GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. : 2406
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 10th August 2026

EVALUATION OF SOCIO ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE UDAN SCHEME

2406. DR. JYOTI NAGNATH WAGHMARE

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

(a) whether Government has evaluated the socio-economic impact of regional air connectivity in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities under the UDAN scheme;

(b) the total number of air routes currently operational under the scheme and the details of routes that have proven to be financially unviable (non-operational);

(c) the incentives being offered to ensure the financial stability of regional airlines and to attract private investment; and

(d) the current status of green airport initiatives aimed at reducing carbon emissions?

ANSWER

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

(a): As on 10.07.2026, a total of 679 RCS routes connecting 95 airports, including 17 heliports and 02 water aerodromes, have been operationalised across the country under the UDAN Scheme, benefitting more than 168 lakh passengers through over 3.58 lakh RCS flights. The Scheme has significantly improved regional air connectivity, enhanced access to remote and underserved regions, promoted tourism, trade and employment, and provided affordable air travel to citizens.

International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) study titled 'Economic Benefits of Civil Aviation: Ripples of Prosperity', shows that the air connectivity has an economic multiplier of 3.25 and employment multiplier of 6.1.

(b): At present, 348 RCS routes are operational across the country. A total of 165 RCS routes have ceased operations before completion of their three-year Viability Gap Funding (VGF) support period due to factors such as low passenger demand, airline-related issues, aircraft availability constraints, airport-related operational limitations, and other operational or commercial reasons.

(c): To support the viability of regional air services, the Scheme provides concessions from the Central Government, State Governments/Union Territory Administrations and airport operators to reduce operating costs, along with VGF to bridge the gap between operational costs and expected revenue. Airline operators are also granted route exclusivity for a period of three years to promote stable and sustained operations.

Further, the next phase of the scheme incorporates a longer VGF mechanism extending up to five years, progressively tapered to enable airlines to transition towards commercially sustainable operations.

(d): The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has undertaken various green initiatives to promote sustainable aviation, including adoption of renewable energy, energy-efficient infrastructure, green buildings, solid waste and water management, and phased induction of electric vehicles.

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