) and IIT Hyderabad with a mission to build an open innovation platform to foster innovation for the benefit of both India and Japan.

### **About Technology Innovation Hub on Autonomous Navigation (TiHAN) Foundation, IITH**

The Department of Science and Technology (DST), under the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS), has sanctioned the prestigious Technology Innovation Hub (TIH) in the technology vertical of Autonomous Navigation and Data Acquisition Systems (UAVs, ROVs, etc.). Technology Innovation Hub on Autonomous Navigation (TiHAN) at IITH is a multi-departmental initiative, including researchers from Electrical Engineering, Computer Science and Engineering, Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, Civil Engineering, Mathematics, Design, Entrepreneurship at IITH with collaboration and support from reputed institutions and industry. As part of the project, we are setting up a first-of-its-kind integrated testbed on Autonomous Navigations (Aerial/Terrestrial) on the IITH campus, which has state-of-the-art facilities such as Proving Grounds, Test tracks, Mechanical integration facilities like Hangers, Ground control stations, State of the art Simulation tools (SIL, MIL, HIL, VIL), Test tracks/circuits, Road Infra – Smart Poles, signalized & unsignalized Intersections, Environment Emulators like Rainfall Simulators, V2X Communications, Drone Runways & Landing area, Control Test center. TiHAN-IITH is envisaged as the destination for collaborative research for next-generation mobility solutions between academia, industry, and R&D Labs, both national and international.

To know more, please visit: <https://tihan.iith.ac.in/>

### **About Suzuki Innovation Center**

SIC was set up in January, 2022 at IITH, we aim to stimulate entrepreneurial spirit and encourage them to take on ambitious challenges and explore new frontiers in India.

The three key activities of SIC are as follows:

1. ENGAGE: INVOLVE FUTURE COLLABORATOR; International leaders, Entrepreneurs, and Innovators
2. EXCHANGE: EXCHANGE VALUES & SYNERGY, to facilitate talent development and ignite entrepreneurship
3. INNOVATE: BRING BALANCED GROWTH, In Rural India, Mobility, Climate, and beyond

For more information, please visit: <https://sicglobal.org/>

### **About Indian Institutes of Technology Hyderabad**

Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad (IITH) is a premier institute of science and technology established in 2008. IITH has been consistently ranked in the top 10

institutes in India for Engineering according to the National Institutional Ranking Framework making it one of the most coveted schools for science and technology in the country. IITH has been very successful in building tie-ups with leading academic institutions around the globe.

For more information about TiHAN, please visit: <https://tihan.iith.ac.in/>

### **About SkyDrive Inc.**

SkyDrive was formally established in July 2018 after testing flying car concepts and prototypes from 2014 with the mission of “taking the lead in the once-in-a-century mobility revolution.” Its vision is to create a future where everyone has access to eVTOLs as their daily transportation in Japan and across the world. The company succeeded in the first crewed eVTOL flight test in Japan in 2019 and its eVTOL “SKYDRIVE” is in the process of acquiring its Japan Civil Aviation Bureau (JCAB) certification. SkyDrive has been selected as a company to participate in the Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) project at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. SkyDrive plans to begin production of “SKYDRIVE” in the Spring of 2024 at the plant owned by official production partner Suzuki Motor Company. SkyDrive is headquartered in Toyota, Aichi Prefecture. Tomohiro Fukuzawa is the CEO of the company.

For more information, please visit: <https://en.skydrive2020.com/>

Editor’s Note:

(\*1) “eVTOL” is an abbreviation for electric vertical takeoff and landing. eVTOL aircraft are characterized by electrification, a fully autonomous autopilot, and vertical takeoff and landing. It is also called Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) or Urban Air Mobility (UAM).

(\*2) Related URL: <https://www.nirfindia.org/2023/EngineeringRanking.html>

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