STATUS OF CIVIL AIVIATION SECTOR

1774.   SHRI SANT BALBIR SINGH

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

(a) the current status of the country's civil aviation sector, including the total number of operational airports, air traffic growth trends, and passenger and cargo handling capacity for the financial years 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25;
(b) the steps taken by Government to expand and modernize airport infrastructure, particularly in tier-2 and tier-3 cities, under initiatives, such as, the Regional Connectivity Scheme (UDAN); and
(c) the measures being implemented to enhance passenger safety, improve air traffic management and ensure adherence to global aviation safety standards across airlines and airport operators?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION

 (Shri Murlidhar Mohol)

(a): India is one of the fastest-growing aviation markets in the world and is already the third largest domestic aviation market. At present, there are 159 operational airports in the country.
Indian airports handled 376 million passengers (domestic & international) and 3.37 million metric tonne (MMT) of cargo during the FY 2023-24 as compared to 327 million passengers and 3.15 MMT cargo during FY 2022-23. The total annual passenger handling capacity of the airports increased to more than 530 million passengers per annum (MPPA) during the FY 2023-24 from the previous figure of 460 MPPA during FY 2022-23.

(b): The Government has launched the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS)-UDAN scheme on 21-10-2016 to facilitate / stimulate regional air connectivity by reviving unserved and underserved airports in Tier-2 & Tier-3 cities, for making air travel affordable to the masses. Under the Scheme, 619 RCS routes connecting 88 unserved and underserved airports, including 13 heliports and 2 water aerodromes, have been operationalised.

Expansion and modernization of airport infrastructure is a continuous process for which, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) and other PPP Airport Operators have embarked upon a Capex Plan from 2019-20 to 2024-25 of more than Rs.91,000 crore for the development /upgradation/modernization of various airports in the country to meet the growing demands of air traffic and passenger growth. Projects include new airports, expansions and modifications of existing terminals, additional passenger facilities, new terminals, expansions and strengthening of runways and aprons, and Air Navigation Services (ANS) works like control towers and technical blocks.

(c) Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), the safety regulator of the country, has issued Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) for ensuring safety of the airports in accordance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards and best practices. CARs are revised from time to time as per revisions advised by ICAO to meet current standards.

DGCA maintains a robust safety oversight system to monitor compliance with the Rules and CARs by routine surveillance, spot checks, regulatory and special audits. DGCA publishes an Annual Surveillance Plan (ASP) to guide surveillance and spot checks across various technical areas. Findings from audits, surveillance activities, and spot checks are rigorously followed up with the concerned operators. Compliance with corrective actions is verified, and observations are closed only after a thorough review.

AAI, as the sole Air Navigation Service Provider (ANSP) in India, continuously modernizes air navigation infrastructure and upgrades air traffic management systems to meet the growing demands of air travel. Initiatives like IP-based Voice Communication Control Systems (VCCS) and IP-based VHF radios, Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B) ground stations, Performance-Based Navigation (PBN) procedures RNP-Z (LPV) procedures based on GAGAN, Central Air Traffic Flow Management (C-ATFM) system and Airport Collaborative Decision Making (A-CDM) have been implemented at various airports by AAI.

*****