

China unveils 'laser to shoot down low-flying drones'

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A file picture taken of a remote controlled drone

China has developed a highly accurate laser weapon system that can shoot down light drones at low altitude, state media reported.

The machine has a two-kilometre range and can bring down "various small aircraft" within five seconds of locating its target, the official Xinhua news agency said, citing a statement by the China Academy of

Engineering Physics (CAEP), one of the developers.

Xinhua showed pictures of large metal boxes in camouflage paint and the wreckage of a small drone, some of it burning.

It is expected to "play a key role in ensuring security during major events in urban areas" and address concerns on unlicensed mapping activities, according to Xinhua.

It is effective up to a maximum altitude of 500 metres and against aircraft flying at up to 50 metres per second (112 mph), Xinhua said.

It cited Yi Jinsong, a manager with China Jiuyuan Hi-Tech Equipment Corp., a firm under the academy, as saying that small-scale, [unmanned drones](#) were relatively cheap and easy to use, making them a likely choice for terrorists.

"Intercepting such drones is usually the work of snipers and helicopters, but their success rate is not as high and mistakes with accuracy can result in unwanted damage," he said.

The system, which can be installed on vehicles, shot down more than 30 [drones](#) in a recent test with a "100 percent success rate" said the CAEP statement.

The academy is developing similar laser security systems with greater power and range, Xinhua said in its report late Sunday.

China typically deploys tight security for domestic political meetings, international conferences and sports events, looking to prevent public protests over issues such as illegal land seizures and corruption as well as any threats to the participants.

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