

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. : 6304
(TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 2nd April 2026)

DEVELOPMENT OF AIRPORT INFRASTRUCTURE IN TAMIL NADU

6304. DR. M K VISHNU PRASAD

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION

be pleased to state:-

- (a) the number of airports developed or upgraded under the UDAN Scheme since its launch in Tamil Nadu and other southern States;
- (b) whether any regional routes have been discontinued and if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor;
- (c) the criteria used for selection of routes and operators under the UDAN Scheme; and
- (d) the status of commencement of commercial operations at Neyveli Airport, Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu?

ANSWER

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

(a): Under the Regional Connectivity Scheme - Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (RCS-UDAN), four airports namely Salem, Vellore, Neyveli and Tanjore, have been identified for the development and operation of RCS flights in the State of Tamil Nadu.

(b): In the state of Tamil Nadu, a total of 26 routes have been operationalised under RCS-UDAN, out of which 20 routes are currently operational in the state of Tamilnadu.

Discontinuation of operation of any flight between cities in the country is primarily a commercial decision of the airlines, based on the economic and operational viability of the route and other associated factors. In addition, factors such as completion of the three-year Viability Gap Funding (VGF) period, poor visibility conditions, daytime runway restrictions at Visual Flight Rules (VFR)-only airports, shortage of aircraft, leasing-related issues, novation of routes and low passenger load factors have also contributed to discontinuation of certain routes.

(c): Under the UDAN scheme, selection of airline operators is undertaken through a transparent bidding process, wherein routes are awarded to the eligible bidder quoting the lowest Viability Gap Funding (VGF) per seat, in compliance with the provisions of the scheme. Post-bid, the Implementing Agency issues a Letter of Intent (LoI), which requires submission of a detailed operationalisation plan, including availability of aircraft and crew, proposed schedule, and coordination with relevant authorities. The routes are awarded based on satisfactory fulfilment of these requirements.

(d): The physical development works at Neyveli Airport have been completed. Presently, the processes related to licensing and overall operational readiness are underway. Operationalisation of RCS routes from Neyveli Airport is subject to readiness of the airport.
