

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. : 270
(TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 7th August 2025)

RCS-UDAN IN RAJASTHAN

270. SHRI UMMEDA RAM BENIWAL

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION

be pleased to state:-

- (a) the salient features of the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS)-UDAN and the manner in which Rajasthan has benefitted from it so far;
- (b) whether it is true that the Indian Air Force's Airport at Uttarlai in Barmer is being connected to civil aviation services and if so, the current status thereof along with the concrete steps taken so far by the Union and State Governments to expedite the said project;
- (c) whether the Government has received complaints/suggestions from the public under the said scheme and if so, the details thereof along with the action taken thereon;
- (d) whether the Government has any plan to connect Barmer district under the said scheme and if so, the details thereof along with the progress made so far in this regard and expected timeline fixed for completion of the said work; and
- (e) the details of annual report regarding operations at Jaisalmer airport?

ANSWER

Minister of CIVIL AVIATION (Shri Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu)

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

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (E) IN RESPECT OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 270 FOR REPLY ON 07.08.2025 REGARDING "RCS-UDAN IN RAJASTHAN" ASKED BY SHRI UMMEDA RAM BENIWAL (a): 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. The scheme focuses on connecting unserved and underserved airports through revival and upgradation of existing infrastructure. RCS-UDAN is a market-driven scheme, with airlines bidding for routes based on demand assessment. Selected airline operators receive financial incentives, including Viability Gap Funding, reduced VAT and excise duty on ATF, and operational concessions. Airports requiring upgradation for awarded routes are developed under the 'Revival of Unserved and Underserved Airports' scheme. In the State of Rajasthan, three airports namely Jaisalmer, Bikaner and Kishangarh and 56 Routes connecting these airports have been operationalised under the Scheme till date.; (b): Uttarlai Airport, owned by the Indian Air Force (IAF), has been identified for development under the UDAN scheme. Routes connecting Uttarlai to Jaipur have been awarded to M/s FlyBig for operation of 19 seater aircraft. The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has proposed to establish a civil enclave at Uttarlai Airport using its internal resources. Commencement of flights under UDAN by the Selected Airline Operator (SAO) is subject to readiness of the airport for operations.; (c): The Government has received feedback from both airlines and passengers regarding the challenges faced in implementing the UDAN Scheme. Some of the highlighted concerns are: i) Challenges in last-mile connectivity from the city centre to the airport ii) Occasional flight diversions/cancellations due to weather at VFR airports iii) Discontinuation of routes after completion of VGF tenure iv) Occasional high ticket fares of non-RCS seats.; The Government has taken steps to address the challenges which include continuous coordination with States/UTs for last-mile connectivity to airports, wider adoption of technologies such as Special Visual Flight Rules (VFR), Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) etc at feasible airports, to mitigate weather-related constraints, rebidding of before-term discontinued RCS routes and continuous engagement with stakeholders to improve the scheme's effectiveness. Based on the success and learning from the existing Scheme, the Government has announced the launch of the modified UDAN Scheme to enhance regional connectivity to 120 new destinations in the next 10 years. The scheme will also support helipads and smaller airports in hilly, aspirational and North East region districts.; (d) & (e): UDAN is a demand-driven scheme wherein bidding rounds are conducted periodically to expand connectivity. Airline operators assess the feasibility of operations on a particular

route and bid under the scheme. Valid bids received from airlines are awarded for operationalisation under the Scheme, on readiness of the airport. As per the provisional data received by Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), a total of 1,16,702 passengers were carried to and from Jaisalmer Airport by schedule Indian airlines on domestic operations during the Financial Year 2024-25.
