**GoI to bear construction cost of international standard airport in district Mandi**

 Union Civil Aviation Ministry today gave in-principle approval for construction of international standard airport in district Mandi with support of Airport Authority of India (AAI). Apart from this, the Ministry also gave approval for expansion of Shimla, Kangra and Kullu airports.

 This decision was taken in a meeting held today under the chairmanship of Minister of State for Civil Aviation (Independent charge), Government of India Hardeep Singh Puri, which was also attended by Chief Secretary Dr. Shrikant Baldi through video conferencing.

 Dr. Baldi said that the construction cost of expansion of Shimla and Kangra Airports would be borne by Union Civil Aviation Ministry. A team of Airport Authority of India would soon visit Kullu-Manali airport to conduct survey for its expansion.

 He said that under UDAN-2, in-principle approval has also been given for bearing construction and operational cost of six proposed Heliports in the State by Ministry of Civil Aviation. Apart from this, present services under UDAN-1 will be continued as per schedule.

 Secretary, Joint Secretary and Director General of Civil Aviation, GoI, Chairman AAI, Director Tourism and Civil Aviation Himachal Pradesh and other senior officers attended the meeting.