

L&T Partners with Startup to Forge Indigenous Drone Engines



In a strategic move to advance India's defense self-reliance, industrial giant Larsen & Toubro (L&T) has announced a collaboration with Green Aero, a Hyderabad-based startup. The partnership, formalized in July 2025, will focus on developing indigenous micro turbojet engines specifically designed to power high-speed military drones. This initiative aims to reduce India's reliance on imported propulsion systems and create a new generation of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) with homegrown technology.

L&T's Precision Engineering and Systems (L&T PES) division, a key supplier to the Indian Armed Forces, has a long history of contributing to major defense projects, including the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA). By leveraging its extensive manufacturing experience and Green Aero's innovative propulsion technology, L&T plans to integrate these new engines into its own UAV platforms. The collaboration is seen as a significant step in the "Make in India" defense initiative, fostering a symbiotic relationship between a large, established corporation and an agile, deep-tech startup.

Green Aero, founded in 2023, has rapidly gained recognition for its advancements in aerospace propulsion. The company recently demonstrated its hydrogen-powered jet engine, "The Blue Dragon," in May 2025, although the partnership with L&T will focus on traditional fuel-powered micro turbojet engines for immediate defense applications. These engines are critical for

powering high-speed drones used for intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and combat missions, offering a high thrust-to-weight ratio in a compact, low-weight design.

The partnership will enable L&T to produce both fixed-wing and vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) tactical UAVs with improved performance, particularly for high-altitude operations and naval applications. These drones are expected to reach speeds of up to 450 km/h and have a range exceeding 200 km, positioning them as a strong indigenous alternative to foreign-made systems. The agreement underscores the growing importance of private-sector innovation in meeting the defense needs of the nation and securing its strategic interests.