

DISCUSSION ON WORKING OF MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION — Contd.)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :
Prof. Sourendra Bhattacharjee.
Please be brief.

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE (West Bengal) : Mrs. Deputy Chairman, when Members from that side characterised you as hard, I had to remark that it is rather unchivalrous.

SHRI MAKHAN LAL FOTEDAR (Uttar Pradesh) : Madam Deputy Chairman, he has said "Mrs. Deputy Chairman." It should be "Madam Deputy Chairman."

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE : But I don't know what you told even before I began.

SHRI MAKHAN LAL FOTEDAR : Does it stand corrected ?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :
I will see. It will be correct. Prof. Sourendra Bhattacharjee, did you address me "Mrs. Deputy Chairman?"

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE : No, nothing. I am asking you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :
I am myself Deputy Chairman by my own right.

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE : I am just asking you what should I say when you question me even before I began.

Anyway, in civil aviation when the speed is supposed to be much higher than what it is on the surface, we will try to cover as much ground as possible within a very short time.

The question is, what we are discussing today is really a hang-over of the previous regime. Air journey under the Civil Aviation Ministry during the 17 years and a portion of the current year is the most unpunctual one, even more than the Railways because cancellations of flights, staggering of the flights and things like that are so common that sometimes it is frightening to undertake the air journey. I hope our

young Minister will see to it that this situation is remedied to a considerable extent, if not altogether. I used to tell something in connection with the security of air travel. My daughter, when she was very young, used to say that she would not go by air, because, in her opinion there would be no connection with the Earth. But in spite of her reservations she once accompanied me to Srinagar. Because I was with her, she was unmindful of this nonconnection with the Earth. The question of safety and security in air travel is very important. I was once in the midst of a bird-hit at Palam. The news travelled very fast to Calcutta. The news was on the TV and in the newspapers. When I reached Calcutta I was under an embargo not to fly any more. Somehow, that was obviated. Anyway in such a situation the question of security is very important. In the surface journey, accidents may have many people surviving, but in air journeys survival is very uncommon. Still I used to tell when travelling by air or on completing it that I have survived another ordeal by flight. I hope these aspects also will be kept very much in view by the Minister. Already in connection with A-320, he took a very firm stand that without being sure of the safety he said these planes would not be allowed to fly. There is a question of kickbacks also; the question of missing files which might have established the previous Prime Minister's connections with the kickbacks in the entire deal is also there. These things are there, but that apart the question of air safety is more important. How far the fly-by-wire system is efficient and how far the training was sufficient ? These are the points which agitated us. But anyway the emphasis has to be on air safety.

I must mention just one thing. I was surprised to find in the report of the Civil Aviation Ministry that Railways Safety Organisation is a part of it. When the hands of the

[Shri Sourendra Bhattacharjee]

Civil Aviation are full with the question of safety of Airlines, how could the Railway Safety Organisation be made part of it? (*Interruptions*) I do not think so. The Minister will explain it. May be Mr. Baby is understanding it quite correct, but in any case will he explain the position in this regard?

There is no reason why the Railway Safety Organisation should be under the Civil Aviation Ministry. Therefore, I request the Minister to kindly explain this position also. Thank you, Madam.

उपसभापति : राम अवधेश जी, मैं आपको बुला रहा हूँ। मैं आपको प्रोसीजर बता दूँ इससे पहले कि आपको बोलने को कहूँ। आप अकेले अपनी पार्टी के सदस्य हैं। अगर चार घंटे का डिस्कसन होता है तो दो मिनट मिलते हैं।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : (बिहार) : तब तो आपका ज्यादा हक है।

उपसभापति : बात सुनिये, चार घंटे डिस्कसन होता है तो आपको एक मिनट बोलने को मिलेगा। अगर आठ घंटे होगा तो दो मिनट। मैं आपको अपनी तरफ से तीन मिनट देकर पाँच मिनट बोल लीजिये। बस बोल लीजिये।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : यह दस शोज हो गया।

उपसभापति : पाँच मिनट बोल लीजिये।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : महोदया, पार्टी के कई लोग बोल सकते हैं तो अलग-अलग व्यू प्वाइंट दे सकते हैं। मुझे तो अकेले ही सब प्वाइंट पर बोलना है।

उपसभापति : अब इसमें आपका टाईम जा रहा है।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : उपाध्यक्ष महोदया, मैं आपके प्रति आभारी हूँ कि आपने समय दिया। इस विषय पर बहुत लम्बी बहस हो चुकी है और मैं चाहूँगा कि जो बात आ गयी है उसको न दोहराऊँ संक्षेप में मैं बोलना चाहूँगा। मैं मंत्री जी से एक बात चाहता हूँ कहना कि इंडियन एयर लाइंस और एयर इंडिया को प्राइवेटाइजेशन की तरफ ले जाने की कोशिश की गयी, अभी नहीं पिछली सरकार द्वारा जिसमें टाटा साहब को चेयरमैन और बजाज साहब को चेयरमैन बनाया गया, इस आधार पर कि प्राइवेट मैनेजमेंट बहुत अच्छा होता है। लेकिन यह फ़ेल हो गया और थे कहना चाहता था कल भी कि प्राइवेट मैनेजमेंट अच्छा ही होता है यह कोई जरूरी नहीं है यह साफ़ हो चुका है, और टाटा साहब क्यों एयर इंडिया के चेयरमैन बने थे? उसका कारण है कि जो ताज ग्रुप के होटल थे देश में, विदेश में उनकी बुकिंग होगी और बुकिंग को बढ़ावा मिले, इसलिये उनको चेयरमैन बनाया गया था और वह काफी इसमें सफल भी रहे, भले हमारे जहाज खाली जायें इसकी उनको चिंता नहीं थी। लेकिन जो जाये उसकी बुकिंग ताज ग्रुप के होटलों में देश-विदेश में होगी। आज भी एक साजिश चल रही है। होटल कार्पोरेशन का तरफ़ से जो चार सेंटूर होटल बने हैं—दो बम्बई में, एक दिल्ली में और एक श्रीनगर में, तो इस ढंग से चलाये जा रहे हैं और भीतर से मुझको सुनने में आया है जो सूचना मिली है रिटार्नबल सोसिज से कि आस्ट्रेलिया कं. किसी कंपनी के हाथ से यह चारों सेंटूर होटल बेचे जा रहे हैं, उनको दिये जा रहे हैं जबकि होटल कार्पोरेशन के यह होटल हैं। अगर होटल कार्पोरेशन इसको नहीं चला सकता है तो आई टी डी सी है जो पब्लिक सेक्टर में है, तो पब्लिक सेक्टर की चीज को पब्लिक सेक्टर में दे दो, आप क्यों बेचना चाहते हैं दूसरे को और इसमें मुझको सुनने में आया है कि इस कैबिनेट के प्रभावी मंत्री नहीं एक दूसरे भारी भरकम मंत्री जो इसमें मीडिएट कर रहे हैं और वह चाहते हैं कि आस्ट्रेलियन कंपनी को दे दिया जाये।

श्री आरिफ मोहम्मद खान : नहीं

श्री रफीक आलम (बिहार) : कोई रिपोर्ट है भारी भरकम की ।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : आप लोग जब सुनियेगा दिल खोलकर दिमाग खोलकर तो अच्छा लगेगा ।

उपसभापति : बस दो मिनट, आपको जो बोलना है बोल दीजिये ।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय को मेरी बात सबसे अच्छी लगती है ।

उपसभापति : बस दो मिनट ।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : तो मैं यह कह रहा था मंत्री जी से... (व्यवधान)

उपसभापति : : दो मिनट बोल दीजिये ।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि इस पर स्पष्ट बात करें कि क्या वह कोई आस्ट्रेलियन कंपनी को दिया जायेगा या वह आई टी.डी.सी. को दिया जायेगा ।

दूसरी बात मैं हवाई सुन्दरियों के बारे में एक-दो मिनट में अर्ज करना चाहता हूँ । खासकर इस बात पर बहुत दिलचस्प बहस हुई है ।

उप-सभापति : हवाई बात कर रहे हैं ?

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : इस सदन में इस बारे में बहुत दिलचस्प बहस हुई और मुझे अफसोस है कि मारग्रेट आल्वा जी और खापड़ जी यहां नहीं हैं, एक और खूबसूरत महिला सदस्य हैं रेणुका जी वह भी नहीं हैं, अगर वे होतीं तो अच्छा होता । वह आपस में इस बारे में झगड़ रही थीं । वह कह रही थीं कि हवाई जहाज में काम करने की उम्र 35 वर्ष से बढ़ा कर 58 वर्ष तक ले जानी चाहिए । इस पक्ष में वे थीं ।

मैं इस बारे में एक बात कहना चाहता हूँ कि वह मानवीय सवाल उठाना चाहती थीं और मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि यह मानवीय सवाल नहीं है बल्कि यह सवाल प्रशासन का है । जो सेना में काम करते हैं उनकी उम्र कितनी है ? उनकी उम्र 35 वर्ष है । 35 वर्ष से आगे कोई जवान सेना में काम नहीं कर सकता । अफसर हो सकता है 58 वर्ष का, अफसर हो सकता है 45 वर्ष का, लांस नायक हो सकता है लेकिन सरहद पर लड़ने वाला सिपाही 35 वर्ष से आगे नहीं जा सकता । वह रिटायर हो जाता है, उसे पेंशन दी जाती है । एक पुरुष की 35 वर्ष तक साहस दिखाने की उम्र रहती है और महिला के सौन्दर्य का सवाल है 35 वर्ष... (व्यवधान)

श्री अजीत जोगी : यह आपत्तिजनक है । (व्यवधान)

श्री कमल मोरारका : (राजस्थान) यह उनका मत है । आप सुनिये (व्यवधान)

उप-सभापति : आपका एक मिनट एक्स्ट्रा हो गया इसलिए आप बैठ जाइये (व्यवधान)

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : दो मिनट और दे दीजिए । (व्यवधान) मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि यह उम्र का सवाल है इस पर जिस तरह से हंगामा हुआ वैसा नहीं होना चाहिए । 35 साल की उम्र हवा में काम करने के लिए है । उसके बाद वह जमी पर काम करें । हवा में जब काम करें तो उनका सौन्दर्य केवल दिखाने...

