

(c) whether Government is planning to take the Regional Connectivity initiative for connecting the unconnected areas; and

(d) which are the places that the Minister would prefer to include in his first list?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI JAYANT SINHA): (a) to (d) Ministry of Civil Aviation has already released National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP)-2016 on 15th June, 2016, which *inter-alia* includes Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS)- UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) for promoting Regional connectivity in the country. In pursuance of NCAP-2016, Ministry of Civil Aviation has launched RCS-UDAN on 21st October, 2016 for providing connectivity to un-served and under-served airports of the country. This is a demand-driven scheme, where airline operators undertake assessment of demand on particular routes, for mounting air services.

Extension of runway at Vagaikulam airport

1450. SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has formulated any detailed plan including extension of runway from existing 1350 meters to 2000 meters and then upto 3000 meters for the development and creation of additional facilities at Thoothukudi Airport at Vagaikulam in the State of Tamil Nadu; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI JAYANT SINHA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In order to extend and widen the runway of Thoothukudi (Tuticorin) Airport from the existing 1350m x 30m to 2286m x 45m and to make it suitable for operation of A-320 (Code-C) type of aircraft in Phase-I and subsequently for operation of Code-D type of aircraft in Phase -II, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) has projected the requirement of 586 acres of land to Government of Tamil Nadu.

Pending cases of height clearance

1451. DR. KANWAR DEEP SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to stated:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of applications are pending in metro cities for height clearance by Airports Authority of India;

(b) if so, the period of their pendency and the reasons therefor;