

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION  
**RAJYA SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. : 4001**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 30th March 2026

**UDAN SCHEME FOR REGIONAL AIR CONNECTIVITY**

4001. SHRI SHAMBHU SHARAN PATEL  
DR. PARMAR JASHVANTHSINH SALAMSINH  
SHRI BRIJ LAL  
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SHRI ADITYA PRASAD  
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SHRI DEEPAK PRAKASH

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

- (a) whether Government proposes to further expand the UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik) Scheme to connect additional Tier-II and Tier-III cities and remote region in the country through affordable regional air connectivity;
- (b) if so, details thereof including number of additional airports, heliports and water aerodromes proposed to be operationalised under the upcoming phases of the scheme;
- (c) whether Government has undertaken any evaluation of the operational sustainability of UDAN routes, particularly with regard to viability gap funding and airline participation;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) whether there is any plan to commence flight operations at Bokaro in Jharkhand under UDAN scheme?

**ANSWER**

Minister of State in the Ministry of CIVIL AVIATION (Shri Murlidhar Mohol)

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

(c) & (d): Yes. An evaluation study titled "Evaluation Study of Regional Connectivity Scheme" was conducted by the Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO), NITI Aayog during 2023-24. The study highlighted the need for clearer targets, improved route selection based on regional market conditions, adequate funding of the Regional Connectivity Fund (RCF), feasibility assessments for RCS airports, capacity building and stronger coordination with State/UT Governments.

The evaluation noted that while Viability Gap Funding (VGF) supports the initial viability of routes, long-term sustainability depends on passenger demand, route selection, airline

operational efficiency and supporting infrastructure. Measures such as route rationalisation, capping of VGF tenure, market-driven bidding and enhanced stakeholder coordination have been incorporated in subsequent rounds of UDAN.

(e): Bokaro Airport, owned by Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), has been identified for development to enable the commencement of RCS flight operations under the UDAN scheme. For development of Bokaro airport, an amount of Rs.80.03 crore has been sanctioned, out of which Rs.78.50 crore has already been incurred towards the development of the airport infrastructure. Licensing of airport is pending for want of regulatory compliances. Operationalisation of RCS routes from Bokaro Airport is subject to readiness of infrastructure and operator.

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