

IIT Kanpur successfully conducts test flight for cloud seeding

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Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur has successfully conducted a test flight for cloud seeding, a statement issued by the premier institution said on Thursday (June 22).

Cloud seeding involves the utilisation of various chemical agents such as silver iodide, dry ice, common salt, and other elements with the aim of enhancing the probability of rains, it said. The project was initiated a few years ago and is headed by the Computer Science and Engineering Department of IIT Kanpur.

The flight went up to an approximate height of 5,000 feet. It landed on the IIT Kanpur lab airstrip after successfully completing the test ride on Wednesday.

The experiment was conducted with due approval from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

A Cessna aircraft was flown from the flight laboratory of IIT Kanpur with

cloud seeding attachments procured from a manufacturer in the US. The modifications in the aircraft were approved by the manufacturers of the aircraft and the DGCA.

The test flight spread the agents using a flare as is standard practice, said Manindra Agrawal, a professor associated with Computer Science and Engineering Department.

"We are glad that our trial run for cloud seeding came out successful. We did not fire the flares into the clouds, it was a trial for the equipment. The successful test flight implies that we're now prepared to run a cloud seeding in later stages," said Agrawal.

"We have been working on this project for a few years now. There was a delay in the procurement processes due to Covid," he added.

Now, after the approval from the DGCA and successful completion of the first trial, we are close to completing the setup, Agarwal said further.

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