

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. : 3376
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 23rd March 2026

AIRPORT EXPANSION IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR AND LADAKH

3376. SHRI GULAM ALI

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

- (a) whether, in furtherance of Government's efforts to strengthen connectivity and promote development in the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, proposals have been examined for establishing new airports or civil enclaves in districts distant from Jammu and Srinagar airports, particularly Rajouri, Poonch and Kishtwar;
- (b) whether feasibility studies or land identification have been undertaken in these districts and in Kargil;
- (c) whether civilian use of existing defence airstrips in these areas has been considered to boost regional connectivity and tourism; and
- (d) the timelines and funding model proposed, if viable?

ANSWER

Minister of State in the Ministry of CIVIL AVIATION (Shri Murlidhar Mohol)

(a) to (d): As per the Greenfield Airports (GFA) Policy, 2008, if any airport developer including a State Government desires to develop a Greenfield airport, they are required to identify a suitable site and get the Pre-feasibility Study conducted and submit a proposal to Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) for 'Site Clearance' followed by 'In-Principle' approval. No proposal seeking 'Site Clearance' under the GFA Policy for development of a Greenfield Airport in the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh has been received.

MoCA has also launched Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) - UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) to enhance regional air connectivity from unserved and underserved airports in the country. The following airstrips in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir are listed in the UDAN document: Akhnur, Chamb, Gurez (Gurex), Jhangar, Kishtwar, Miran Sahib, Mantalai, Panzgam, Poonch, Rajouri and Udhampur. If any airline applies for routes connecting these airstrips in future bidding rounds, the same may be considered as per UDAN scheme provisions.

An expert committee from Airports Authority of India (AAI) conducted a site visit to Udhampur Airforce station to assess the feasibility of introducing civil flight operations at this Defense airfield. On Preliminary Assessment, development of a Civil Enclave is found to be feasible subject to regulatory clearances and land availability. Also, a committee recently visited Kishtwar Airfield to assess for commencement of civil flight operations. AAI has also requested 5 acres of land from the Indian Air Force (IAF) for establishment of a new Civil Enclave at Thoise.

A multi-disciplinary team from AAI, IAF and Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had visited sites at Wakha Kargil, Turtuk, Diskit, Nyoma and Padum/ Zaskar in UT of Ladakh in 2021. However, none of the sites were found suitable for airport construction.
