

# Aviation policy on anvil: Prabhu

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India will need at least 1,000 planes in the next few years as it prepares a comprehensive and integrated plan for 2035 to boost the aviation sector, Union civil aviation minister Suresh Prabhu said today in Kolkata.

Speaking at an event organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the Union Civil aviation minister said that India is also preparing a plan for manufacturing planes in the country. "We need at least 1,000 planes in the next few years and we don't want to import them," Mr Prabhu said.

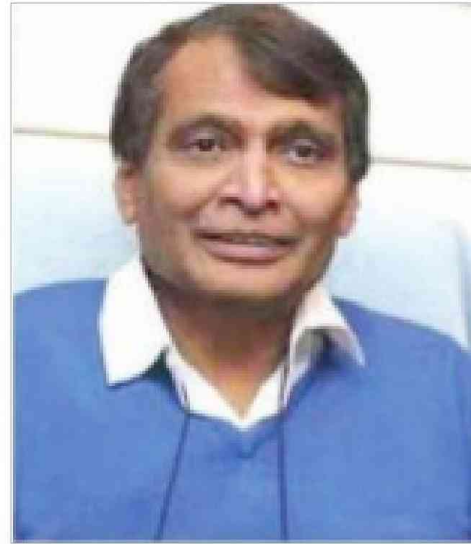
"Technology is going to play a key role. As part of its long-term aviation policy, the Central government is working on an integrated plan to transform India into an aircraft and allied components manufacturing hub," Mr Prabhu said.

"Creating infrastructure for aviation is a big challenge and we, therefore, are preparing a comprehensive and integrated plan for 2035," he said.

"A big global aviation event has been planned where a whole range of stakeholders from across the world will be involved," he said.

India will frame a separate cargo policy too, Mr Prabhu said adding cargo flights can move at night with the policy coming in.

Plans are also afoot for manufacturing drones. "Drones will now play an important role and it is a tril-



lion dollar market, to exploit which we are preparing a plan," he said.

Pointing out that a million jobs would be created in the aviation sector, the minister said: "We need skilled man power and we are working on a skilled development programme."

The country's aviation sector would log the highest continuous growth in the next few years, with technology and land being the key factors, Mr Prabhu stated.

"We need to create infrastructure on the ground to make flying successful. Procuring land for infrastructure projects is a challenge," the union minister said.

Land is going to be the driving force for many development projects in the country, Mr Prabhu noted.

"India has only 2.2% of the land in the world. The same land is used for agriculture, horticulture and is occupied by humans and cattle population, Mr Prabhu said. Creating infrastructure for aviation is a big challenge," he said, adding that the government is resolute to overcome the challenge.