

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO : 4
(TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 3rd February 2025)**

STATUS AND EXPANSION PLANS FOR COOCH BEHAR AIRPORT

4. SHRI SAMIK BHATTACHARYA

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

- (a) current occupancy rate of the Kolkata-Cooch Behar flight operated by India One Air since its inception, and how has the demand trended over time;
- (b) details on the proposed plans to expand Cooch Behar airport, including the extension of the runway and other infrastructure upgrades currently under consideration;
- (c) steps being taken to increase the number of flights operating from Cooch Behar airport, whether there is any consideration of introducing new routes, such as a potential Cooch Behar-Guwahati flight; and
- (d) whether AAI is exploring potential partnerships with airlines to introduce larger aircrafts with higher passenger capacities at Cooch Behar airport?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION

(Shri Murlidhar Mohol)

(a): As of January 12, 2025, the airline has operated 1122 flights, carrying a total of 8,687 passengers.

(b): The Cooch Behar Airport, owned by the Airports Authority of India (AAI), was identified for the operation of RCS flights. An expenditure of Rs. 10.45 crore was incurred to develop the airport and it became operational on February 21, 2023 under the UDAN Scheme. Cooch Behar is an AAI operational airport suitable for VFR Code 2B type of aircraft and has runway of orientation 04/22 with dimensions 1069m X 30m. Currently Cooch Behar Airport has one parking Bay for ATR-42 type of aircraft and a passenger terminal building of area 2100 Sqm.

Expansion/upgradation of Cooch Behar Airport is not feasible due to following reasons:

I. High Cost of Box Culvert over River Mora Torsha

II. Diversion of Railway Track

III. Unavailability of Land for Runway Strip due to railway track.

(c) & (d): With the repeal of Air Corporation Act in March 1994, Indian domestic aviation has been deregulated. Airlines are free to induct capacity with any aircraft type, free to select whatever markets and network they wish to service depending on market demand, operational and commercial viabilities and their policy.
