

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. : 857
(TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 23rd July 2026)

UPGRADATION OF CHENNAI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

857. THIRU DAYANIDHI MARAN

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION

be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether the Union Government has assessed the reasons for Chennai International Airport's declining passenger traffic and national ranking despite being one of India's oldest and busiest aviation hubs and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the steps taken to augment capacity, improve passenger amenities, modernise airside infrastructure and reduce runway congestion at Chennai International Airport during the last five years along with the funds spent and the present status of these works;
- (c) whether the Government has assessed the impact of airline route suspensions, limited slot availability and infrastructure constraints on Chennai's domestic and international connectivity and if so, the details thereof including the measures taken to restore the lost services;
- (d) the reasons for the delay in completing the ongoing integrated terminal and parallel taxiway projects and the revised timeline fixed therefor; and
- (e) the long-term strategy of the Government to ensure that Tamil Nadu's principal aviation gateway remains globally competitive and does not lose traffic and investments to other metropolitan airports due to inadequate infrastructure planning?

ANSWER

Minister of State in the Ministry of CIVIL AVIATION

(Shri Murlidhar Mohol)

(a): There has been no decline in passenger traffic at Chennai International Airport and the airport has consistently retained its position as the fifth busiest airport in the country in terms of passenger traffic since FY 2022-23.

(b): The Airports Authority of India has undertaken the expansion and modernization of Chennai Airport in two phases at a total cost of Rs. 2467

crore. Under Phase-I, a New Integrated Terminal Building has been constructed, increasing the airport's passenger handling capacity from 23 Million Passengers Per Annum (MPPA) to 30 MPPA. The terminal has been operational since 08.07.2023. Phase-II involves the development of Terminal-3, which will enhance the airport's capacity to 35 MPPA. An expenditure of Rs. 1762.08 crore has been incurred on the project up to June 2026. Further, to enhance airside infrastructure and improve operational efficiency, AAI has completed various airside infrastructure works, including Rapid Exit Taxiways (RETs), taxi tracks, link taxiways etc. at a total cost of Rs. 236.75 crore during the last five years.

(c): No limitation regarding availability of slots has been observed at Chennai airport and no request for slot allocation by any airline is pending with AAI. Since deregulation of the domestic aviation sector in March 1994, airlines determine their aircraft deployment and route network based on operational and commercial viability. Accordingly, introduction of air services is at the discretion of the airlines. International air services are governed by the bilateral Air Services Agreements (ASAs) between India and the respective countries, commercial viability, passenger demand, slot availability, operational feasibility, and other associated factors.

(d): The modernization of Chennai Airport has faced delays primarily due to unforeseen natural calamities, including the COVID-19 pandemic, multiple cyclones, and unusually high rainfall. The revised timeline for completion of the project is December 2026.

(e): AAI continuously upgrades and augments infrastructure at Chennai International Airport to enhance operational efficiency, improve passenger experience and meet future traffic requirements.
