

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. : 4051
(To be answered on the 19th December 2024)**

DISCONTINUATION OF FLIGHTS

4051. SHRI GURMEET SINGH MEET HAYER

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION

नागर विमानन मंत्री

be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether it is true that nearly 46 per cent of operational flights have been discontinued due to low demand, inadequate State support and infrastructure constraints under Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS)UDAN and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has conducted a detailed study to examine the causes of these setbacks;
- (c) if so, the details and findings thereof along with the remedial actions taken in this regard and if not, the reasons for this omission;
- (d) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to overcome the said challenges;
- (e) the manner in which the Government proposes to increase passenger demand, strengthen collaboration with the State Governments and address infrastructure limitations; and
- (f) whether the Government has focused on developing regional hubs like Chandigarh airport and divert some flights from overburdened hubs like Delhi which leads to better regional connectivity and more balanced aviation growth, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

Minister of State in the Ministry of CIVIL AVIATION

नागर विमानन मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री

(Shri Murlidhar Mohol)

(a) The Government launched the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) - UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) in October 2016 to enhance regional air connectivity from unserved and underserved airports in the country for making air travel affordable to the masses. 87 Aerodromes (including 13 Heliports and 2 water-aerodromes) have been operationalised under the RCS-UDAN Scheme till now. Since the commencement of the scheme, a total of 615 routes have been operationalized to date. Currently, 367 routes are in operation, including those being commercially operated by the same airline

and others. The reasons for discontinuation of routes include the disruptions caused by COVID-19 pandemic, grounding of many aircraft due to global aircraft engine issues that has led to substantial reduction in the available fleet for all the airline operators in the country, shutting down of airlines and low passenger demand on some routes.

(b) to (d) The following studies have been conducted on the RCS-UDAN Scheme.

- 1. The report "The Regional Connectivity Scheme UDAN - Progress and Prospects" by the Indian School of Business (ISB), (2021-22)**
- 2. The mid-term appraisal for the Scheme "Evaluation Study of Regional Connectivity Scheme" by DMEO NITI Aayog (2023-24).**

The Government regularly monitors the routes that have ceased operations under UDAN and conducts special bidding rounds to operationalise such routes.

(e) & (f) In 2016, the Government released the National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP 2016), which laid out the vision, mission and key objectives for the sector. NCAP also envisages key action steps covering over 20 aspects of the aviation value chain including: regional connectivity, safety, security, airlines, airports, bilateral traffic rights, code-share agreements, air navigation, helicopters, cargo, manufacturing, maintenance and skill development etc. The Government has been taking concrete steps to take flying to the masses by making it affordable, convenient and also provide safe, secure, affordable and sustainable air travel for passengers as well as air transportation of cargo with access to various parts of India and the world and establish an integrated eco-system which is leading to significant growth of the civil aviation sector which in turn is also promoting tourism, increasing employment and leading to balanced regional growth across the country including Chandigarh.