श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी (पश्चिमी बंगाल) : सौन्दर्य तो पृथ्वी पर भी होता है... (व्यवधान)

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : वह क्लर्क का काम करें, फाइल का काम करें । जैसे 35 साल की उम्र बन्दूक चलाने तक की है, सिपाही सरहद पर 35 साल की उम्र से ऊपर बन्दूक नहीं चला सकता... (व्यवधान) ठीक है, छोड़ता हूँ इस बात को ।

उप-सभापति : आपकी बात हो गई आप बैठ जाइये।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : मंत्री महोदय से एक बात कहना चाहता हूँ कि जो पूर्वी क्षेत्र है भारत के उसकी बहुत उपेक्षा की गयी है। जैसे कि रांची है। कई बार वहाँ में भी आया कि नाइट लैंडिंग की व्यवस्था नहीं है। इसी को लेकर कहा गया था कि एक जहाज जो रांची जाने वाला था वह आवर फ्लाई कर गया पटना को क्योंकि रांची में नाइट लैंडिंग की व्यवस्था नहीं है।

श्री आरिफ मोहम्मद खान : वहाँ लाइट की चोरी होती है इसलिए नाइट लैंडिंग की फ़ेसिलिटी नहीं है।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : छोटे नागपुर में तो चोरी नहीं होती...

उप-सभापति : वह कह रहे हैं चोरी होती है।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : वह गलत कह रहे हैं। मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि नाइट लैंडिंग की व्यवस्था रांची में होनी चाहिए...

उप-सभापति : आपका टाइम खत्म हो गया है। आप बैठ जाइये।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : किसी पैसेंजर को रांची में उतरा होता है तो उनको बड़ी दिक्कत होती है। जैसे बी आईपी को उतरना हो तो नहीं उतर सकेगा।

उप-सभापति : आप अपनी जगह पर इतमीनान से बैठ जाइये। अब मैं एक सुन्दर महिला को बोलने के लिए बुला रही हूँ।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : अंत में एक वाक्य मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि एयर बस ए-320 के बारे में जितनी बातें हैं उनकी जांच सही ढंग से हो और फिर सख्ती से काम हो। धन्यवाद।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:
Kumari Chandrika Kenia. I must

also remind you that because you are the lone Member of your party, according to the rules, you have two minutes. I will allow you five minutes.

KUMARI CHANDRIKA PREMJI KENIA (Maharashtra): I must thank you immensely for giving me an opportunity to speak on the working of the Civil Aviation Department.

First of all, I would like to register a strong protest against the increase of the internal air-travel fares by 10 to 15 per cent announced by the hon. Finance Minister at the time of the moving of the Finance Bill for consideration. Madam, it is a usual practice to announce concessions at that time. But, for the unfortunate air-traveller, there was only a hike in the air-travel fare and the beleaguered air-traveller has been facing the hike or increase in the air fare every now and then in recent times. I would like to urge the Government to curb the substantial raise in the air travel fare.

Apart from the increase in the air travel fare what bugs and bothers the commuter is the proverbial delays. Delays and cancellations of flights have become the rule of the day and the commuter is left in the lurch at the airport because the delays are announced till the last moment and the reasons given for the delays are very flimsy and unconvincing. Suddenly the aircraft develops technical snags and is grounded for hours together.

**[The Vice-Chairman
(Shri M. A. Baby) in the Chair]**

The air crash of the Airbus A-320 at Bangalore was the last straw on the camel's back. People have lost faith in the safety of aircraft and they prefer to travel by road or rail rather than board a plane.

The saga of trials and tribulations, harassment and hardships is a very pathetic indicator of the fact that there is something terribly wrong with our airlines and it is high time that the Government

woke up to these ground realities and introduced stringent measures to improve the working of the Civil Aviation Ministry.

I shall now like to narrate the woes and difficulties faced by air-hostesses who are subjected to all kinds of humiliation at the hands of the male staff in the form of molestation and sexual harassment. Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, not all the cases are reported. But one of the air-hostesses had the courage to register her grievances of sexual assault by a flight purser in Rome in the month of December. She has been running from pillar to post to seek justice but her requests and demands had fallen into deaf ears. No action has been taken against the flight purser. The hon. Minister is present here and I would like to request him to personally look into the matter and the culprits should be brought to book. There is a need to change the rules and regulations and make such misbehaviour an offence. The air-hostess can rightly say that

बो जरा सी बात पर सालों के दाराने
गए,

फिर भी इतना तो हुआ कुछ लोग
पहचाने गए ॥

Now I would like to highlight the brighter side of the airlines. The facility of play-rooms or creches made available to small children who might get stuck up at the airports for hours together because of the delays and cancellations, is a silver lining in the dark cloud. I would also like to congratulate the Government on hiring Russian planes on lease to provide more aircraft. I request the Government to go for more aircraft on lease basis. It is high time the Government allowed private enterprise to chip in and run regular flights. I would also like to congratulate our dynamic Minister who has launched

a special drive to fill vacancies which had remained unfilled for a long time and has directed to review cases of all officers who have been retained..(Interruption)... who have been retained even after crossing the age of retirement. I congratulate the hon. Minister and I would like to know from him whether any action has been taken in this direction or not. I would also like to refer to the sanction of an airport for the Thane city. The people of Thane city have been clamouring for an airport for several years. Thane, Bhiwandi, Kalyan, New Bombay, Ambernath—all these cities have become the hubs of industrial and commercial activities, achieving gigantic proportions and the creation of an airport in Thane city will really lessen the burden of Bombay airport and it will give a boost to the development in Thane district. I would also like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister the fact that the management of Centaur Hotel, Bombay has been stalling the payment of several bills amounting to crores of rupees to the interior decorators, architects, caterers and electricians who have completed their assignments diligently and honestly. They have been constantly pleading with the management for repayment of their dues, but the management has been refusing to make the payment on one pretext or the other. I would really urge upon the Minister to look into the matter and settle the genuine dues and ask the management of Centaur Hotel, Bombay to make the payment without any further delay.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. A. BABY): Please conclude.

KUMARI CHANDRIKA PREMJI KENIA: I am concluding, Sir.

Much has been said about the airworthiness of Airbus A-320 and objections are made that 14 aircraft have been grounded and it is a political

[Kumari Chandrika Premji Kenia]

decision to ground Airbus A—320. I would like to submit that even if it is a political decision to ground the aircraft, the Government has taken a wise decision because the safety of commuters is the prime concern of the airlines. We can ground any number of planes, but we cannot risk the life of even one commuter.

In the end, I would like to request the hon. Minister that it is being announced that Sahar airport will be named after Jawaharlal Nehru. We have a lot of respect for our national leaders, but I would like to express the sentiments of people of Maharashtra. They are very much agitated on the subject and I would request the hon. Minister to reconsider the decision and name the Sahar airport after Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Thank you.

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES (Goa): Sir, in the current year while presenting the Budget, the Finance Minister did not have the benefit of making guidance from the Plan Document as the Eighth Five Year Plan was yet to be formulated and we presumed that the Finance Minister got the guidance from his party-manifesto.

In para 9 of his statement, the Finance Minister states:

“The task of the new Government was to contain the rise in prices.”

And this has been the main slogan of his party for election, in which they did not get the mandate; they did not get the majority, but they got some substantial seats. With the hike in price of petrol, the prices of all items shot up. This has not spared the airfare. Taking advantage of the situation, the Civil Aviation Ministry, with the pretext of providing better facilities to the travelling public, has increased the air-fares. Much has been said about Airbus A—320, Sir. The arbitrary grounding, of the A—320 Airbus under the pretext of safety,

Government has inflicted a loss of crores of rupees to the Airlines beside causing misery and hardships to the travelling public. The whole tourist economy has been held to ransom. Tourism is a foreign exchange-oriented industry. And, in order to ease the pressure on air traffic, the earlier Government had rightly decided to go in for the most advanced and modern fly-by-wire aircraft, the Airbus A—320. But this Government, obsessed with FIR's smelt some foul play and without making any alternative arrangements, grounded them all. Sir, it is shocking to know that our international airports, compared to other international airports and even airports of the developing countries, are substandard. Our international airports lack all facilities, particularly for neat and clean upkeep. Some of our airports can be compared to railway stations in spite of the creation of the Airport Authorities for their maintenance. Most of the airports in our country are owned and controlled by the Defence forces and there is lack of co-ordination between the Defence Ministry and the Civil Aviation Ministry. Any development work for the civilian side is always stalled with the pretext of view of safety or shortage of space. The best example is that of Goa. In spite of land being made available by the Government of Goa for the expansion of Dabolim airport in Goa, nothing seems to be moving all these years. Although the airport is used for international flights, the civilian parking bay can accommodate only one Boeing and an Airpbus at a time and you can imagine the amount of chaos that it would create in case there are delays and delays are there very often. Then, in the absense of a proper arrival lounge, there are no restaurants and catering facilities. As a result the passengers are treated at some five-star hotels at exorbitant rates, thus allowing a greater nexus between the 5-star hotels and airline staff.

In order to improve services at the airports and to avoid bureaucratic hassle, I would suggest that the

Government constitute inter-ministerial committees of the Defence Ministry and the Civil Aviation Ministry and also initiate the formation of an Airport Visiting Committee consisting of prominent public figures, airport users, Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the local Government.

Lately, Sir, we have noticed that there is a sort of brain-drain in the Indian Airlines, among the pilots. Unless we provide better facilities and better avenues to them, I do not think we will solve this problem because the Indian Airlines and Air India are being used by them as training platforms, to get trained there and then to go abroad.

There is another thing to which I would like to draw the attention of the Minister. The other day I raised some questions about the airports in Cochin and Goa. There are no night landing facilities there. No flight can land there at Cochin after 6 p. m. at take off. This airport being under the control of the Navy and this being the Naval base, something should be done about this.

I think I need not say much about Air-India. During my six trips to foreign countries, the only time I had the opportunity to fly by Air-India flight was in the month of December from Amsterdam to New Delhi. The temperature was warm and I asked the Air Hostess, "What is this? Why is it so?", she said, "You are an Indian. Don't make noise. We have shortage of blankets." As a result one foreigner fainted. If this is the condition of our airline, Air-India, I do not know how we can think of competing with the other international airlines.

I hope the Minister will look into all these matters. Thank you, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. A. BABY) : Mr. Trivedi. Only two minutes.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI (Gujarat) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, before I start my speech, I would like to seek your protection and perhaps your kindness too.

