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Title: Need to set up Green Field Airport at Chepurupalli/Rajam in Andhra Pradesh.

SHRIMATI BOTCHA JHANSI LAKSHMI (VIZIANAGARAM): Madam Speaker, Visakhapatnam, also known as city of destiny, is the second most important city in Andhra Pradesh, after Hyderabad. Nearly 6.5 lakh domestic travelers use Visakhapatnam Airport every year. This includes all cross section of the people of Andhra Pradesh, southern parts of Chhattisgarh and the industrial belt of Orissa. This figure will further increase with the advent of new industries at an investment of more than Rs. 2 lakh crore, and will reach one million passengers per annum. Thus Visakhapatnam Airport will automatically qualify for the status of international airport.

But at present the Airport is operating up to 10 p.m. only, thus limiting the operations of different airlines. Different airlines are hesitant to start new services as the Airport is operating to limited time period only. For example the Air India Express Service from Visakhapatnam to Singapore and Dubai, is not possible because of limited operation time of the Airport. The market studies and surveys indicate that nearly six lakh more people travel from this region to destinations of Dubai, Singapore and beyond, using Chennai, Kolkata Hyderabad Airports at enormous cost and efforts. Thus there is urgent need for 24 hours operations at Visakhapatnam Airport.

Madam, I request the Government, through you, to take necessary steps to operate the Visakhapatnam Airport 24 hours in a day.