

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.: 31
(TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 3rd February 2025)

STATUS OF KUSHINAGAR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

31. SHRI KUNWAR RATANJEET PRATAP NARAYAN SINGH

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether Government is aware of the current operational status of Kushinagar International Airport, which has not yet fully realized its intended potential;
- (b) the manner in which the airport's performance align with the objectives of the UDAN scheme to improve regional connectivity;
- (c) the key challenges in attracting airlines and passenger traffic to this airport;
- (d) the measures being planned to enhance the operational viability of the airport; and
- (e) the manner in which Government proposes to ensure efficient utilization of regional airport infrastructure in the future?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION

(SHRI MURLIDHAR MOHOL)

(a) & (b): Kushinagar Airport is an operational airport of Airports Authority of India (AAI), however, at present there are no scheduled flight operations at the airport. Under UDAN 4.1, the Kushinagar-Hindon route was awarded to SpiceJet, but the airline commenced operations from Delhi instead of Hindon on 26.11.2021, and the services were discontinued on 04.11.2023. Additionally, under UDAN 4.1, the Kushinagar-Saharanpur route has been awarded to SpiceJet for operations with a 78-seater aircraft.

(c) & (d): With the repeal of Air Corporation Act in March 1994, the Airlines are free to induct capacity with any aircraft type, free to select whatever markets and network they wish to service and operate subject to the compliance of Route Dispersal Guidelines (RDGs) issued by the Government and flight schedules approved by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). Hence, it is upto the airline operators to introduce air services to / from any airport in the country depending on their operational & commercial viability. Some routes are discontinued by the airlines due to financial challenges, aircraft related issues, weather disruptions or other operational constraints.

To address this, the Government regularly monitors discontinued UDAN routes and conducts special bidding rounds to revive them, including underutilised airstrips and routes.

(e): To ensure the efficient utilisation of regional airport infrastructure and enhance air connectivity, the Government promotes regional connectivity through the RCS-UDAN scheme, offering financial incentives to airlines, including concessions from Central and State governments, and airport operators, along with Viability Gap Funding (VGF). This helps bridge the gap between operational costs and expected revenues. These measures aim to strengthen regional connectivity, improve accessibility, and promote economic growth while ensuring the efficient utilisation of regional airports.