The other day, when Mr. Kamal Morarka was speaking, I think half the time the honourable and knowledgeable Capt. Satish Sharma was speaking. At least that half time should be given to me. If from two minutes one can go up to five minutes, then, if the allotted time is ten minutes, I think I can go up to twenty-five minutes and it comes to about forty minutes or so. So it comes to around 40 minutes.

Mr. Vice-Chairman, I would like to take a cue from the honourable Madam Alva and start with a positive note. May I congratulate the honourable Minister for improving the punctuality? A start not enough as yet, but it has improved. May I also congratulate the Fire Department for every promptly putting out the fire on the jumbo AI 747? May I also thank the previous Government for putting the fear of God in the minds of the travelling public? There has been a lot of talk that the previous Government did this, did that, and this Government is doing this and so on, blames and counter-blames. I really do not want to get involved in blaming. But even when a patient goes to a doctor, before diagnosing the doctor has really to know something about the patient's history. Only to that extent I would go into the past. I would first start with the modern, the most sophisticated, so-called A320 fly by wire and die by fire aircraft. I would like to set at rest all the misgivings our honourable Members from the Congress are trying to put forward that A320 was grounded on political considerations. They also put forward the argument : So many aircrashes

[Shri Deneshbhai Trivedi]

have taken place, why have you not grounded all the aircraft of different types? A-320, they say, is the safest aircraft and so on and so forth. Let it be made very clear, I would have personally demanded the grounding of A-320 even—in that fortunate event—if this air crash of A-320 did not take place. I would still have asked the honourable Minister and the Government to ground this aircraft. The crash has only highlighted the shortcomings of this particular aircraft. You believe it or not, I personally had forecast in several meetings on several occasions and through so many of my pilot friends that one of these days an A-320 would crash. And my words have really been made very true by the honourable Mrs. Alva and others who put forward the argument that whenever they go to buy a ticket they are told by the computer, "Sorry, the flights are full." and when they really board the aircraft after somehow getting a ticket, they find several seats vacant, and contrary to that many times the seats are okayed by the computer but when they go to the airport, they find that their names are missing. So I think these computers are silly and stupid, if 'stupid' is not unparliamentary. They malfunction whereby throwing all the logical functioning out of gear. Let me remind Members, through you, Sir, that A-320, the so called "fly by wire" and "die by fire", "the state of art," the most sophisticated, aircraft, etc. etc. and fully computerised functioning aircraft, is totally controlled by this silly and stupid computer which at times malfunctions. And at no stage has the Government ever said, if I am correct, that A-320 was unsafe or safe. The Government has only said that the matter is under investigation. How do we pass this judgement that they are safe, like our friends in the Congress are doing, that the aircraft is safe? We are really not in a position, I think the world

today is not in a position, to say that the aircraft is safe or unsafe because we do not have the data. What we have is only experience. This is where again I think the question of the previous Government comes. They ordered so many A-320s without properly following the evaluation procedure. They had not learnt from their past mistakes. They have learnt, if anything, to repeat the mistakes. They are talking in defence of A-320s without having much of data. The world does not really have the data necessary. They are talking in defence of A-320... The world does not have the data. They are talking in defence of A-320, and I dare say that they are making a mistake, because the world has got experience otherwise, which I will prove later on. Sir, the airbus industry also perhaps would not have come up with so forceful argument that the Air bus is safe. Hon. Members from the Congress are passing a judgment and declaring A-320 safe. Let me tell you, Sir, that other airlines in the World like North-West in America are facing so much of a problem. Recently in the "Newsweek" an article has appeared about the North-West facing problems. The Australian scientists have been studying for the last 20 years—it is not one or two day's study, but last 20 years' study—and they have come to the conclusion that computers are unsafe in high-risk jobs, specially in aviation. (*Time bell Rings*).

Sir, I have just started. I have not even warmed up. (*Interruptions*) I am talking with facts and figures.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. A. BABY) : Don't cast aspersions on the previous speakers.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: Sir, I will quote what the research has to say on computers. It says:

"Computers are too unreliable ..."

Mark the word "unreliable"....

"....to monitor nuclear power stations or manage air traffic" or aviation.

"Mistakes are so common that computers should not be entrusted with life-critical applications...."

A-320, I feel, is life-critical.

And they have gone further and cited so many examples. Since you are ringing the bell and I am so scared like my hon. friend, Mr. Swell....
(Interruptions)

They have cited so many examples :

"A single hyphen left out of a programme for an Atlas-Aegena rocket carrying a probe to Venus caused it to tumble wildly and forced US launch authorities to explode it in the air...."

Because of the stupid and silly computers.

Sir, this is very important, and I am bringing your attention to this :

"Twenty-two fatal crashes of fly-by computer HS-60 Blackhawk helicopters used by the US Air Force."

So my hon. friends from the Congress should know that it is not only the experience of India. The research further says:

"The researches say recent studies found that the best programmers can be more than 25 times as competent as the worst and that many software supervisors do not understand their programmers' work."

So there is definitely a communication gap between the people who design the programme and the people who use it.

The whole problem is the way the process in which, if at all there was one—the way in which the purchase was made and subsequently the way in which they had introduced this aircraft in our fleet of Indian Airlines. The Ramdas Committee has very clearly and definitely stated that there was no infrastructure at all and no planning at all. Even if when we buy a small refrigerator in our house we have to do some planning. We have to find out where it is going to be kept, whether we have got wiring for that, whether a voltage stabilizer is required or not, whether the meter will take the load, etc. But the previous Government thought it wise to introduce so many of these sophisticated aircraft without any planning. I am not telling this. This is what the Ramdas Committee is telling.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. A. BABY) : Now, please try to be brief. We would like to leave the reply also from the Minister today. So please facilitate that. There are many more speakers. The reply cannot be at the fag-end of the day.

5 P.M.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: I will be very brief. I will not go into the depth of it. Everybody knows it. The Ramdas Committee says that the Management has haphazardly introduced this A-320 when we were not ready. As far as the infra-structure is concerned, India was not ready for this A-320. Again I come back to Shrimati Alvaji. She has been really helpful to me. This is again very vital. It is very very vital. She mentioned about Thergaonkar's report. Capt. Thergaonkar had submitted in the Court of Inquiry in Bangalore that there is not much of a difference between V-2500 and CFM-56 engines. I would like you to note here, Sir, that the

[Shri Dineshbhai Trivedi]

training of our Pilots has been on CFM-56 engine and not on V-2500 engine. Mrs. Alva went on to quote from Capt. Thergaonkar's report. "There was a slight retardation in the speed." In other words, the acceleration of CFM-56 was a little more than that of V-2500. Sir, this five second difference, please mark the five second difference, could have avoided the Bangalore crash. This difference is exactly 5 seconds. This has been reported and this has been mentioned by Capt. Thergaonkar as well. So, again it is because of a faulty pattern of training. You are supposed to fly one aircraft engine and you are subjected to training on another aircraft engine. I do not understand the logic of it. Why is it like that ?

Lastly, on A-320 I will enlighten the House if I can and specially our friends in the opposition who have been speaking so high of A-320. The Pilots who were going to fly these planes had categorically and clearly opposed the introduction of A-320. Now this is very important. I have with me, which I can submit to the House if required, a letter dated as back as October 8, 1988, written by the General Secretary of Indian Commercial Pilots' Association. They were the people who were going to fly these aircrafts. Before the introduction of the aircraft, the Pilots' body wrote this. I will have to quote this, Sir. Please bear with me. The letter says :

"As regards the induction of A-320 Air Bus into Indian Airlines fleet, we state that the aircraft is neither proven nor Indian Airlines have the infrastructure to maintain these aircraft. The climatic and environmental conditions would make it impossible to maintain these aircrafts. Even a freak chance of rain and back up computer failure due to dust, heat or humidity will end in a disaster as the Pilot

shall have no control whatsoever under the circumstances. Therefore, we request you to reconsider your decision to induct A-320 Air Bus aircraft in Indian Airlines fleet. We are neither being cynical nor being pessimistic, but are looking at the realities as they are today. We would request you to consider the report of an eminent scientist of U.K. ..."

Earlier it was Australia. Now they are talking about U.K.

"and a Fighter aircraft crash in U.S.A. while flying by wire system."

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. A. BABY) : Please conclude now. You have already taken so much of extra time.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: Just two more minutes, Sir. In conclusion, the Pilots' Association has said that they have not been able to give convincing information about the cause of the accident of the Airbus crash at France airshow. They have gone on further to say that they would oppose, by all means at their disposal, this decision. They have also talked about a faulty training pattern. I have a list with me which enlists about more than 50 snags in the last six months of this A-320.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. A. BABY) : You can submit that to the Minister.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: I will submit that. It is for the information of the House and for the record that there are 50 snags. And the remark is "Serious. Very Serious. Design Fault. Product Improvement required." Now we are talking about new aeroplanes and you are talking about product improvement. What kind of evaluation

have we gone through when we were thinking of purchasing these aircraft? Evidently there was no Committee which was set up to look into the specifications of this particular aircraft, whether they are suitable to us or not. In most of the cases, wherever the snags are there, no explanation was available. And, Sir, it is very serious. And I congratulate the Minister and the Ministry and the Government for having taken such a bold and unpopular decision. Sir, it would have been very easy to take a decision for the aircraft to fly. But, I think, it is an unpopular decision which they have taken. But, I congratulate the Government that in the interest of the travelling public they have taken this decision. Sir, I promised you that I will not take more than two minutes. I will just talk about the DGCA.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. A. BABY) : You have already taken two minutes.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI : Sir, I think, we need to define what the Aviation Ministry is, what business they have. And my definition would be transportation of passengers and cargo by the safest, shortest, most economic, convenient and comfortable means. Sir, when we talk about this, safety comes first. And here I will have to throw some brick-bats at the Ministry that the DGCA, the parent body, which is supposed to look after the safety is doing everything but looking after safety. And I dare to say that most of the crashes could have been avoided if the DGCA were only alert. I am afraid the DGCA are still making the same mistakes. They are not alert. And the aviation industry in India is still with a lot of responsibility. I say, it is still unsafe because of DGCA. Recommendations of various Courts of Enquiry have not been implemented, and all navigational and landing aids like ILS, etc. are primitive. This has to be improved upon.

