

## Draft National Air Sports Policy (NASP) 2022

The draft National Air Sports Policy (NASP) 2022 outlines the vision of the Government of India to promote the air sports sector in India by investing in technology and infrastructure, focusing on quality and safety, simplifying processes and systems, training and building awareness.

### What is the national air sports policy 2022 about?

- The NASP focuses on promoting the air sports in India by making it more safe, affordable, accessible, sustainable and enjoyable.
- The Government of India plans to make India one of the top air sports nations by 2030.

### What air sports will the NASP 2022 cover?

It will cover air sports like paragliding, aerobatics, aeromodelling, amateur-built and experimental aircraft, ballooning, drones, gliding, hang gliding, skydiving, microlighting, paramotoring and vintage aircraft.

### Key features of the draft national air sports policy (NASP) 2022

- A two-tier governance structure: This will comprise the Air Sports Federation of India (AFSI) and associations for each air sport.
  - Role of AFSI: It will be the apex governing body. It will represent India at the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) and other international platforms related to air sports.
  - Associations for each air sport: These associations will take care of day to day activities (e.g. Paragliding Association of India or Skydiving Association of India etc.). These associations will be accountable to ASFI with respect to the regulatory oversight and for providing affordable, secure, accessible, enjoyable and sustainable conduct of their respective air sport.

#### What is FAI?

- FAI stands for **the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale** (The World Air Sports Federation)
- It was founded in **1905**. It is headquartered in Lausanne, Switzerland.
- It is a **non-governmental and non-profit international body** and is the world governing body for air sports.
- It is recognised by the **International Olympic Committee (IOC)**.
- Its aims include:
  - Furthering aeronautical and astronautical activities
  - Ratifying world and continental records
  - Coordinate the organisation of international competitions
- It makes rules for the **control and certification** of world aeronautical and astronautical records

- It also **establishes regulations for air sporting events and activities** which are organised by Members anywhere in the world.
  - It also helps to promote skill, proficiency and safety in aeronautics.
- All air sports competitions in India will be conducted as per the guidelines given by FAI.
  - Air sports involve a greater level of risk than flying a regular aircraft, therefore the NASP 2022 emphasises on ensuring international best practices in safety.
  - Domestic designing and production of air sports equipment: Any domestic design, development and production of air sports equipment will be furthered in line with the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.
  - Import of air sports equipment: The Government aims to consider permitting the import of air sports equipment without any import duty for a specific period of time. It may also consider the free import of previously used air sports equipment based on the laid down norms of airworthiness.
  - Registration of air sports service providers: Air sports service providers will have to register themselves as members of the respective air sports associations. They also need to get the key equipment used for air sports registered with the respective air sports association, till such equipment is damaged beyond repair or lost or decommissioned.
  - Stringent penal actions: ASFI will take penal actions against those associations that do not enforce safety standards. These may include financial penalties, suspension or dismissal.
  - Airspace map of India: An airspace map has been published on DGCA's DigitalSky Platform. This airspace map has been divided into red zone, yellow zone and green zone. Operation in red and yellow zones will require permission from the Central Government and the concerned Air Traffic Control authority respectively. Permission is not required to operate in green zones for aircraft with all-up weight up to 500 kg. Air sports practitioners can make use of the airspace map for guidance.
  - Control Zones: For air sports centred around a fixed location – for example, Vagamon in Kerala, Bir-Billing in Himachal Pradesh, Hadapsar in Maharashtra, or Gangtok in Sikkim – the given location can be declared as a 'Control zone' for air sports after getting permissions from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Ministry of Defence (MoD), State Government and the local Air Traffic Control authority. This will help in easy, safe and accessible flying in such control zones without creating any risk in terms of national security or safety of other manned aircraft.
  - Hassle-free process for air sports aficionados coming to India: The air sports aficionados migrate to milder climates when air sports activities decrease during peak winters in Europe and North America. Therefore, the AFSI and the air sports associations plan to develop an easy and accessible system to enable their movement to India. This will help:
    - The Indian air sports enthusiasts to learn from the experience of the visiting professionals and understand global best practices
    - To create opportunities to host global competitions in India
  - Funding: To develop air sports in India, long term funding will be raised from sponsors, corporate investors, membership fees, events and media rights. ASFI may also seek financial support from the Government of India to promote air sports.
  - Affordability: To make air sports reasonably priced for the public, the Government plans to request the GST Council to consider rationalizing the GST rate on air sports equipment to 5% or less.
  - NASP 2022 aims to encourage schools, colleges and universities to include air sports in their

curriculum.

## **Benefits of the national air sports policy to India**

- Direct revenue from air sports activities
- Growth of travel and tourism
- Development of infrastructure
- Generation of local employment, especially in hilly areas.
- Creation of air sports hubs across India will bring in air sports professionals and tourists from all over the world.

## **Future of air sports in India**

- Given the **large geographical expanse, diverse topography and fair weather conditions** of India, it has the potential to be among the leading nations in air sports in the world.
- India's **large population** (especially the youth) and a **growing culture for adventure sports** and aviation will further the growth of air sports in the country.