GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO : 2567
(TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 24th March 2025)

CIVIL AVIATION POLICY AND DEVELOPMENTS

2567.   SHRI SANT BALBIR SINGH

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

(a) the steps that have taken by the Ministry to enhance infrastructure development in the aviation sector to accommodate growing passenger traffic;
(b) Government plans to address challenges related to air traffic management, safety, and capacity expansion at major airports;
(c) initiatives implemented to improve regional connectivity, especially under the UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik) scheme, and the future goals for its expansion; and
(d) the manner in which Government is ensuring the modernization and upgrading of aviation technologies to keep pace with global standards?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION

 (Shri Murlidhar Mohol)

(a) to (d): 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.

To accommodate growing passenger traffic, 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.

The air traffic management systems are continuously upgraded by AAI 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.

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.

To improve regional connectivity, the Government has launched the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS)-UDAN scheme on 21-10-2016. This scheme aims to make air travel affordable and accessible in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities by reviving unserved and underserved airports. Under the Scheme, 619 RCS routes connecting 88 unserved and underserved airports, including 13 heliports and 2 water aerodromes, have been operationalised.

Modernization and upgrading of aviation technologies are essential to keep pace with global standards. Various digital initiatives like e-SAHAJ, e-GCA, e-BCAS, Airsewa, Digital Sky and Digiyatra have been launched for bringing in transparency, accountability, ease of doing business along with ease of living. Further, Ministry of Civil Aviation has encouraged the aviation safety and security regulators, Airports Authority of India and other stakeholders for adoption of technology for enhancing safety and security in the Civil Aviation sector and for passenger convenience. Measures taken by the stakeholders to enhance the use of technology inter-alia include Inline Baggage Facility, Self-Baggage Drop Facility, GPS Aided GEO Augmented Navigation (GAGAN), Airports Operational Control Centre, Augmentation of Air Traffic Control (ATC) Automation System, Advanced Surface Movement and Guidance Control System, ADS-B based approach surveillance services, State of art Air Traffic Flow Management Central Command Centre, Airport Collaborative Decision Making System, Computed Tomography Explosive Detection System (CT-EDS), Real Time Wait Display System, Radioactive Detection Equipment (RDE), Perimeter Intrusion Detection System, Airport Predictive Operations Center etc.

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