Various committees have gone into it and they have suggested the ILS Category II by the end of Seventh Plan. But still it has not been implemented.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. A. BABY) : Please conclude.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI : We definitely need Category II ILS system. For your information, Sir, Ahmedabad, Guwahati and even Bangalore did not have the ILS. So, Sir, it is very important that the DGCA requires some shake up. I say, you must have a committee to look after the DGCA. If the pilot has to have a licence, if the engineer has to have a certification, if the Airlines must have a licence, why not the airports? I suggest that all the airports in India must have certification, and periodically that certificate should be renewed like they do it in FAA, that is in America.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. A. BABY) : Thank you.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI : Sir, I appreciate your thanks. But I just say about one little note on the purchase. There has been a lot of talk about Mr. Siddhu's note. But there is another note of Mr. C. R. Gharekhan of June 19, 1985, and that note says that the previous Prime Minister was interested in buying the aircraft, and there is a quotation in that note, 'with a little bit of help from the French.' I think, this is creating a little doubt as to what kind of help we were talking about. I just leave at that, I will not go further into that. Sir, I have just a few suggestions on the working of the Indian Airlines.

(Interruptions)

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY : Sir, he should place those on the Table of the House.

(Interruptions)

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: Sir, I do not know why they get so much agitated about it. If they have nothing to hide, they should not worry about it. All I am trying to suggest is that there must be competition. Today the passengers are not happy, the pilots are not happy, nobody is happy in the Indian Airlines. We require competition. And if the competition is going to come by Vayudoot or whatever you have—I do not agree with my friend, Mr. Kamal Morarka—we must encourage Vayudoot, we must give a choice to the passengers whichever way they want to fly. I want to utter a word of caution that the present management of Vayudoot has been faulting with all the safety norms and if you are going to give Vayudoot a chance and the D.G.C.A. is not going to oversee, we are in for disaster.

Lastly, the air-taxi is improving. We have a lot of scope. We must encourage. But I have a word of caution here. Our sky is going to become as congested as our roads and if we do not have a proper monitoring system, if we do not have proper air controllers, I am afraid, we are going to have mid-air collision and we are in for disaster.

In conclusion, I congratulate the hon. Minister for taking bold steps and on, at least, being serious about improvement in civil aviation. Thank you.

SHRI KHYOMO LOTH (Nagaland): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, thank you for giving me time. I would like to raise a few specific issues pertaining to the North-East.

Since the grounding of the A-320 aircraft, the people of the North-East are suffering terribly because there are no regular flights. In a week, there are four flights. But these flights are not regular. From Nagaland, Dimapur, which is the

airport, to go to Delhi, it takes us two days. This is because, the flights come very late. We have to come to Delhi from Dimapur via Calcutta. Most of the time, we miss the flights, the flights which originate from Calcutta and going to Delhi. Therefore, we are made to stay overnight. Now, how long will this terrible situation last?

We talk about integration. But integration without communication is irrelevant. Communication is very important. Because of the Bodo agitation, and the Karbi-Anglong agitation, there are frequent *bandhs*, there is *bandh* every month and even train services are affected. Many people are compelled to travel by air. It is not that people can pay. They are compelled to travel by air. Even there, they are put to inconvenience because the flights are not regular.

There are other inconveniences. For example, difficulties regarding reservation. When you go to Calcutta or Guwahati, you find that your name is missing. I do not know. People have become so ingenuous that they can even manipulate computers. They put in all sorts of names. You go with an 'okay' ticket and you find your name missing. These things are happening. We are suffering a lot. Now long will this situation continue? How long will these A-320 aircraft remain grounded? What is the alternative? What are you going to do for the passengers?

The other day, two lady Members raised the issue of the air-hostesses and other staff, about older ladies. I want to raise the same issue in relation to younger girls, beautiful girls, from our area, who are not getting any jobs either in the Indian Airlines or in Air India, either as airhostesses or as ground staff. They are not getting jobs even after coming through the

interview. They are well-qualified, graduates, coming from even convent schools and colleges. They are not getting jobs. In one case, a girl, after coming out successful in the interview, was selected and was put on the panel, waitlisted, but she was not given the job. These things are happening. These points were raised even when we discussed the Constitution (Amendment) Bill. Even though we talk about reservations and other facilities to the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, etc., they are not getting them. They are not getting even their share, not to speak of the general quota. Even in the case of the reserved quota, our people are not getting. All these things are happening.

As you know, the States in the North-East are small. How can they go on employing the educated youth in their administrations? Therefore, the number of unemployed youth is increasing. This will create a social problem. Unless you give opportunities to these people, unless you absorb them in the Central services, or, in undertakings like the Indian Airlines, Air India, etc., you cannot improve the position and you cannot bring about integration. That is why, the insurgent and underground activities are continuing still. They feel a sense of frustration. They also learn a lot after getting education here in Delhi. They get involved with so many political ideologies. They become a social problem, a political problem. So, we feel that they should be given an opportunity for employment. I am glad that today I am able to speak at least for this Ministry, that our boys and girls are not being employed. If ask the number, there will be hardly a few which you can count on your finger tips. So, please consider this and see that the airflights are rescheduled so that we could get regular flight from north-east to Delhi. Our people come for medical aid apart from government duties. They go to the South, to

Madras in hospitals, to Bombay where better medical facilities are available. People, in spite of being poor, are compelled to travel, to go to these places, but we are not getting proper facilities of transportation.

I would like to know, how long will it take to improve the situation? Will the Minister assure that our youth will also be accommodated in his Ministry?

SHRI G. G. SWELL: Sir, I would only make one point and that is the need to put Shillong, the capital of my State Meghalaya, on the map of the Indian Airlines. I do not know whether our Minister has ever visited Shillong. I wish he had been there. At one time it was the capital of the entire north-east. Still it remains the second largest city in the whole of the north-east. It is the headquarters of the Army Command for the north-east. It has perhaps the biggest cantonment in the whole of the entire region. It is the headquarters of the Air Force of the north-east. It is the seat of the North-eastern Council. It is the seat of the Central University and many other Government offices are there. Everyday literally scores of people travel by air from Shillong to Delhi mostly, of course, to Calcutta and Bombay also but Shillong is still not on the map of the Indian Airlines. They have to come down all the way from Shillong to Guwahati, driving four hours and with all the uncertainties, with all the inconveniences. Vayudoot operates between Calcutta and Shillong and as some hon. Members have mentioned, but it is entirely unreliable, entirely an unreliable organisation. The flights are irregular, unsafe and the capacity is very very small. Therefore, I would put it to the Minister of Civil Aviation to consider seriously from every point of view the convenience of the people, the convenience of the Government, the security of this country, and

[Shri G.G. Swell]

put Shillong in the map of Indian Airlines.

I think it is only a matter of rescheduling the flights to arrange in such a way that Indian Airlines, whether it is the Boeing or some other aircraft that operate in that area touch Shillong also. It is an easy thing to do and I would put it across to him for his consideration. That is all. Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI (M. A. BABY): Shri Subramanian Swamy. Not there. Shri Gaj Singh.

SHRI GAJ SINGH (Rajasthan): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir,....

AN HON. MEMBER: Maiden speech.

SHRI GAJ SINGH: It is the second speech. (*Interruptions*). Sir, we are all anxious to hear the response of the Minister on this long, fragmented debate which has gone on for several days. I will not enter the controversy or the politics of the purchase and the grounding of of the Airbus A-320 because much has been said about it on the floor of this House, outside this House and in the press and, as I said, we are all anxious to hear the response of the Minister on this particular pressing matter. But I do wish to highlight that the purchase of this aircraft was three years late as far as our projections of air traffic were concerned and now, with the grounding of this aircraft, I think we have been put back by another five years. So I would like the Minister to be very clear about what the immediate contingency plans are, to take care of the shortage of aircraft that we are facing today—which many Members have expressed—as also the long-term plan as to how we are going to meet this shortfall in our air seats. Another belief, and a fear—which I believe—is that the present planes that are in service today as also the men—both the machines and the men—are being over-committed and as a result

maintenance and servicing are being badly neglected. I am not saying that this is a fact. However, it is a belief that we have as also the belief that is going around among the foreign tourists.

The Minister is aware that next year is the International Tourist Year of India. I would like to know what plans Air-India and Indian Airlines have, apart from making up the shortfall of air seats we have at present, to provide for the additional tourist influx that such an event will bring. As you know, this event will focus the attention of all tourist agencies, travel writers and tourists on India and is bound to bring in a lot of tourists and I for one feel that as far as tourist traffic is concerned, there must be a sufficient number of stand-by aircraft to take on large groups so that the domestic traffic is not disrupted. Domestic traffic always suffers when group traffic comes and *vice versa* when groups do not get confirmations and, as a result, there is total chaos. So there must be sufficient stand-by aircraft—whether the Government have them themselves, whether they will lease them or whether in this they would go in for privatization. I know, some people are allergic to this word “privatization” but I see no harm in it because, if we do not at some stage come to grips with this major problem, we will be going in for privatization by default. Better the Government starts thinking about this matter from now on.

In the International Tourist Year of India, I must say that Rajasthan has become a very popular tourist destination in India and is bound to play a very important role, particularly because in India and in the sub-continent, because of problems in Kashmir, Nepal and Sri Lanka, a lot of traffic is going to be diverted to Rajasthan in India which is a very well-known destination. In this House, within the space of this week, there has already been mention by Ramdasji Agarwal and

Bagrodiaji, about the importance of Jaipur and the need to consider putting an international airfield there, because it is felt that not only will it help ease the pressure on domestic traffic but will also help streamline the tourist traffic in the right direction and not cause congestion on the main trunk routes from Delhi. Similarly, I would also say that Agra should definitely have an international airfield. We are fortunate to have one of the major wonders of the world, the Taj, which is known right round the world, within itself an attraction which every foreign tourist who comes to India would like to see and why not take him straight by an international flight to Agra itself? I know there is a problem of Agra having a high-security Defence airfield, but at some stage we will have to get over this and bifurcate the two to ensure the security of the Defence airfield and have a fully up-to-date airport with modern facilities to take direct international flights to Agra. Similarly, I feel that at Jodhpur also where there is a defence airfield, the facilities for civil aircraft need to be upgraded because it is now a popular tourist destination and people come in from Jaipur to Jodhpur and from there they go by surface to Jaisalmer, Bikaner and various other parts of the interior and the desert. The facilities there for the civilian traffic are very disgraceful. They are, in fact, make-shift arrangements which were built at the time when we had one Avro flight which came every alternate day. Today there are two Boeing flights to Jodhpur daily plus Vayudoot flights plus the odd domestic charter that come. These facilities, along with those at Udaipur, the other major tourist airport in Rajasthan, all need to be geared up so that we can meet the requirement and so that the State can get the full benefit from this major revenue. Rajasthan is very short of funds and could well do with it.

