

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO : 830
(TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 8th December 2025)**

**ASSESSMENT OF REGIONAL AIRPORTS BEFORE SANCTIONING OF
WORK**

830. DR. ASHOK KUMAR MITTAL

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

- (a) whether Government is aware that several newly-inaugurated regional airports have no commercial flights or operations shortly after opening, raising concerns about the economic viability of such facilities, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether criteria, feasibility studies and traffic-demand assessments were used before sanctioning these airports and whether these are being reviewed;
- (c) measures Government is taking to ensure that such regional airport projects under the UDAN Scheme and other connectivity programmes are operationally viable and sustainable; and
- (d) the timeline and strategy for rationalising under-performing airports, optimising resources and avoiding taxpayer funds being locked into non-functional infrastructure?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION

(Shri Murlidhar Mohol)

(a) to (d): Some airports are non-operational under the Regional Connectivity Scheme-Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (RCS-UDAN) Scheme due to factors such as completion of the three-year concession period, poor visibility conditions, daytime runway restrictions at VFR-only airports, shortage of aircraft, leasing issues, temporary discontinuation by airlines, novation of routes, and low passenger load factors. As on date, these airports include Pathankot, Pakyong, Kushinagar, Aligarh, Azamgarh, Chitrakoot, Shravasti, Moradabad, Bhavnagar, Ambikapur, Ludhiana, Datia, Kalaburagi and Shimla.

RCS-UDAN is market driven scheme in which the unserved and underserved airstrips/airports are listed for bidding by airlines to provide connectivity. Bidding rounds are conducted from time to time for covering more destinations and routes under the scheme. Based on their assessment of demand on particular routes, interested airlines submit their proposals at the time of bidding under UDAN. An

airport which is included in the awarded routes of UDAN and requires upgradation/development for commencement of UDAN operations, is developed under the 'Revival of unserved and underserved airports' scheme. On development and readiness of airport, Selected Airline Operators (SAOs) commence operations on the awarded UDAN routes connecting these airports.

In order to improve long term sustainability of connectivity under the UDAN Scheme, the following approach is adopted:

- 1.To leverage the expertise of the relevant State Government in their respective regions, they have been requested to identify and prioritize high-potential aerodromes that can be developed and operationalized.

- 2.Airlines have been asked to submit business plans for timely operationalization, prior to the award of the route. The Implementing Agency has also been publishing the list of prioritized aerodromes that are ready or likely to be ready.

Further, eligible routes that were discontinued in the past rounds due to various reasons such as airline failure, have also been re-bid, awarded and operationalized in the subsequent rounds.

Airports and routes under the UDAN Scheme are reviewed regularly based on passenger load factors, airline interest, operational readiness, and financial sustainability.
