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Title : Need to start operation of civil aircraft from Kalaikunda Airbase in West Bengal.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (MIDNAPORE): Medinipur town was district headquarters of united Medinipur district and at present is district Headquarters of Paschim Medinipur district in West Bengal and is a very old establishment which also witnessed many historic moments of our freedom struggle.

The town itself houses Vidyasagar University and many other colleges and a large market to cater to the needs of not only both the Medinipur districts but also the adjoining districts of Bankura, Purulia etc.

One of the big Railways establishments, Kharagapur Junction, lies very near to this town. Kharagpur is an industrial town, and every other day many a big industrial houses are setting up their units in and around Kharagpur.

The first Indian Institute of Technology is also situated in the vicinity of this town and lot of foreign nationals, both Academics and Engineers, visit IIT regularly.

But this rapid growth is somewhat halted due to non-existence of Air connectivity with the rest of the country, though there is a large airbase at Kalaikunda which is very nearby. But that belongs entirely to Defence.

I would, therefore, urge upon the Government that as already an infrastructure is available at Kalaikunda, the Central Government should take active initiative to provide civil air connectivity to Kalaikunda with the rest of the country as early as possible by enabling civil air operations through a portion of existing Kalaikunda airport.