



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik) Scheme

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Why is in news? RCS- UDAN Completes 6 Successful Years

The Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) - UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik), a **government-backed initiative to improve infrastructure and connectivity in India**, especially in **remote and underserved regions**, completes six years.

This is **first-of-its-kind scheme globally** to create economically viable flights on regional routes so that flying becomes affordable to the common man even in small towns.

The **first RCS-UDAN flight** was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister on April 27, 2017, **connecting Shimla to Delhi**.

The scheme focuses on **improving unserved air routes in underserved regions** of the country and fulfilling the aspirations of the common citizens.

So far, RCS-UDAN has **facilitated travel of more than 130 lakh passengers**, demonstrating its success in enhancing air travel accessibility.

It is a key component of the **National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP)** which was released by the Ministry of Civil Aviation (India) in 2016.

The scheme is **jointly funded** by the central government and state governments.

Two components of UDAN:

Airports: The first component is to develop new airports and enhance the existing regional airports to increase the number of operational airports for scheduled civilian flights.

Flight routes: The second component is to add several hundred financially-viable, capped-airfare, new regional flight routes to connect more than 100 under-served and un-served airports in smaller towns by using "Viability Gap Funding" (VGF) where needed.

Various versions of UDAN Scheme:

UDAN 1.0: 5 airlines companies were awarded 128 flight routes to 70 airports (including 36 newly made operational airports)

UDAN 2.0: 73 underserved and unserved airports were announced and for the first time, helipads were also connected.

UDAN 3.0: In coordination with the Ministry of Tourism, Tourism Routes were included. In addition to Seaplanes for connecting Water Aerodromes, several routes in the North-East Region came under the ambit of the scheme.

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UDAN 4.0: Gave impetus to North-Eastern Regions, Hilly States, and Islands. The operation of helicopters and seaplanes incorporated.

UDAN 5.0: It focus is on **Category-2 (20-80 seats) and Category-3 (>80 seats) aircraft**. Similarly, the cap of 600 km has been removed and there is no restriction on the distance between the origin and destination of the flight.

UDAN 5.1: This round of RCS-UDAN is designed **specifically for helicopter routes** by increasing the scope of operations for helicopter operators, enhancing VGF and reducing Airfare Caps.

UDAN 5.2: It provide impetus to the tourism sector **through small aircraft (<20 seats)**. The Scheme will provide greater operational flexibility to the small aircraft operators, by allowing them to operate a maximum of 40% of annually quoted RCS seats and a minimum of 10% of annually quoted RCS seats in any given quarter.