Thank you, Sir.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY (Tamil Nadu): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, the 14th of February this year was another blackest day in the airlines history of India. A gruesome disaster overtook the Indian Airlines Airbus 320 within moments of landing at the Bangalore Airport, and 91 precious lives perished and many were mortally wounded. We shuddered to read the news. The tragedy was that young couples, father and son, mother and daughter, entire families, some of the families perished in this gruesome disaster.

Sir, there is a debate the aircraft, A-320 aircraft, which has become the subject matter from that date onwards whether it was due to the error of the pilot or it was due to the engine itself.

Sir, my point is, whatever report may be submitted about the Bangalore aircraft accident, one thing I would like to draw the attention of the House to, is that only 34 aircraft so far have been delivered, that is, Airbus A-320 fitted with V-2500 engine, and out of these 34 delivered all over the world, 15 have been delivered to India. The pity of it is that out of these 34, 30 have been grounded. Cyprus has gone for it, and one or two other airlines have gone for it. Sir, in this deal, India has ordered for 31 aircraft, and the total cost is Rs. 2,500 crores.

My point is, when the Air Show in Paris, the capital of France took place, this controversial engine, V-2500 was on the drawing board. That is the point to be taken note of. The engine was on the drawing board, and no airline was prepared to go in for this engine. Why did India go in for this particular V-2500 engine? In some quarters it was stated that those people had promised there would be a 10 per cent fuel economy. Is it a fact that the assurance which was given by those people, who wanted to sell this engine, never materialised? So, we have been duped. It is nothing but a fraud committed against India by those people who promised that there would be a 10 per cent fuel economy. I would like to know from

[Shri V. Gopalsamy]

the hon. Minister for Civil Aviation under what circumstances the procedures were totally flouted and violated. How all the norms have been thrown to the winds? When the Dilbagh Singh Committee in its flight report had clearly opted for the purchase of Boeing aircraft, how suddenly this decision came like a bolt from the blue? In the year 1988, in the month of June the air crash of Air France A-320 took place in the demonstration flight. Even then the Government did not change its decision. Therefore, I would like to point out that in the year 1985, when the then Prime Minister went to France for the Air Show, he was impressed. What transpired there, we do not know. Then the decision came. It was not a small decision. It was a decision to purchase aircraft paying the tax-payers money to the tune of Rs. 2,500 crores. When some gruesome incident due to a family feud or war between the castes or rival groups in the rural areas takes place, when some murder takes place in a remote corner of a particular constituency, there is a tendency, I find, to put the blame and responsibility on the Prime Minister himself. In a case, I would like to point out, when a decision was taken by a Government involving Rs. 2,500 crores and because of that decision that aircraft was operated in the sky by which 90 lives perished, is the then Prime Minister not responsible for it? This is my argument. (Interruptions) Is it not the direct responsibility of the Prime Minister?

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Pondicherry): He is making an untrue plea holding the former Prime Minister responsible. I would like to know whether such a statement can be made by a responsible Member of this House.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: I know my responsibility.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: First of all I differ that 45 aircraft of Airbus A-320..... (Interruptions) That itself is untruth. Even today in

England, in America, in France, in all in 27 countries Airbus A-320 is being used. (Interruptions) It was clearly proved that it was a pilot error. How can he say that? Untruth he is speaking.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. A. BABY): Now, please sit down.

SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATRAMAN (Tamil Nadu): It is a valid argument. You are being paid back in the same coin. (Interruptions).

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Sir, shall I continue?... (Interruptions)... My point is very relevant... (Interruptions)... My dear friend, your turn is over. It is my turn... (Interruptions)... Sir, my point is that I raise my accusing finger not against you but against the then Prime Minister because... (interruptions)... India has been made a guinea-pig for experiments by the decision of the then Prime Minister. This is the point I am making... (Interruptions)... Sir, Rs. 2,500 crores deal... (interruptions)... within 12 hours... (interruptions)... It is just like boys entering the toy shop. An errant boy purchases a particular toy which fascinates his mind. Then after sometime he breaks the toy. After all it is a loss of Rs. 15 or Rs. 20 or Rs. 30. But the Head of the State or the Prime Minister should not behave like an errant boy in a toy shop. This is my point. He was impressed with the show. No other Airline throughout the world has opted for that CF engine... (Interruptions)... The then Prime Minister behaved like this... (Interruptions)... Sir, the result is the calamity, the catastrophe, the gruesome incident, this accident where 91 lives have been lost. For this the then Prime Minister is fully responsible for the decision.... (Interruptions)... Sir, here comes another alarming aspect of this deal. It is very much

to be noted in this discussion that the six Swiss bank accounts initially frozen in connection with the Bofors gun deal investigations... *(interruptions)*... I am not referring to Rajiv Gandhi here. Why are you perturbed?

[The Deputy Chairman in the Chair]

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gopalsamy, now we have very little time. Please conclude. I want the Minister to reply.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Five minutes.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No. Please sit down.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Three minutes.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. I request you very humbly to take your seat. I want the Minister to reply.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Madam, I have to conclude my speech. Two minutes.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI (Tamil Nadu): Madam...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He does not need your support. Let him finish. Mr. Gopalsamy is a very boisterous Member. He does not need your support. Let him finish.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: I am thankful to you. Therefore, in the Bofors gun deal... *(Interruptions)*.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We are not discussing Bofors gun deal. I remind you. We are only discussing Airbus. I won't permit you. I am not permitting you.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: It is about Airbus.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No. That is about Bofors. Please sit down.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: It is not Bofors. It is Airbus deal. Please, just a minute.

DR. G. VIJAYA MOHAN REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): His speech cannot be throttled.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Nobody is throttled, not, of all the Members, Mr. Gopalsamy. Nobody can throttle him, not I at least. It is impossible. But the thing is, we are discussing Civil Aviation and I have requested Members to be very brief because I have to ask him to reply. We want to finish it today. Now, you go back to the airlines and leave Bofors for some other time.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: I am going back to Airbus. Therefore, Madam, "Please take positive separate orders... *(Interruptions)*... following a specific request by the Bureau that it suspected the six accounts to have deposit on remittances from the... *(Interruptions)*."

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That has nothing to do with this.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: And Airbus contracts also." This is the relevant point. "And Airbus contracts also"... "because there is a suspicion how much amount has been poured into the Swiss account from the Airbus deal". This is the relevant point, Madam. I would request the hon. Minister... *(Interruptions)*. whether you are initiating any probe into this. *(Interruptions)*. We are very much concerned. How much money has been poured into one of the accounts, Swiss accounts, through this Airbus deal? Thank you, Madam.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN:
Hon. Deputy Chairman, first I would like to thank Shri Suresh Kalmadi, Shri Kamal Morarka, Shri Hanumanthappa, Shri Dipen Ghosh, Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad, Shri Pramod Mahajan, Smt. Margaret Alva, Smt. Renuka Chowdhury, Shri Kapil Verma, Shri Bhadreswar Buragohain, Shri Sourendra Bhattacharjee, Shri Ram Awadesh Singh, Kumari Chandrika Kenia, Shri John Fernandes, Shri Dineshbhai Trivedi, Shri Khyomo Lotha, Shri G.G. Swell, Shri Gaj Singh and Shri Gopalsamy for having participated in this discussion. They have raised several points and they have made very useful and valued suggestions also. Before I respond to the specific points that have been raised by the hon. Members, first I would like to make a few general observations about the working of the Civil Aviation Ministry.

Madam, I hardly need to emphasise the importance of civil aviation for the economic and social development of the country. Ours is a vast country with varied transportation needs. We need to develop all forms of transportation in a coordinated manner whether it be rail, road, shipping, in-land water-ways or air transportation. It is true that the civil aviation sector generally caters to the needs of the elite section. But I think it will not be right to come to the conclusion that because it caters to the needs of the elite section, it does not deserve high priority. On the contrary, efficient development of air services both for passengers and for cargo transportation is essential not only for economic and industrial growth, tourism and export earnings, but also for the social integration of the country. There are far-flung areas which cannot be connected without an efficient mode of transportation. There are growing cities and towns, places of tourist

importance which require air-link and there is a persistent and growing demand from various sections, including hon. Members of Parliament, that air services should be provided to their places or frequencies be increased or the airports should be upgraded so as to enable them to receive wide-bodied aircraft. This itself is a reflection of the importance of the Civil aviation sector in the promotion of economic and social development of the country.

Indian Airlines is carrying about 30,000 passengers a day or about 110 lakh passengers every year. The demand for air traffic is growing at the rate of 10 or 11 per cent per year. Air India is carrying 21 lakh international passengers every year and there is a growing demand and competition in the international traffic apart from passenger services. There is also a growing demand for cargo transportation by air. The efficient and orderly development of civil aviation and important infrastructural sector is, therefore, of great importance. I may also mention that the demand for air-traffic is growing all over the world and the Asia-Pacific region is regarded as the fastest-growing area for air-traffic in the 90s. I would also like to submit that we must clearly recognise the fact that India, with its scarce investment resources, cannot afford to subsidise civil aviation sector and this point, I would like to emphasise because some hon. Members have mentioned about the frequent increase in the fares which are charged by our airlines. A distinguishing feature of civil aviation sector is that it is highly technical and capital-intensive. This sector cannot develop properly without making huge investments. For example, the purchase of 31 A-320 aircraft required an investment of almost Rs. 2500 crores. The purchase of Boeing-747 by Air-India cost about Rs. 250 crores. The mo-

dernisation of Delhi and Bombay Airports to bring them on par with the safety standards obtaining in other parts of the world may cost over Rs. 200 crores. The training of a pilot comes to about Rs. 6 crores. Furthermore, the bulk of the investment needed in the civil aviation industry is in the form of hard currency as both the aircraft and the equipment are imported. Even the aviation turbine fuel requires expenditure in foreign exchange. Therefore, it is important that while we make these investments that are necessary for the Aviation Department and the civil aviation sector, we ensure that operations are rendered profitable and we do not subsidise air-travel or air-cargo operations by incurring losses or asking for Budgetary support to make up these losses. There could be some degree of gross subsidisation, for example, to provide air-services to remote areas like the North-East region. But it is important to ensure that taken as a whole, the operations result in profit. It is only through generation of internal resources by the airlines that we can ensure further growth and development of the airlines. For generation of internal resources, it is important to maintain high standards of productivity and efficiency and by charging remunerative fares. In this context, I would say that the fares charged by Indian Airlines are much lower than the fares charged by many other airlines including those of affluent countries. It is indeed anomalous that with the scarce resources invested in a capital-intensive sector like Civil Aviation, the fares charged are lower in comparison with those prevailing in other parts of the world. The Committee appointed by the Planning Commission, under the chairmanship of Shri Vijay Kelkar, the chairman of the Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices, has recently submitted its report on air-tariffs and it has recommended certain criteria on a rational basis.

