

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO : 3522
(TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 4th April 2022)**

CHEAP AIR JOURNEY

3522. SHRI K.R.N. RAJESHKUMAR

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether Government has formulated any scheme to facilitate cheaper air journey to the general public and, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) if not, the steps proposed to be taken by Government for operation of cheaper domestic flights;
- (c) the names of the States in which Government proposes to implement this system; and
- (d) the details of the rates likely to be made applicable, State-wise?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION

(GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD))

(a) to (d): Ministry of Civil Aviation has launched Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) - UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) on 21-10-2016 to stimulate regional air connectivity and making air travel affordable to the masses. Under UDAN, 948 valid routes have been awarded across length and breadth in the country, of which, 415 routes connecting 66 unserved and underserved airports including 8 Heliports & 2 water aerodromes have been operationalized.

Besides Viability Gap Funding (VGF), other concessions from Central, State Governments and airport operators are extended to Selected Airline Operators (SAOs) to encourage operations from unserved/underserved airports/heliports/water aerodromes and to keep the air fare affordable under the UDAN scheme. While launching the UDAN Scheme in 2016, the Government had capped the Airfare at Rs. 2500 for a distance of approximately 500 km (equivalent to one-hour flight) per seat under Regional Connectivity routes. The capping is subject to indexation as per the formula specified in the UDAN Scheme document. UDAN is a Pan-India Scheme and routes are awarded connecting length and breadth of the Country.

Under the provisions of Sub Rule(1) of Rule 135 of the Aircraft Rules, 1937, every

air transport undertaking engaged in scheduled air services require to establish tariff having regard to all relevant factors, including cost of operation, characteristics of services, reasonable profit and the generally prevailing tariff. Airlines are free to charge reasonable air fares as per their operation viabilities subject to compliance of above said order. The airlines are compliant to the Sub Rule (2) of Rule 135 of the Aircraft Rules, 1937 as long as fare charged by them is in line with fare displayed on their website.

However, fare capping was put in place by the Government during the COVID-19 pandemic as a special measure in order to safeguard the passengers' interest. The lower as well as upper air fares (excluding User Development Fee (UDF), Passenger Service Fee (PSF) and GST) were fixed sector-wise on the basis of duration of flight time. The fare capping is currently applicable on rolling basis for a 15 days' cycle.
