

International Air Connectivity Scheme (IACS)

April 5, 2022

In news-The Ministry of Civil Aviation has launched the IACS scheme (International Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik-UDAN) to connect North Eastern States with selected international destinations.

About the scheme-

- The objective is to enhance air connectivity from certain States of the country with selected international destinations to promote socio-economic growth.
- The primary objective of the Scheme is to assist State Governments as they seek to facilitate/ stimulate scheduled air connectivity between their respective states and international destinations as selected by them.
- The scheme seeks to make use of the open skies policy that India has with other Asian countries that allows direct and unlimited flights to and from these nations to 18 Indian destinations.
- Now, these routes are untested, and airlines could be understandably reluctant to ply them.
- To encourage them to participate, the government offers a subsidy in the form of pre-decided payout per seat.
- Airlines are required to bid on the number of passenger seats per flight for which such support is required.
- The State Government of Assam, Manipur and Tripura have identified routes connecting Guwahati, Imphal and Agartala with selected international destinations viz. Bangkok, Dhaka, Kathmandu, Yangon, Hanoi, Mandalay, Kunming & Chittagong.
- As on date, there are two international airports in the NorthEast Region at Guwahati and Imphal which are

operated by Guwahati International Airport Limited (GIAL) and Airports Authority of India (AAI) respectively.

- International UDAN is an extension of the domestic UDAN scheme that rolled out in 2017.
- **UDAN in its domestic avatar seeks to boost air connectivity by linking up unserved and under-served airports in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities** with the big cities and also with each other.
- This is done by offering cheap tickets to passengers and the Central and State governments paying a subsidy to the airlines to enable them to offer cheap tickets.
- The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), Government of India released the National Civil Aviation Policy 2016 (NCAP 2016), that envisions increasing the international ticketing to 20 crore by 2027.

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