According to its recommendations, fares will have to be substantially increased by Indian Airlines. This report is under examination, but it is a fact that unless Civil Aviation Sector is able to operate profitably and generate its own resources, further development cannot be sustained. I would also like to mention that because of the depreciation in the value of rupee, fares paid in dollars are higher than fares paid in rupees. It is necessary to close this gap so that there is no disadvantage to anybody and Indian Airlines is able to earn more of its revenue in terms of hard currency. The matter is receiving attention and we will take steps to ensure that fares are increased on a remunerative basis so that airlines generate adequate internal resources and foreign exchange earnings are increased. We are also considering the question of giving priority to passengers paying their fares in hard currency. This will help Indian Airlines to earn more foreign exchange and assure seats to foreign tourists on domestic routes. I would also like to stress the need for our Airlines, both Indian Airlines and Air India, operating in a competitive environment. Many hon. Members, particularly, Shri Kamal Morarka and Shri Hanumanthappa have highlighted the need for change of attitude in the functioning of Indian Airlines with regard to customers. There is general criticism that Indian Airlines is callous towards its customers and does not care about their convenience. I agree with the hon. Members that attention to customer and his satisfaction should be the topmost priority of any airline. The management of our Airlines have been told that customers' satisfaction should receive the utmost attention and that their performance will be judged by this yardstick. I am glad to say that by virtue of certain steps taken in the recent past, there has been a tangible improve-

[Shri Arif Mohd. Khan]

ment. However, I feel that unless there is an element of competitive pressure, customers' satisfaction tends to be neglected. It would, therefore, be a good idea if Indian Airlines is also subject to a certain degree of competition considering that it is carrying more than 11 million passengers every year. The competition that can be introduced by way of other operators like Vayudoot or air-taxi or charters cannot be substantial, but even so, a certain degree of competition on domestic routes with other operators will do the Indian Airlines a lot of good. I have recently announced certain policy-decisions taken by the Government for the liberalisation of air-taxi and air charter operations. A number of unnecessary restrictions on their operations have been removed, but the basic condition that they should find their own foreign exchange resources for the acquisition of the aircraft and their operation would remain. In other words, they should be foreign exchange earners and not foreign exchange drainers. I hope that these decisions would pave the way for increased tourist and passenger traffic and also introduce a certain measure of competition in air services.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH (West Bengal): How would they earn foreign exchange?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: That I will explain; it is not very difficult. Groups will be coming and the bookings will be done outside India and these small air-taxis will be used to carry these groups from one place to another. But, since the bookings will be made in foreign countries, they will be paying their fares in foreign exchange.

I hope that these schemes will lessen to some extent the need for our making investments for the

acquisition of aircraft to meet the traffic demand.

I have also announced certain decisions relating to air cargo operations. I am fully aware of the need for providing sufficient cargo capacity so that our exporters do not face problems in boosting the exports of the country. Towards the closing months of every financial year we face the problem of mounting backlog of cargo at our airports, particularly of garments. We have made the "Open Sky" Policy permanent and have directed Air-India to operate Boeing-747 freighter services to Europe and the US. Air-India would also give priority to augmenting its cargo capacity in its future fleet acquisition programme. We have also announced that additional passenger frequencies will be allowed to foreign airlines provided such additional frequencies are operated on a permanent basis to India through passenger-cum-cargo aircraft. Experience has, however, shown that the main reason why cargo capacity is not being created by the airlines is the unremunerative nature of the operations, particularly because of the unidirectional nature of the cargo. The cargo flights into India have virtually to come empty. Air-India was suffering from a very great disadvantage because it alone was subject to certain mandatory rates fixed by the Government much lower than the rates charged by the foreign carriers. We have, therefore, abolished the mandatory rates so that Air-India also can charge remunerative rates according to the demand and supply position in the market.

We have also announced that all carriers can charge rates according to the demand keeping the JATA rates as the fare rates. These decisions have already resulted in expeditious clearance of cargo from the airports. More importantly, I feel that these decisions will lay a durable basis for

building up cargo capacity by Air-India as well as by other foreign airlines.

Madam, about the safety and efficiency of operations—because this is another aspect which has been highlighted by the honourable Members here—I would say that there are two aspects of operations—the visible and the invisible. The invisible part of the operations is the standard of safety maintained by the airlines which the passenger does not see, but which he takes for granted. The norms and standards for the training of pilots, the maintenance of aircraft and the maintenance of navigational and communication equipment at the airports are apart of the invisible aspect of the operations. I would like to assure the honourable Members that there would be no compromise whatsoever on the maintenance of safety standards by our airlines. In fact, this will be the first and foremost priority, whatever be the cost involved enforcing it. We have appointed a full-time Director-General of Civil Aviation and he has been mandated to monitor and enforce the observance of strict safety standards by our airlines. The DGCA is being strengthened and streamlined in order to enforce strict safety standards. The DGCA will soon establish a Flight Instruction Directorate and a system for the evaluation, licensing of pilots and engineers.

I would also like to mention that the Finance Minister had, in the Budget proposals, announced a cut on the import duty which was levied on the import of Instrument Landing System, and equipment which is housed at the airports. Now, we are taking steps to ensure that before the next winter, this Instrument Landing System—Category II become operational at Delhi airport.

at 6 P.M

The visible part of the operations of the airline is the attitude towards the customers. As I have already stated, I have emphasised the im-

perative need for ensuring customer satisfaction on the part of the airline. This has to be built as an integral and inseparable part of the functioning of the airline. I would like the staff coming in to contact with the public being given comprehensive training. In particular, we have stressed the need for maintaining the reliability and the punctuality of the services because if this aspect is taken care of, all other aspects of customer satisfaction would fall automatically into place. The starting point of all irritation and grievance of the passengers is the unreliability or unpunctuality of the operations. I have said that even if the number of flights is to be curtailed it would be better to do so and operate the truncated services on a reliable and punctual basis. I am glad to say that since April, there has been a significant improvement in the punctuality of the operations.

SHRI AJIT P.K. JOGI : No, no; absolutely wrong.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : Definitely not. I will give you the figures. This complaint has been there. I am not trying to counter the complaints which have been made by the Members. I am merely providing the facts. It is true that because the entire A-320 fleet has been grounded, the waiting list is very long. There have been many other complaints because of this cut in the capacity. But whatever truncated services there are, definitely they are running more punctually and more reliably. As a result the number of complaints from the travelling public has also come down to a significant extent. Here again I would like our airlines to build punctuality and reliability of the operations as the central element of their operations. And as I have already said, I am not trying to challenge all these points

[Shri Arif Mohd. Khan]

which were made by the honourable Members. I know, I understand, there are complaints still and I would like to assure the honourable that whatever steps are necessary, we will take those steps in order to ensure punctuality and reliability of the airlines. I would like to say that though the discussion was on the working of the Civil Aviation Ministry, it largely centred on the controversy involving Airbus A-320 and most of the honourable Members, particularly from the Opposition Benches, when they were speaking, particularly Shri Suresh Kalmadi who is a pilot himself, they made points regarding the technical superiority and in the case of Shri Suresh Kalmadi, his earlier speeches in this House itself were different from the points which he made during this discussions. But I can understand.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI : (Maharashtra) : Madam, I beg to differ. Whatever I said earlier, I stand by it and I can say it was in no way different from what I have said now. I said V2000 engine was not the right decision, it was not the right order because at that time I felt that the engine would not have been delivered in time, but the company went ahead and delivered it in time. That is the difference I have mentioned. Of course, I don't say V2000 engine is the right engine. Fuel efficiency is not there. So whatever I had said earlier, I have not charged from it.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : Okay, I stand corrected. Madam, the point I am trying to make is that I find myself in no position to pass a judgement on the technical aspects of the plane or the airworthiness of this particular aircraft. In fact, even when we took the decision—because this point has been repeatedly made by the honourable Members from the Opposition Benches that after one accident you took the

decision to ground the entire fleet; if something happens to a particular train, whether you would stop running all the trains or if something happens to a particular type of aircraft, whether you would stop operating those aircraft—I don't know from where they got this idea—definitely our decision to ground the fleet was not...

SHRI JAGESH DESAI : Whose decision was it ? Government's or Indian Airlines' ?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : I am saying Government decision. Even on earlier occasions I have said the Government has taken the decision. And as the Civil Aviation Minister I take full responsibility for having taken this decision to ground the entire fleet. (Interruptions) Please let me explain. Let me respond to the points which you have raised.

Madam, when we took the decision to ground the entire fleet, what was the announcement made by the Government? I wish Shrimati Margaret Alva, Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad and Capt. Satish Sharma were present in the House, because the other day when Capt. Satish Sharma had intervened and he had spoken about the super technical qualities of this plane, then I had responded to him by saying that Capt. Satish Sharma, being a pilot, would appreciate that the air-worthiness is not the only factor, which is relevant as far as safe operation of any type of aircraft is concerned. When it concerns safe operation of the aircraft, it is not merely the air-worthiness. Other factors like the preparedness, the capability of the Airlines, ground handling facilities maintenance facilities, availability of the trained personnel are equally important. I would like to say that in Europe they have developed trains which can run at a speed of, say, 500 km. per hour. Now, these trains may be very good. Technically they may

be super. Now, if you import one of these trains and try to run it on the existing tracks, say, between Delhi and Calcutta, even if the train is of high technical quality, what will happen to this super technical innovation which is running in Europe very safely? Without changing the track which we have here, if we try to run that train here, what will happen you can imagine. Despite my having clarified it so many times, this point is being made again and again that because of one accident you have taken the decision to ground the entire fleet? Who will be responsible for the losses which are being incurred by the Indian Airlines? I will tell you who will be responsible? I take full responsibility. I am coming to that only.

