



## Increased usage of advanced technologies will not only help efficiency of airports but also passenger comfort.

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### How optimistic are you about the government initiatives and policies in the airport sector, especially development of airports under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model?

Certainly because of current scenario of Covid pandemic, traffic volumes are quite low and also non aviation revenue is quite low. In long run, I believe that "Passenger Comfort" will be better served with privatization. PPP model has progressed a lot and now it is being bidded on per passenger payment basis. This model would further evolve as time progresses. Like combining non-profit airports with profit making airports while offering for PPP or demand on innovative concessions for F&B, duty free shops etc.

### The government intends to make India a global hub for Aircraft Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) services. Also, the convergence between the Defence sector and the civil MROs will be established to bring down the maintenance cost of airlines. What is your take on this?

Hubs have been helpful in cost cutting and also they are revenue earner. At the same time, hubs have been successful in attracting more volume of traffic-both passenger and cargo. Hubs demand special skills for operations and right infrastructure with right and phased investment.

### There is a need to complete the ongoing projects under the UDAN initiative in a time-bound manner. In addition, the existing capacity of international airports needs to be augmented under the International UDAN initiative. What measures do you think can help the government reach this target?

The RCS - UDAN Scheme has the aim of fulfilling dreams of a common man of flying. The scheme will be impactful and will prove to


be successful, if time to time review of various relevant issues is done, with dynamic approach. Like the routes are carefully planned for economic viability, maintain and improvise the subsidy schemes, improve degree of monitoring and supervision, and take proactive approach to the challenges it may pose from time to time.

Moving to international UDAN will be successful since traffic is increasing with neighboring countries like Bangladesh or even locations like Bangkok.

### How do you see the adaptation of smart technologies for digital transformation of airports for the future like Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), tracking system, automation, big data and advanced analytics?

Increased usage of advanced technologies will help not only to the efficiency of airports but also to the passenger comfort. Ultimately, PPP will be more feasible with usage of advanced and tested technologies. Along with adaptation of smart technologies, airports should be planned & developed with modular approach i.e. ability to expand with increase in traffic volumes from brick and mortar point of view and from digital capabilities point of view.

### What are the significant concerns / challenges / potential in the airport sector in terms of competitiveness, rising fuel factor, overcapacity, labour unrest, emergence of low-cost carriers etc.?

Yes, this sector needs to be revived right now but it is time to invest in this sector so that cutting down O&M costs, passenger processing abilities, increase in non aviation revenue can be meaningfully addressed. 

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