

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO : 41
(TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 21st July 2025)**

**REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY SCHEME FOR REMOTE, HILLY REGION
IN H.P.**

41. SHRI HARSH MAHAJAN

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

- (a) the role of the UDAN Scheme in providing affordable air travel and promoting balanced regional development;
- (b) the new routes launched under the scheme and whether Government plans to add new destinations under the scheme;
- (c) whether Government plans to prioritise connecting remote, hilly, and aspirational districts, including the Himachal Pradesh North Eastern Region; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION

(Shri Murlidhar Mohol)

(a) to (b) : The Ministry of Civil Aviation launched the Regional Connectivity Scheme-Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (RCS-UDAN) on October 21, 2016, with the objective of enhancing regional air connectivity and making air travel more affordable for the general public and promoting regional development.

The Scheme ensures affordability as the airfares on the seats on which Viability Gap Funding (VGF) is provided are capped at affordable rates, as determined by the government.

The Scheme also provides financial incentives to airline operators on regional routes that include: Concessions by the Central Government, State Governments/ Union Territories and airport operators to reduce airline operation costs and also the VGF to bridge the gap between operational costs and expected revenues on such routes to make air travel affordable under the scheme.

Since the commencement of the scheme, 637 number of RCS routes have been operationalised, connecting 92 unserved and underserved airports, including 15 heliports and 2 water aerodromes across the country. By bringing Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities onto the national aviation map, UDAN has significantly reduced travel time

and improved accessibility for both residents, businesses and enhanced tourism.

The UDAN scheme has also driven significant infrastructure upgrades at existing airports and facilitated the development of new regional airports. This has not only improved overall transport logistics but also generated indirect employment opportunities.

(c) to (d) : The Government has recently announced to launch the modified UDAN Scheme to increase regional connectivity to 120 new destinations across the country including Himachal Pradesh and to cater to 4 crore passengers in the next 10 years. The scheme will also support helipads and smaller airports in hilly, aspirational and North East region districts.