What was the announcement that was made by the Government? The announcement made by the Government was that a high-power technical committee is being appointed by the Government to evaluate the state lot preparedness of the Indian Airlines for safe operation of A-320 aircraft, with special reference to maintenance facilities, ground capability and availability of trained personnel. This Committee will give an immediate report within a period of seven days, etc. etc. I would like to mention that this committee came to the conclusion that the rate of induction was too rapid; the induction rate of Airbus-320 has been rapid for the operating and maintenance staff to assimilate and prepare themselves for the high technology demands of the aircraft. The Indian Airlines had not appreciated these demanding requirements and the Airlines was consequently ill-prepared to accept such large number of aircraft and operate them on the scale plan. Now, this has led us to take this decision. Was it merely the crash which took place outside Bangalore on the 14th of February? No. At Bangalore itself, on the 15th February I told the Press, when the question was put to me at Bangalore airport, that be-

cause of one accident the fleets are not grounded, we are not to ground the fleet, the Inspector of the inquiry has already started his investigation, we have already taken the decision to constitute a court of inquiry and we will await their report. There is no question of grounding the fleet. Madam, subsequently, continuously for three days four majors snags developed. The hon. Member will recall that. They were reported very widely in the press. Four major snags developed in which either the plane could not take off or if it could take off and the snag developed after the aircraft became airborne, plane was returned to the base. In two cases, the plane was brought back and the passengers were disembarked. After the snag was rectified, passengers at the Delhi Airport refused to board the same plane. Even after rectification of the snags, they refused. They said that they were not going to board the same plane. Alternative arrangement was made to ferry those passengers. Madam, I think that because of these incidents the very credibility of the Indian Airlines was at stake. The Airlines had to save its name, its credibility and its reliability. There were not merely these four snags. (*Interruptions*) Intervene if you want to intervene. Stand up and I will yield. But don't speak while sitting. I am very serious and I want to respond to all the points which have been raised by the hon. Members. I am ready to yield if you want to make a point. (*Interruptions*) Why don't you stand up? I am ready to yield.

Madam, this is very important. On 14th February this accident took place. I have with me the clipping from a French paper *Le monde* of 16th February in which the paper reports this. The hon. Members would recall that before the Bangalore crash, two accidents had already taken place. One accident was at the time of the airshow. The other accident was on the first

[Shri Arif Mohd. Khan]

demonstration flight when the French Prime Minister himself was on board and very major technical snags had developed.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI : Will you give the dates ?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : I will give you the dates. I am coming to that only. First I am talking of 16th February because it was reported on 16th February in the most leading newspaper of France. What does it say ? "After this accident, the French..."

SHRI N.K.P. SALVE (Maharashtra) : Why should he not read the French version?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : Well, I have the English translation and I am not conversant with French. It is very difficult for me. When Shri Salve was my senior, he did not train me in French.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY : But he knows the French style.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : He did not train me in French. What can I do? It says : After this accident, the French Technical Navigating Personnel Union, that is, the Union of the Commercial Pilots of France has asked that flights of A-320 be suspended by Air France and Air Inter, the two airlines in France which were operating these aircraft. They demanded the operation to be suspended. It is noteworthy that, whether it is Air France or it is Air Inter, they are definitely operating A-320 aircraft, but A-320 fitted with CFM-56 engine which is a tested engine, whereas our A-320 is fitted with V-2500 engine, an engine which was still on the design board when order was placed and which is not our tested engine. Not merely that. The most disturbing news which again appeared in one of the leading French newspapers was this.

It was a statement by the pilot who was in command, who was operating the plane which had crashed at the time of the air show. He gave the statement...

AN HON. MEMBER: He bailed out.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: That pilot survived. This is on 31st March. This is reported in 'La Humanite Liberation'... (Interruption) I do not know whether I will be able to pronounce it correctly.

Madam, this is very very important. This is a statement which has been made by the pilot who was operating that ill-fated aircraft which had crashed. He says in Malhause: "Michael Haslatine, the pilot of the A-320 that crashed in Hafshim on 26th June, 1988, met with an Association for the defence of the victims of the accident for the first time. He told them that Air France had offered him just after the accident a million francs and the training course for piloting the Boeing 747 in exchange for his resignation. He added that the aim of this offer was to make him take the responsibility for the accident and that he would give proof of this to the Judge who is to hear his case on 6th of April."

Madam, though this appeared on 2nd of April, 1990, but this charge which was made by this pilot was conveyed to the Commercial Pilots Association of India much before it was published in the French newspapers, and through Commercial Pilots Association this information had already reached us, in fact, much before it appeared in the French newspapers.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: Before you ordered the grounding?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I will give you all the information

which we had before we took the decision to ground. Now, Madam, I have another statement. (*Interruptions*) Madam, I have already said that I find myself in no position to give an opinion on the technical aspects or air-worthiness aspects. But since the hon. Members on the Opposition benches chose to give certificates of air-worthiness and the plane being technically superb—they may be right—I am in no position to give my opinion on that subject. I would rather wait for the report of the technical experts to come. I am not giving my opinion. I am only quoting from French newspapers, and I am saying that although I will have all the respect for the opinion which has been expressed by the hon. Members—most of them are experts on civil aviation subject, on the technology which is used in the aircraft: I have every respect for their opinion—I cannot remain oblivious to all this which was appearing in the French papers about snags, about other problems which were being faced by the Airlines which were operating A-320. And, in fact, Madam, I have with me the statement of the Vice-President of the Airbus Industrie. While defending the Airbus Industrie, he was constrained to accept in a press conference: "Mr. Ziggler revealed that since the A-320 was brought into service two years ago, the manufacturer has received 900 reports of technical incidents, and the Flight Test Services has remedied 700 of them. Therefore, 200 still remain for which I am still seeking a solution." Out of 900 reported cases of technical snags, 200 still remain. This is what the Airbus Industrie itself has said. On the other hand, our friends on the other side are going on giving all kinds of certificates of technical superiority, etc., to this plane. But the Airbus Industrie itself has not given any such certificate to itself. They say that they have received about 900 reports of technical snag

and out of these 900 reports, they say that they have been able to solve only 700 and the balance 200 still remain unsolved.

AN HON. MEMBER: A candid admission.

SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR SAHU (Orissa): Will the hon. Minister give comparative figures of other aircraft companies?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Well, if you want, I can give. But I will give them later on.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Before the purchase, they did not know all these things?

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Have you finished 'grounding'?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I am still on that subject. Do you want me to finish 'grounding'? Don't you want to know all the details? I am sure, you want all the details. (*Interruptions*)

The hon. Member asked about the comparative figures. I do not have the total figures. But I have some figures which I will give later on.

I would like to refer to one point which had been repeatedly made by hon. Members. It has been said that all over the world, the A-320 is being flown by various airlines. Madam, the factual position is, the total number of orders placed on the Airbus Industrie for A-320 aircraft is 542. Out of this, the number of orders for Airbus fitted with V-2500 engine, the combination which we decided to buy, is only 124. The total number is 542 and out of this, the number of orders for Airbus fitted with V-2500 engine, the combination which we decided to buy, is only 124.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: 124.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I am coming to that. In fact, it was much more than 124. At the time of the demonstration flight, most of the airlines, even belonging to countries which are part of the consortium which owns the Airbus Industrie, changed their orders. They had earlier placed orders for Airbus fitted with V-2500 engine, but they changed their orders from V-2500 engine to CFM-6 engine which was a trusted engine. Out of these 124 orders which are still with the Airbus Industrie, the total number of deliveries till today are: one aircraft to Adrean Airlines, 15 to Brainif, 3 to Cyprus Airlines and 15 to Indian Airlines. In our case, out of these 15, one was destroyed. We have 14. Brainif has 15 aircraft fitted with V-2500 engine, but they have not flown them for commercial reasons. We grounded them in the third week of February.

Therefore, despite all the tall claims made by hon. Members from the other side that the aircraft is being flown by so many airlines in so many countries, the fact of the matter is that there are only four aircraft in operation now; one by Adrean Airlines and three by Cyprus Airlines. Not more than four. Only four aircraft are in operation.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: Any accidents in those countries?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I am coming to that. Thank you for reminding me. The hon. Member, I think, could not appreciate the point I had made earlier. Our decision to ground the aircraft was not just because the accident had taken place. It was a mixture of so many other factors. We were receiving all these disturbing reports. There were two other cases here. Within three days, in the case of

two flights, there were technical snags. The aircraft returned to base. The snags were rectified. Yet, the passengers refused to board the flights. Since you have reminded me, I think it is worthwhile if I told you about the other Airlines also. I have a report with me here of the North-west Airline of America which has an airbus fitted not with V-2500 but CFM engine. The report appeared in the News-week last week only which says, 'Bumpy ride for A 320'. If in America where the airports have most of the modern equipment, landing instruments available, if with all those facilities an American Airline, which is one of the major Airlines, is finding it a bumpy ride, you can imagine the kind of difficulties which we must be facing with this aircraft. You could only imagine about that. The report has said about all these technical snags which have been developing, the one which I had marked is not with me, I will find it out. It has said that there have been constraints to report all these snags and difficulties to the Federal Aviation Authority.

I have also available with me an article which has been published in the most leading French science magazine, the name of the magazine is 'Science & Vie'. This is the most leading science magazine of France. The heading of the article is 'A-320's dilemma'. This is based on the reports which have been given by the Deputy Director of Flight operation of Air France after having gained experience of running the aircraft for a certain period of time. Then this report was submitted and the article is based on that. Madam, first of all, it makes the point that this is the first Civil Aviation aircraft which is totally computerised. I am making this point. Now it says that the controversy about this aircraft surfaced at the time of the inaugural flight of A-320 of Air France on

22th March, 1988, over Paris with the Prime Minister of the year on board. This flight was marked with a series of technical incidents, in particular, by the release of untimely alarms. Now controversies were going to come up when an aircraft crashed in Hapsion forest on 26th June, 1988 and A-320 of the Indian Airlines had crashed before it could attain the landing in Bangalore last February. It further says, the first operation year of A-320 has been marked by a number of incidents, putting the conception of certain system of the aircraft directly at fault. These were very often badly accepted by the first qualified teams on this aircraft and sometimes vigorously denounced by technical directors of the launching company. These incidents can lead one to ask a question if the constructor and certification authorities were not a little too hasty.

