

(c) Similar System is being provided at Mumbai International Airport.

**Enhancement of allowances of  
Pilots in Air India**

2503. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Air India signed an agreement with Pilot Association giving an allowance of Rs. 50,000 to 60,000 per month without any additional productivity;

(b) what are the reasons for this further enhancement to the Pilots who are drawing a huge salary; and

(c) whether the demands of other categories are not considered; if so the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) The agreement signed by the Management with Indian Pilots Guild on 3.1.98 envisages a payment of by pass allowance per month of Rs. 50,000/48,000 for Commanders and Rs. 36,000/34,000 for Co-pilots respectively who are in the grade for more than 2 years/upto 2 years.

This settlement has resulted in (i) increased utilisation of aircraft (ii) Reduced time off and (iii) Career Progression for Pilots and Co-Pilots.

(c) The management has considered the demands of the other categories and signed Memorandum of Settlement with various Unions/Association/Guild.

**Replacement of old Boeing  
aircrafts**

2504. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have ordered the inspection of Boeing 737 Aircraft

with Indian Airlines and Alliances Air in view of US Government ordering the inspection of aged Boeing 737;

(b) what is the life span of Boeing 737 Aircraft and whether Government have programmed to phase out the aged Boeing Aircraft;

(c) whether Government have received the report from Boeing Company regarding the inspection of aged Boeing Aircraft; if so, the major findings thereof; and

(d) if not, by when Government will be getting the report?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The manufacturer has not stipulated any fixed life span for Boeing 737 aircraft. However, the design economic life for Boeing 737 aircraft as stipulated by Boeing Company is 75000 flight hours/51000 cycles/20 years.

(c) and (d) Director General of Civil Aviation has received documents from Boeing company on inspection of aged Boeing aircraft. These documents call for inspection of the critical areas of aged aircraft based on flying hours/flight cycles/elapsed time. Such inspections have been declared mandatory for compliance by all B737 aircraft operators. These inspections are complied with as and when due.

**Upgradation of Madurai Airport**

2505. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to convert the madurai Airport to an international airport and provide better facilities to improve the turnout of tourists to this historical city;

(b) if so, when the project will be completed; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does Not arise.

(c) No airline has indicated its willingness to operate international flights through Madurai airport.

#### **Revival of Air India**

2506. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 934 given in the Rajya Sabha on December 8, 1998 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Airlines has 24,000 employees for their 24 aircraft operation which is more than double to figures of any Airlines in the world;

(b) whether it is also a fact that most of its aircraft are old and redundant and the Airline is in no position to replace them;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) how Government plan to revive this Airline?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Air India with a fleet strength of 26 aircraft has 18751 employees as on 31.3.1998. The number of employees per aircraft is 721 which is higher in comparison with other reputed airlines.

(b) and (c) The average age of the fleet is as under:

Type	No. of Air- craft	Average Age (Years)
B747-200	7	21.8
B747-300	2	10.0
B747-400	6	03.9
A300	3	16.2
A310	8	11.3

Expansion/renewal of fleet by the airlines is a continuing exercise and depends on various factors, the more important

ones being the resources of the airlines, traffic requirements, suitability of the aircraft type and viability of operations of various sectors/routes.

(d) The Government has also constituted a Committee of experts under the Chairmanship of Dr. Vijay Kelkar, to undertake a comprehensive examination of the reasons for the losses incurred by the Air India and to suggest strategy for turning around the company.

Meantime the Disinvestment Commission in its VIII Report on Air India has inter-alia recommended infusion of Government equity of Rs. 1000 crores and induction of a strategic partner on the basis of global bids. The recommendations of the Commission are under consideration of the Government.

#### **Voluntary Retirement Scheme in Air India**

2507. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 936 given in the Rajya Sabha on 8th December, 1998 and state:

(a) the details of the existing strength of Pilots, Co-Pilots and other Secretarial staff in the Air India and what is the annual expenditure incurred on account of salaries and other perquisites and how many of them are surplus in each cadre; and

(b) whether the company has since chalked out any fresh VRS for the staff and if so, the salient feature thereof and what is the number of employees likely to avail of its benefits?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Details are as under: