

Regional Air Connectivity- UDAN

8th Mar, 2019

"Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik -
Endevour to make common people fly"
Modi government's regional connectivity scheme

UDAN

launched

Air travel will be made affordable for common people

- ✈ First scheme of its type in the world.
- ✈ First flight of this scheme to take off in January 2017
- ✈ A cap of Rs. 2,500 fixed for one hour commercial flight for distance up to 500 kms (30 minutes travel by helicopters)

What to study?

For Prelims: Key features of RCS.

For Mains: Significance, challenges and potential of RCS.

Context: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved the extension of time and scope for revival and development of un-served and under-served air strips of State Governments, Airports Authority of India (AAI), Civil enclaves, CPSUs, helipads and water aerodromes. The revival of these un-served and under-served air strips will be carried out under the **Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) – UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik)**.

Background:

The AAI has developed 38 unfrequented and less frequented airports since the launch of the scheme in March 2017. As many as 750 routes have been awarded for connecting 77 un-served airports, 21 under-served airports, ten waterdromes and 31 helipads.

About UDAN:

- UDAN, launched in April 2017, is a flagship scheme of the Union Government to enable air operations on unserved routes, connecting regional areas, to promote balanced regional growth and to make flying affordable for masses.
- The UDAN Scheme is a key component of the **National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP)** which was launched in June 2016.

Objectives of the scheme:

- The primary objective of RCS is to facilitate / stimulate regional air connectivity by making it cheap and affordable.
- Promoting affordability of regional air connectivity is envisioned under RCS by supporting airline operators through: Concessions and Financial (viability gap funding or VGF) support.

Significance:

The scheme gives India's aviation sector a boost by giving a chance to small and first-time operators to be a part of the rapid growth in passenger traffic.

- **Mains Question:** India is the world's fastest growing domestic aviation market and regional connectivity is critical if this high growth is to be sustained. In this context, discuss the achievements of UDAN-RCS and the challenges lying in front of it.

To be looked in UPSC Paper 2 Topic:

1. Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.