

(d) if so, the Government's reaction thereon;

(e) whether Government has taken the matter with the concerned airlines to ensure the responsibility of the airlines and also that such incidents of theft do not happen in future; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (f) Complaints are received from passengers on various issues including theft of baggage. The complaints as and when received are taken up with the airlines for redressal and necessary action. Some cases are registered with the police depending on the gravity of the case.

To curb the baggage theft, the Government/airlines have taken the following steps which *inter-alia* are as under:-

- (i) Instructions have been issued to all concerned that all personnel working with Ground Handling Agents shall be searched by airport security personnel at the Gates while leaving airport;
- (ii) Surveillance is kept by CISF manually and through CCTV cameras at all major airports. Installation of CCTV is under process at other smaller airports;
- (iii) Vigilance at airports has been enhanced;
- (iv) Loading/unloading of checked-in baggage is being done under supervision of security/Airport services staff;
- (v) Automated Baggage Reconciliation system installed at metros to reduce instances of such mishandlings;
- (vi) Extensive training imparted to ramp staff (especially loaders) on baggage handling;
- (vii) Establishment of dedicated baggage handling units at Metros; and
- (viii) Tally sheet implemented for each flight by some airlines which is handled by well trained staff.

In case of lost baggages, scheduled domestic airlines also provide compensation to passengers as per company policy.

Retrenchment of aviation staff

112. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any decision or proposal to lay off 15,000 staff for 5 years in Air India;

(b) whether there is any investigations, declared in the subject of funding sources of Jet Airways which appears to have a major role in the so called crisis faced by M/s. Jet Airways; and

(c) whether there is any decision to join hands of Air India with cartel formed by the private airlines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

Air facilities in Uttarakhand

†113. SHRI BHAGAT SINGH KOSHYARI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) by when the civil aviation facilities would be provided in Uttarakhand having a number of tourist spots situated in inaccessible areas on the line of other States viz. North-Eastern region and Jammu and Kashmir as well as in Nepal where such facilities have immensely contributed in the region;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) At present, Dehradun is the only operational airport in Uttarakhand. Scheduled air services are available to/from Dehradun as per the following details:

Kingfisher Airlines

Delhi-Dehradun-Delhi ATR42 14 flights/week

Dehradun airport is suitable for operation of A-320 type of aircraft and Pantnagar airport is suitable for operation of ATR type of aircraft. Construction of new terminal building at Dehradun is likely to be completed by April, 2009.

At present Pawan Hans Helicopter Ltd. (PHHL) is also providing helicopter services in Uttarakhand, PHHL provides connectivity to Kedarnath Dham during the season. PHHL has constructed a helipad at Phatta for helicopter services to Kedarnath and is also operating from Augustmuni for Kedarnath services. PHHL has constructed a hangar at Gauchar air field for helicopter services in Uttarakhand.

Government has laid down route dispersal guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country. It is, however, up to the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability. As such, the airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of route dispersal guidelines issued by Government.

Losses incurred due to fog affected flights

†114. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is incurring huge losses due to cancellation and delay in flights because of fog;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps being taken by Government to deal with this problem; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to do justice with passengers in such situation?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi