

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO : 270
(TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 18th August 2025)**

**REGIONAL AIR CONNECTIVITY AND LOCAL INCLUSION UNDER UDAN
5.1**

*270. SMT GEETA ALIAS CHANDRAPRABHA

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

- (a) the national progress and current priorities of the UDAN 5.1 Scheme for regional air connectivity, including the inclusion of new regions and the support for local entrepreneurs;
- (b) the selection of new routes and engagement of local stakeholders in the State of Uttar Pradesh, including steps taken to enhance regional connectivity, boost tourism, and provide economic opportunities for local businesses and communities; and
- (c) the consideration given to Auraiya-Etawah for regional air connectivity under UDAN 5.1, and the steps taken to involve local OBC entrepreneurs and women SHGs in ground handling and logistics at Kanpur airport?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION

(Shri Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu)

(a) to (c): A statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (C) IN RESPECT OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 270 FOR ANSWER ON 18.08.2025 REGARDING "REGIONAL AIR CONNECTIVITY AND LOCAL INCLUSION UNDER UDAN 5.1" BY SMT GEETA ALIAS CHANDRAPRABHA.

(a) & (b) :The Ministry of Civil Aviation launched the Regional Connectivity Scheme - Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (RCS-UDAN) on 21st October 2016 to enhance regional air connectivity and make air travel affordable for the common citizen. RCS-UDAN is an ongoing market-driven scheme wherein bidding rounds are conducted periodically to expand connectivity from unserved and underserved airports. Based on assessed demand for specific routes, airlines submit bids under the Scheme. Valid bids are awarded to airlines for operationalisation of Routes under the Scheme post-readiness of the airport.

UDAN Round 5.1 was specifically designed to promote helicopter connectivity by expanding the scope of operations for helicopter operators. Under this, helicopter operations are permitted on routes where at least one point - origin or destination - lies in a priority area - namely Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, the North Eastern Region states, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, and Lakshadweep Islands and at least one of them is a heliport.

As part of UDAN 5.1, 18 helipads have been identified, connecting 64 helicopter routes for development and operationalisation.

In Uttar Pradesh, the following airports, namely Agra, Prayagraj, Bareilly, Kanpur, Hindon, Kushinagar, Aligarh, Azamgarh, Shravasti, Moradabad and Chitrakoot have been developed and operationalised under RCS-UDAN. Saharanpur Airport, developed under the Scheme is also ready for operations. Further, commercial flight operations have commenced at Ayodhya Airport.

A total of 87 routes have been operationalised in Uttar Pradesh under the UDAN Scheme.

(c): Saifai (Etawah) in Uttar Pradesh is listed as an unserved airstrip in the UDAN document. No bids were received under the UDAN 5.1 round connecting Saifai (Etawah). However, bids have been received under the UDAN 5.2 round.

As per Airports Authority of India (Ground Handling Services) Regulations 2018, all ground handling services at airports are provided only through the authorised ground handling agencies (GHAs), who recruit their own manpower.
