

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CIVIL AVIATION
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3423

ANSWERED ON:26.04.2007

DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL AIRPORTS IN WEST BENGAL

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Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is considering to develop small airports in various district headquarters of West Bengal to increase air connectivity with State capital through small aircraft;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL)

(a),(b) & (c) The following development works at airstrips/ airports in West Bengal have been taken up by Airports Authority of India (AAI):

(i) Development works for operationalisation of Cooch Behar airport in a phased manner with strengthening and expansion of runway and apron for operation of ATR-72 type of aircraft. The Terminal Building has also been renovated. There are also plans for construction of a New Terminal Building, Fire Station and ATC Tower cum Technical Block.

(ii) There is a proposal for development of Malda airport for operation of ATR- 72 type of aircraft for which a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) regarding transfer of land at this airport by the State Government of West Bengal to AAI free of cost on ownership basis has been sent to the State Government.

In addition to the above, on a proposal from the State Government of West Bengal for development of 8 abandoned airstrips/airfields in various districts of West Bengal requiring major expenditure and infrastructural development, AAI will consider the desired development works subject to firm commitment and demand from some airline operators for operating scheduled services from these airports, availability of required land and sharing of the development cost of these Defence/ State Government/ Private airstrips.