

# Odisha firm designs India's first advanced long-range strike drone

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With one-way attack drones emerging as a defining feature of modern warfare, leading defence technology company IG Defence claimed to have designed India's indigenous long-range strike drone, which can carry explosives up to 1,000 km.

Being developed under "Project KAL", the one-of-a-kind long-range strike drone can be compared with modern drone systems, including Iranian Shahed-class swarm drones. Founded in Odisha and headquartered in New Delhi, the company recently unveiled the first glimpse of the advanced drone.

Development of such next-generation drones assumes significance as platforms such as the Shahed-136 have drawn global attention for their ability to carry explosive payloads across long distances at relatively low cost, particularly in the ongoing escalation involving Iran on one side and the US and Israel on the other, where waves of drones and missiles have been launched across the region.

IG Defence Founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Bodhisattwa Sangha-priya said long-range unmanned strike systems are increasingly shaping the way

modern conflicts unfold around the world. "With Project KAL, we have taken a significant step towards building indigenous systems in this emerging category of long-range strike drones. The upcoming drone system is in its first stage of development, and it would be launched soon," he said.

Shahed-class drones can be produced relatively at a cheaper cost and deployed in large numbers, overwhelming air de-

fence systems and forcing adversaries to expend far more expensive interceptor missiles. This prompted IG Defence to go for the indigenous long-range strike unmanned system, which will help expand the country's indigenous combat drone capabilities. Once developed, this relatively inexpensive unmanned system can impose disproportionate operational and financial pressure on advanced defence networks.

## What is Project KAL

Project KAL focuses on building a one-way attack unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) for deep-penetration missions. The drone can travel long distances into hostile territory to strike high-value targets. It has been designed for a projected range of up to 1,000 km, with an endurance of around three to five hours. This allows the UAV to travel deep into contested environments, remain airborne long enough to monitor the target area if needed, and carry out a precision strike.

Designed to carry a high-explosive payload, the drone could potentially be used to target strategic infrastructure, logistics hubs, radar installations, and other critical military assets. "The idea behind Project KAL is to develop this advanced facility in India with home-grown technologies, strengthening indigenous defence technology under the broader vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat," said Bodhisattwa. Senior Vice President of IG Defence Maj Gen (Retd) RC Padhi said the ongoing conflict involving Iran has once again demonstrated how long-range strike drones can influence operational strategies by combining reach, persistence, and cost efficiency.