

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. : 1363
(To be answered on the 27th July 2023)**

OPERATIONALISATION OF BALURGHAT AIRPORT

1363. DR. SUKANTA MAJUMDAR

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION

नागर विमानन मंत्री

be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether the Government has proposed to operationalise hundred unserved and underserved airports including the Mahinagar, Balurghat Airport in West Bengal and if so, the details thereof;**
- (b) whether the delegation of Airports Authority of India (AAI) had visited three defunct airports in northern Bengal including the Mahinagar, Balurghat Airport in December 2021 to scrutinise the readiness of the facilities and if so, the details thereof;**
- (c) whether it was reported that over 90 per cent of the work at Balurghat airport at Mahinagar in Dakshin Dinajpur district was completed;**
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the Government's reaction thereto along with the reason for such an inordinate delay in making operational Mahinagar airport so far; and**
- (e) the steps have been taken by the Government in this regard so far?**

ANSWER

Minister of State in the Ministry of CIVIL AVIATION

नागर विमानन मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री

(GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD))

(a) to (e) : Yes, Sir. The Government has set a target to revive/develop 100 unserved and underserved airports/heliports/water aerodromes under Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) - Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) in the country by 2024 for operation of UDAN flights. Balurghat airport in West Bengal has not so far been included for development under the UDAN scheme. Balurghat airstrip is suitable for operations of aircraft having capacity for less than 20 seats. The airstrip is available in the list of unserved airports in the UDAN Document. Ongoing UDAN 5.2 round is designed for

small aircraft. In case any valid bid is received for operations to/from Balurghat, the same is to be considered as per the schematic norms of UDAN 5.2.

A team of officials from Airports Authority of India's (AAI) visited Cooch Behar Airport in February 2022 and Malda and Balurghat Airport in December 2021. Cooch Behar Airport belongs to AAI. Malda and Balurghat Airports have been handed over to the State Government on lease for 30 years for development and using the Airport for non-Scheduled operation at nominal fee of Rs. 1/-. MoU has been signed in this regard on 29th June 2016.
