

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO : 239
(TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 11th August 2025)**

STATUS OF UTKELA AIRPORT IN THE STATE OF ODISHA

***239. SHRI SUJEET KUMAR**

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

- (a) whether Government has any proposals or holding discussions to enhance regional air connectivity from Utkela airport, located in Kalahandi district of Odisha, to other major cities;
- (b) whether there is a roadmap for expanding number of destinations, frequency of flights, and aircraft capacity from Utkela airport;
- (c) whether a timeline has been proposed for upgrading Utkela airport to handle larger aircrafts such as ATR-72, beyond the current 9-seater Cessna C208 operations, to improve flight frequency, passenger capacity, and affordability; and
- (d) number of passengers served since its operationalization and steps taken to ensure long-term route viability and sustainability?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION

(Shri Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (D) IN RESPECT OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 239 FOR ANSWER ON 11.08.025 REGARDING "STATUS OF UTKELA AIRPORT IN THE STATE OF ODISHA" BY SHRI SUJEET KUMAR.

(a) & (b): Utkela Airport, located in Kalahandi district and owned by the State Government of Odisha, has been developed and operationalised under the Regional Connectivity Scheme-Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (RCS-UDAN) with an expenditure of Rs. 56.03 Crores.

RCS-UDAN is an ongoing market-driven scheme in which the unserved and underserved airstrips/airports are listed for bidding by airlines to provide connectivity. Bidding rounds are conducted periodically to cover more destinations under the scheme. Airlines submit bids based on demand assessment on particular routes. Valid bids received from airlines are awarded for the operationalisation of routes.

(c):The expansion and upgradation of airports is a continuous process which depends upon commercial viability, traffic demand, availability of land, operational requirements etc. Utkela Airport has been developed for 2B category and the decision regarding further upgradation of Utkela Airport rests with the State Government.

(d): More than 4000 passengers have so far traveled under the UDAN scheme from Utkela airport since its commencement. Steps to improve the long-term sustainability of the routes and viability of airports include the following:

i) Airlines are required to submit business plans before route awards under UDAN.
ii) Increased adoption of technologies like Special Visual Flight Rules and Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) standards at feasible airports for all-weather operations.

iii) Discontinued routes are offered for re-bidding in subsequent rounds under UDAN.

iv) Airports are upgraded depending upon commercial viability and traffic demand.
