

INDIA LAUNCHES NATIONAL AIR SPORTS POLICY 2022 (NASP 2022)

With a view to make India one of the top sports nations by 2023, the Civil Aviation Ministry under the Government of India has launched National Air Sports policy 2022. The policy is launched with an aim to provide a safe, affordable, accessible, enjoyable and sustainable air sports ecosystem in India. Air sports, as the name suggests, includes various sports activities involving the medium of air - like air-racing, aerobatics, aero modeling, paragliding, para motoring, skydiving to name a few. India has a large geographical expanse, diverse topography, and fair-weather conditions. We also have a large population, especially the youth with the growing culture for adventure sports and aviation. The Union Minister of Civil Aviation, Jyotiraditya Scindia while launching the policy said that the Ministry wants to create an environment of adventure, thrill and sports in the country. For this, they will leverage the energy of the youth below the age of 35 that accounts for 70 percent of India's population which is larger than the total population of Europe and three times that of USA. The main objectives of this policy will be to promote an air sports culture; enhance participation and success of Indian sportspersons in global air sports events; and most importantly promote design, development and manufacturing of air sports equipment in India in line with the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan. India with its huge geographical expanse, extending from the Himalayas, mountainous regions, states in the northeast, plains in central India, coastal regions on the western-eastern coastline has an ability to have the widest diversity of air sports. The policy, according to Minister, will serve to attract air sports enthusiasts from all over the world, especially those who live in areas where harsh winters prevent them from participating. It is believed that air sports enthusiasts from Europe, North America, and Australia would flock to India to practice in the winters.



Key Objectives of NASP 2022:-

- a. Promote an air sports culture in the country
- b. Enable adoption of international good practices in safety including but not limited to, air sports infrastructure, equipment, operations, maintenance and training
- c. Develop a simple, stakeholder-friendly and effective governance structure
- d. Enhance participation and success of Indian sportspersons in global air sports events; and
- e. Promote design, development and manufacturing of air sports equipment in India in line with the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.

As per the release, at present the market size is at around 5,000 air sports practitioners creating around Rs 80-100 crore of annual revenue in India.

The Air Sports Federation of India under the Ministry is planning to collaborate with the armed forces of India, Central Armed Police Forces and various state police forces as they have excellent training facilities, equipment and instructors for air sports.

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Speaking on the future of Air Sports in India, the Minister feels that Rs 8000-10000 crore annual revenue can be targeted to generate over 1 lac direct jobs. And the economic multiplier benefits in terms of travel, tourism, support services and local infrastructure development will be over three times

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The ministry will encourage State Governments and Union Territories as well to develop the necessary infrastructure and facilitate promotion of air sports and tourism.

The policy will cover the following air sports in India: -

1. Aerobatics
2. Aero modeling and model rocketry
3. Amateur-built and experimental aircraft
4. Ballooning
5. Drones
6. Gliding and powered gliding
7. Hang gliding and powered hang gliding
8. Parachuting (including skydiving, BASE jumping and wing suits etc.)
9. Paragliding and para motoring (including powered parachute trikes etc.)
10. Powered aircraft (including ultra light, micro light and light sports aircraft etc.)
11. Rotorcraft (including autogyro)

This may include development of new air sports centres, construction of new runways or repairing existing ones, development of new launch pads and landing pads; and financial support for events and training. With this policy, India foresees a potential to be among the leading nations in the world of air sports. ■



– Meghna Chukkath