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Title: Need to take necessary steps for expansion and modernization of Tuticorin Airport in Tamil Nadu.

SHRI S.S. RAMASUBBU (TIRUNELVELI): Tuticorin (Thoothukudi) in Tamil Nadu is a main port city of India. It is an important centre on the commercial and tourist map of our country and is presently being served only by Kingfisher Airlines to Chennai. In the recent past, the tourist flow to this city and neighbouring places have increased manifold and most of the tourists prefer to travel by air so that they can utilize their time to the maximum. Considering the commercial and tourist potential, the air services connecting Tuticorin with other important cities needs to be augmented. Moreover, people from Tuticorin and adjoining districts of southern Tamil Nadu like Tirunelveli, Kanyakumari go to Gulf and South East Asian countries frequently. They have to go either to Madurai, Chennai to Trivandrum for their onward journey and in the process they suffer financial hardship and also lose considerable time and energy in travel.

In the recent past, Union Government has identified 35 non-metro airports in the country for modernization. The modernization of Madurai Airport is underway and some other airports are nearing completion and now it is the turn of Tuticorin Airport. A master plan for upgrading Tuticorin airport in phases has been prepared and the Tamil Nadu Government has been asked to provide adequate land.

I, therefore, urge upon the Union Government to take necessary steps for expansion and modernization of Tuticorin Airport and adequate funds may be provided for the same.