



## Award for Excellence to UDAN Scheme

**For Prelims:** UDAN, Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration, Civil Service Day.

**For Mains:** Significance of UDAN Scheme in improving Aerial connectivity. Achievements under UDAN Scheme.

### Why in News?

Recently, the [UDAN \(UdeDeshkaAamNagrik\)](#) Scheme has been selected for [Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration 2020](#) under the category "**Innovation (General) - Central**".

- The Ministry of Civil Aviation will receive the award on **21<sup>st</sup> April, i.e. Civil Service Day**. The government of India celebrates Civil Services Day, every year as an **occasion for the civil servants to rededicate themselves** to the cause of serving citizens and renew their commitments to public service and excellence in work.
- The Ministry of Civil Aviation plans and commits to construct **100 new airports by 2024 in India with 1,000 new routes under UDAN Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) scheme by the year 2026**.

### What is the PMs Award for Excellence in Public Administration?

- **About:**
  - It was constituted in 2006 by the Government of India **to acknowledge, recognize and reward the extraordinary and innovative work done** by districts and organisations of the Central and State Governments.
  - The award consists of **a trophy, scroll and an incentive of Rs. 10 lakh to the awarded district or organisation** to be utilised for implementation of project/ programme or bridging resource gaps in any area of public welfare.
- **Restructuring:**
  - The Scheme was restructured in **2014** for recognizing the **performance of District Collectors in Priority Programs, Innovations and Aspirational Districts**.
  - The Scheme was restructured again in **2020**, **to recognize the performance of District Collectors towards economic development of the District**.
  - The Scheme has been **revamped** with a new approach in **2021** with the **objective to encourage Constructive Competition, Innovation, Replication and Institutionalisation of Best Practices**.
    - Under this approach emphasis would be on **good governance, qualitative achievement and last mile connectivity**, rather than only on achievement of quantitative targets.

### What is the UDAN Scheme?

- **Launch:**
  - It was launched as a RCS under the Ministry of Civil Aviation in **2016**.

- **Objectives:**
  - To develop the **regional aviation market**.
  - To provide affordable, economically viable and profitable air travel on **regional routes to the common man even in small towns**.
- **Features:**
  - The scheme **envisages providing connectivity to un-served and underserved airports of the country through the revival of existing air-strips and airports**. The scheme is operational for a period of 10 years.
    - Under-served airports are those which do not have more than one flight a day, while **unserved airports are those where there are no operations**.
  - **Financial incentives from the Centre, state governments and airport operators are extended** to selected airlines to encourage operations from unserved and under-served airports, and keep airfares affordable.

## What are the Achievements of UDAN?

- **Connecting Northeast:** Till date, **387 routes and 60 airports** have been operationalised out of which 100 routes are awarded in the North East alone.
  - Under the [KRISHI UDAN Scheme](#), 16 airports have been identified to enhance the export opportunities of the North East region establishing dual benefits of enhancement of cargo movements and exports.
- **Economic Growth:** UDAN has a **positive impact on the economy of the country** and has witnessed an excellent response from industry stakeholders especially airlines operators and state governments.
- **Balanced Regional Growth:** More than **350 new city pairs are now scheduled to be connected under the scheme, with 200 already connected** and are widely spread geographically providing connectivity across the length and breadth of the country as well as ensuring balanced regional growth resulting in economic growth and employment to the local population.
  - The scheme led to development of new [GreenField Airports](#) such as **Pakyong** near Gangtok in Sikkim, **Tezu** in Arunachal Pradesh and **Kurnool** in Andhra Pradesh.
- **Increased Passenger Share:** The scheme led to **5% incremental growth in domestic passenger share** of non-metro airports.

## What are the Phases of UDAN?

- **UDAN 1.0:**
  - Under this phase, **5 airlines companies were awarded 128 flight routes to 70 airports** (including 36 newly made operational airports).
- **UDAN 2.0:**
  - In 2018, the Ministry of Civil Aviation announced **73 underserved and unserved airports**.
  - For the first time, helipads were also connected **under phase 2 of the UDAN scheme**.
- **UDAN 3.0:**
  - Inclusion of Tourism Routes under UDAN 3 in coordination with the Ministry of Tourism.
  - Inclusion of **Seaplanes for connecting Water Aerodromes**.
  - Bringing in a number of routes in the North-East Region under the ambit of UDAN.
- **UDAN 4.0:**
  - In 2020, **78 new routes were approved under the 4<sup>th</sup> round of RCS-UDAN** to further enhance the connectivity to remote & regional areas of the country.
  - Kavaratti, Agatti, and Minicoy islands of Lakshadweep will be connected by the new routes of UDAN 4.0.
- **UDAN 4.1:**
  - The **UDAN 4.1 focuses on connecting smaller airports**, along with special helicopter and seaplane routes.
  - Some new routes have been proposed under the [Sagarmala Seaplane services](#).
    - Sagarmala Seaplane Services is an ambitious project under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways with potential airline operators.

## Way Forward

- Airlines have leveraged the scheme **strategically towards gaining additional slots** at congested tier-1 airports, monopoly status on routes and lower operational costs. Thus, **stakeholders should work towards making the UDAN scheme sustainable on its own and improve its efficiency.**
- Airlines should undertake marketing initiatives so that more and more people can take advantage of the UDAN scheme.
- More infrastructure is required for the **successful implementation of the scheme across the country.**

**[Source: PIB](#)**

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