

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO : 1783
(TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 17th March 2025)

EXTENSION OF RCS-UDAN

1783. SHRI SANJAY KUMAR JHA

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

- (a) number of UDAN routes that have been discontinued before completing three year tenure and measures taken to ensure sustainability of such routes, the details thereof;
- (b) the manner in which Government is planning to make UDAN routes more viable for airlines and steps being taken to attract new airlines to operate on these routes;
- (c) the funds allocated for the aforementioned scheme, in 2025-26, budget along with reason for not considering RE while allocating this; and
- (d) whether Government has made a plan as to which routes will be prioritized under the extended RCS-UDAN Scheme, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION

(Shri Murlidhar Mohol)

(a) : Under the Regional Connectivity Scheme-Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (RCS-UDAN) Scheme, 114 RCS routes have been discontinued due to various reasons such as COVID-19 pandemic, grounding of many aircraft due to supply chain issues, shutting down of airlines and low passenger demand on some routes.

The Government regularly monitors the routes that have ceased operations under UDAN and conducts special bidding rounds to operationalize such routes. 26 Routes that were discontinued due to various reasons as mentioned above have been re-bid, awarded and operationalized in the subsequent rounds. Additionally, 20 routes are also being commercially operated by other airlines outside the UDAN scheme, without Viability Gap Funding (VGF) or any other concessions. 42 routes are not fulfilling the criteria of being an RCS route for rebidding as both the\ airports connecting the route are served airports. Further, the operationalization of balance 26 routes which are eligible and fulfil the criteria of an RCS route shall be be considered as per UDAN provisions, upon receipt of valid bids.

(b) : Promoting viability of regional air connectivity is envisioned under UDAN by supporting Selected Airline Operators (SAOs) through concessions by the Central Government, State Governments/UTs and airport operators to reduce the cost of operations on regional routes and providing financial (Viability Gap Funding or VGF) support to meet the gap. UDAN is a market driven ongoing scheme wherein bidding rounds are conducted from time to time to cover more destinations. Airlines are invited to participate in the bidding rounds as per their own assessment of routes and feasibility.

(c) : The budget for the Regional Connectivity Scheme in FY 2025-26 is Rs.300 Crore.

(d) : RCS-UDAN has a market driven mechanism, wherein airlines undertake assessment of demand and nature of supply required on particular routes and bids accordingly. The modified UDAN scheme is presently in formulation stage.
