

Madhya Pradesh to Boost Regional Connectivity with Two New Airports

Why in News?

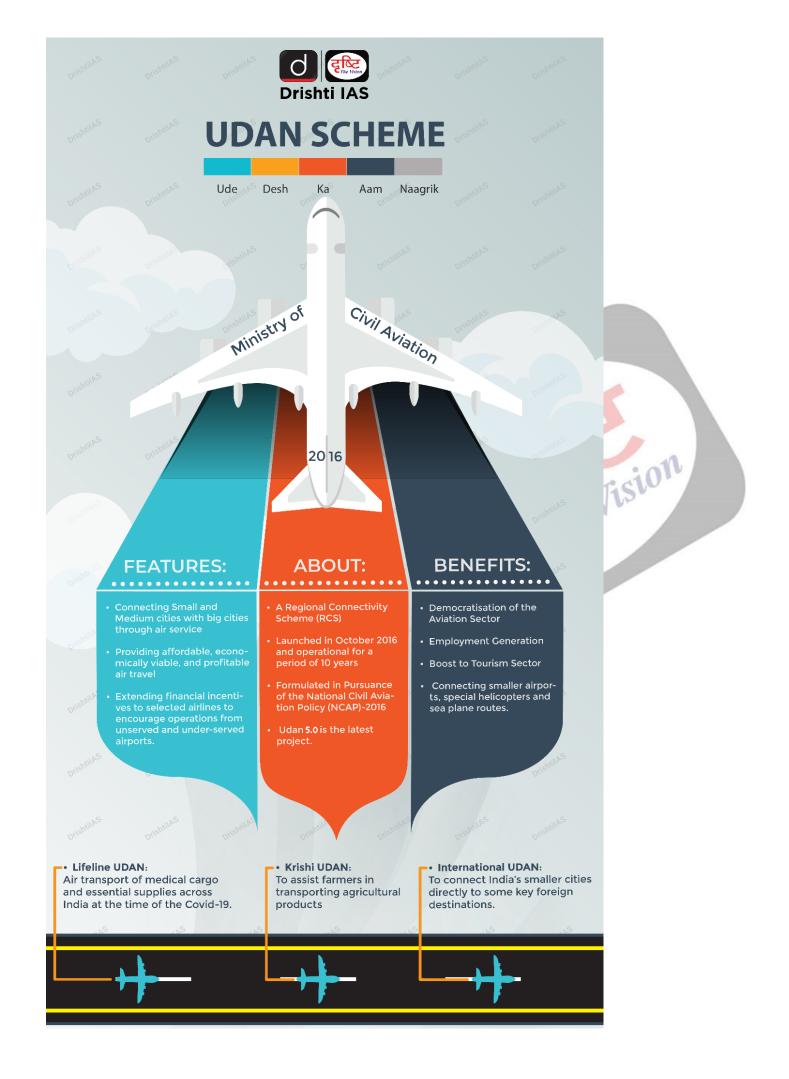
The **Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA)** has announced plans to develop Guna and Shivpuri airports in Madhya Pradesh under the UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik) scheme.

Key Points

- This initiative aims to improve regional air connectivity and make air travel more accessible for residents in these areas.
- Guna Airport, owned by the state government, was identified for development under the UDAN
 5.2 scheme. MoCA has allocated ₹45 crore for its development.
- Shivpuri Airport, located in the Shivpuri district and also owned by the state government, will be developed under UDAN 5.2. This airport is designated for operation with 9-seater aircraft.
 - Spirit Air, a new startup airline, has placed bids for the Shivpuri-Bhopal route.
- The Airports Authority of India (AAI) will play a crucial role, providing Communication, Navigation, Surveillance (CNS)/Air Traffic Management (ATM), and Aeronautical Information Services (AIS). It will manage the operation and maintenance (O&M) of both the airports.

UDAN Scheme

- Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik (UDAN) was launched as a Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) under the Ministry of Civil Aviation in 2016.
- It was formulated based on the review of the National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP)-2016 and it was planned to remain in force for a period of 10 years.
- Under this Scheme, Regional Connectivity Fund (RCF) was created, which funds the Viability Gap Funding (VGF) requirements of the scheme through a levy on certain domestic flights.
- VGF means a grant one-time or deferred, provided to support infrastructure projects that are economically justified but fall short of financial viability.
- Phases of the Scheme:
 - **Phase 1** was launched in **2017**, with the objective of connecting underserved and unserved airports in the country.
 - **Phase 2** was launched in **2018**, with the aim of expanding air connectivity to more remote and inaccessible parts of the country.
 - **Phase 3** was launched in **November 2018**, with the focus on enhancing air connectivity to hilly and remote regions of the country.
 - **Phase 4** of the UDAN scheme was launched in **December 2019**, with a focus on connecting islands and other remote areas of the country.
 - Phase 5 of the UDAN scheme was launched in 2023, with the focus on increased air connectivity, reduced airfares, creating more jobs, boosting tourism, trade and economic development, and achieving last-mile connectivity.
 - **UDAN 5.2** focuses on achieving last-mile connectivity through small aircraft such as Category 1A (<9 seats) and Category 1(<20 seats).



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