

Regarding various issues pertaining to Vellore Airport at Abdullapuram

SHRI D. M. KATHIR ANAND (VELLORE): Hon. Madam Chairperson, I rise to expose the glaring neglect and inaction by the Union Government regarding the Vellore Airport at Abdullapuram, Vellore. Even though on-ground works have already largely been completed, yet no commercial flights, no license, and no operational clearance have been granted.

Madam, the Vellore Airport was taken up under the Central UDAN Scheme with an estimate of Rs. 65 crore. Renovation has been underway since 2017, and the basic infrastructure works like terminal building, runway, taxiway, have been completely finished. In September 2023, the airport officials announced that initial signal test and runway lights testing were successfully completed. Moreover, the Prime Minister, during the recent campaign, landed his plane at the Vellore Airport for the campaign purposes.

Madam, Vellore is a major medical, educational, and industrial hub. The lack of a functional airport continues to deprive the region of emergency connectivity. This cannot be dismissed as a delay. It is a deliberate discrimination against a key region of Tamil Nadu.

13.00 hrs

Therefore, I demand that the hon. Minister of Civil Aviation should form a committee, without further delay, including the Members of Parliament and the MLAs to visit the airport and check what is happening there. He should immediately issue an aerodrome license for Vellore airport based on its completed infrastructure and successful tests, and announce the commencement of commercial flight operations without any procedural delay. They must provide a clear timetable with a definite date for opening, and assure that this Government will no longer treat vital infrastructure projects for Tamil Nadu as a second priority.

Madam, Vellore is deprived of the Central funds. For long time, I have been asking for completing the second bridge at Katpadi railway junction as early as possible. *(Interruptions)* But still it has not been completed. *(Interruptions)* I wanted to bring it to the notice of this august House. Thank you, Madam.

