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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO : 661
(TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 2nd December 2024)

REBIDDING OF ROUTES

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661.   SHRI GOLLA BABURAO

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:-

(a) whether the one-year timeline for rebidding Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) routes applies from the award of the route or after the closure of operations on that route;
(b) if so, the details thereof;
(c) the additional incentives or safeguards that will be introduced to encourage airlines to maintain services on RCS routes beyond the subsidy period;
(d) of the 225 RCS routes that have ceased operations, what are the primary reasons behind airlines discontinuing services despite Government's support; and
(e) Government plans have to revive or repurpose underutilized airstrips that were rehabilitated under the RCS but have since fallen into disuse?

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ANSWER

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MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION

 (Shri Murlidhar Mohol)

(a) & (b): As per the schematic norms of Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS), there should be no scheduled commercial flights on the route for the last two flight schedules (schedules which have expired) as published by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on its website for a route to be included for bidding or rebidding.

(c): UDAN is a market driven scheme wherein interested airline operators bid for routes as per their own assessment of demand and feasibility, and routes are awarded with VGF support for three year period from date of commencement. The continuity of route beyond the three year period is decided by the airline based on commercial viability and operational considerations.

(d): Operating flights on certain routes with low demand becomes financially unsustainable without adequate support or subsidies. Some routes have been discontinued by the airlines due to financial challenges, aircraft related issues or other operational constraints.

(e): Special bidding rounds are conducted to revive the underutilised airstrips and routes identified under RCS.

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