About the comparative figures which you wanted to know, the number of incidents is 12 times more than predicted for. The assessment of running of A-320 during its first year in Air France fleet was put before the Civil Aviation Department on 11th July, 1989, wherein the Deputy Technical Director of the Operations Department pointed out that the first year has been marked by a number of 13 technical incidents 'in general very high'. Whereas the objective fixed was of one technical incident for 1000 flying hours, the year 1988 ends with a rate of 12 incidents for thousand flying hours—now this is the comparative figure—in comparison to the rate of 5 snags per thousand hours at the time of the first running of airbus A-320. The frequency of such incidents, since the aircraft was put into service by Air France and other airlines, has obliged the manufacturer—this is very important—to publish not less than 52 tentative flight instructions in OEB—Operation Engineering Bulletin.

“Between April 1988 and April 1989, launching of a new model of aircraft required, normally, four times lesser number of instructions.”

Then, Madam, I am not going to read the whole thing but only the important points which have been made. This article quotes two incidents and it says a most interesting thing, and since we have honourable Members who appear to be very well versed in the technical aspects of the Civil Aviation sector I am sure they will appreciate the point which has been made in this article about the recording parameters. While discussing two incidents, the article says:

“In an indirect manner, these two types of incidents have revealed another potential source of problem at the level of recording of parameters by the Digital Flight Data Recorder (DFDR). In fact, each information communicated to the pilot is processed by several computers, but the DFDR records most of this information on an intermediate computer, and not at the beginning or at the tail-end of the processing system. During the reading of data there is no possibility of knowing clearly that the pilots had received information because no recording is done at the end of the process.”

In fact, this article which has been published in a leading French magazine raised doubts even about the data which is recorded in the DFDR of the plane. Before I read the concluding sentence, another comparative figure is given wherein it has been said:

“At the end of last year, the dossier of complementary technical data which has been distributed to all A-230 crew contains 11 pages while the same dossier for other aircraft of the Air France fleet rarely goes beyond three pages”.

[Shri Arif Mohd. Khan]

And the article is concluded with this sentence:

"All these elements could lead us to the conclusion that the manufacturers have confused the speed with precipitation."

Now, Madam, I have quoted from this article and I have quoted from other French newspapers. My purpose is not to condemn this aircraft, my purpose is not to pass judgement against this aircraft. My purpose is only to impress upon the honourable Members—as I have said earlier, I have great respect for the opinions which they have expressed—that I cannot remain oblivious to all this information which was coming from the country of the manufacturers. The statement which was being made by the official organization of the commercial pilots of France and the kind of doubts and apprehensions which have come to the mind of the travelling public in India were such that it was essential for me to save the credibility of the airline. If I was going to tell the travelling public that the plane is okay, nothing is wrong and if my feeling was that I may do so far commercial reasons, the travelling public was not ready to believe me. It was more essential to get opinion from some independent source. So we appointed a High-power Committee, which gave its opinion. The committee has not said that these planes cannot be reinducted but, at the same time, it has prescribed a long procedure, how the training has to be strengthened—training of the pilots, training of the maintenance staff—and the kind of facilities which should be there at the ground, at the airports. They have laid down so many things. And, as I said earlier, this Committee was appointed to go into the question of the capability the preparedness of the airline to operate this first civilian aircraft which was totally

computerized. The other technical aspects, this Committee has not gone into. It is for the court of enquiry to establish the cause of the accident, whether the cause of the accident was human failure or the cause of the accident was a technical failure. Whatever it was, it is for the court of enquiry, and the Government has taken a decision that till the report of the court of enquiry comes, we are not going to operate this aircraft. I do not think there is any confusion. I don't think we are in double mind. We are absolutely clear.

मुझे बहुत खुशी होती अगर गुलाम नबी साहब यहाँ होते, चाँकि उन्होंने बहुत जोर देकर कहा था और वे हिन्दी में बोल रहे थे और उन्होंने सवाल किया था जो बहुत सही सवाल है। उन्होंने सवाल किया कि यह जो नुकसान हो रहा है हर हफ्ते या हर महीने

I think that this point has been repeated by Mr. Santosh Bagrodia also, who is responsible for this loss which the Indian Airlines is incurring.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA :
I would have, but I didn't.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN :
Okay. गुलाम नबी साहब ने कहा कि इस नुकसान के लिए कौन जिम्मेदार है। मैं आपसे कहता हूँ कि 10 करोड़ रुपए महीने का नुकसान हो रहा है यह बात सही है। But the Government of India is not a commercial organisation.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI : Will you yield for a minute please ? It is not Rs. 10 crores per month because on Rs. 2,500 crores of investment, even taking 12 per cent interest, it comes to Rs. 25 crores by way of interest only, (Interruptions)

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN :
Out of Rs. 2,500 crores, almost Rs. 900 crores is yet to be invested. This calculation which the hon.

Member is making may be on the total investment which is required to be made. But so far we have imported, we have acquired only 15 aircraft. That is according to the calculation of the Indian Airlines, and I have already given this information to the House on a number of occasions, during the Question Hour also. The total loss which the Indian Airlines is suffering because of the grounding of this fleet is Rs. 2.5 crores, a little then Rs. 2.5 crores per week.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI : No.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : Well, it is not a question of opinion. If actually I am wrong, the hon. Member can show me the calculation, and I am subject to correction. There is no problem.

SHRI AJIT P.K. JOGI : The interest itself on Rs. 1,600 crores will be much more. It is a simple calculation.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI : If you take only interest at 12 per cent, it will not be less than Rs. 15 crores per month.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : Well, I concede that in mathematical calculations I may be weaker than you.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI : You ask your Department to give the correct figure.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : I concede. There is no problem. I am subject to correction. If the hon. Member shows it, if he proves it otherwise, I will gladly correct myself. It is not a question of opinion. It is a question of facts. So, there is no problem.

DR. JINENDRA KUMAR JAIN (Madhya Pradesh) : Have you calculated the commission also ?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : That is why I am saying that I am

very weak in this. I am not able to calculate it properly.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA :
Your Department is there.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : Well, my figure which I have given to the hon. House is based on the calculation made by the Indian Airlines. That is why I am saying. . .

SHRI JAGESH DESAI : They should go into it again and give the correct figure. (*Interruptions*)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : I would remind the hon. Minister that we have a Half-an-Hour Discussion listed at 6.00 o'clock.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : I am going to conclude, Madam.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI :
Before you conclude. . .

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : I have waited for three weeks, Madam.

SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI : This is important, Madam.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI : Madam, he has stated that they are waiting for the final report of the court of enquiry. When we raised the subject in Parliament that the reading of the cockpit voice recorder was leaked out to the Press, at that time the hon. Minister said that he had to give it to the Indian pilots to study what it was all about and see whether it was the fault of the aircraft or an error on the part of the pilot. Now it seems, as per the leak, all indications are that it was an error on the part of the pilot. Secondly, the Director of Accidents of your own DGCA has also corroborated that and said it was a pilot error. Nowhere in the world any aircraft or Airbus has been grounded for five months. I would like to know why the Government is not asking for an interim report from the present inquiry commit-

[Shri Suresh Kalmadi]

tee. They can keep on collecting the recordings from all passengers etc. etc. They can go on for months and months. In the meantime why are you not talking of an interim report? While the inquiry has been going on, they have already taken a decision to lease the aircraft and sell the aircraft. On what basis have you gone in for that? (*Interruptions*)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, please don't interrupt. I reminded the House that we have a half-an-hour discussion. You have spoken on it. You should have made that point at that time.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Can I request that he should conclude it tomorrow? It is a very serious matter Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, I want it to be completed today. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: It is a very important discussion. Let us not conclude it in a hurried manner. He took half-an-hour in telling the achievements of the Indian Airlines.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I took only ten minutes.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: We can forgo the half-an-hour discussion. We don't mind. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Madam, let him not conclude today.

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA (Karnataka) : Madam...

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Madam, I am yielding to Mr. Hanumanthappa.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: I just want to add that the pilot error cannot be established. The Flight Data Control they said was in engaged position. It should have been in disen-

gaged position. It has not yet been proved whether the computer was malfunctioning. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I will reply to that.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Now, Mr. Hanumanthappa. It is free-for-all. He also got up.

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: Actually I want to know from the Minister whether Air France had offered both types of engines—CFM-6 and V-2500—to the Indian Airlines before placing the orders. I would like to know whether a comparative study had been made by the Indian Airlines and what were the points which favoured this engine? That is one point.

The second query is this. The Minister has said a certain degree of competition other than the Vayudoot and Air taxis will be introduced. I will be glad if the Minister further elaborates his idea on the introduction of a certain degree of competition.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : O.K. I will come to that. पहले मैं जो कह रहा था, मैं उस पर आना चाहता हूँ और कि उसे दोहराऊँगा कि मैंने जो इन्फेशन हाऊस को दा है कि 2.55 करोड़ लोस —

That Rs. 2.5 crore loss which is being incurred by the Indian Airlines every week is the information which has been given by the Ministry to me and I am making the statement with all the responsibility. It includes interest and financing charges, But I am coming to the question which was asked—who is responsible for this loss? Well, people may have different view points. You may look at everything from a commercial angle. For us commercial angle is not everything. For us the national honour is much more important; the life of every single

Indian who travels on the Indian Airlines is more important. We would like to ensure that he travels without any doubt or apprehension in his mind. That is much more important to us than the loss of Rs. 2.5 crores, which we are incurring every week. I take full responsibility for it.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI :
It is a political decision just to damn the previous Government. That is all. *(Interruptions)* It is not a technical decision. It is a political decision.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN :
Madam, I am grateful to him. As far as I am concerned something political is not necessarily bad. When you say a political decision, you have this thing in your mind that politics must be necessarily bad. No. We believe in a different kind of politics. We believe in politics which has overtones of morality. We believe in politics which is based on principles.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI :
Why have you grounded the aircraft ? ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN :
Secondly, Madam he was asking why the Government did not ask the court of enquiry to give an interim report to facilitate the re-induction of this aircraft. Madam, I would like to say emphatically...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI :
I never asked for reinduction of the aircraft. I only asked for the interim report from the court of enquiry. That is all.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN :
Okay. You are saying that the Government should ask the court of enquiry to give an interim report. Sorry, we do not interfere with the functioning of the courts of enquiry. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI : It will not be an interference.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI :
To study the report you will take another six months.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN :
I do not know why you are presuming things as if everything is based on speculation. I cannot help it. But I would like to repeat again that we do not interfere with the proceedings of the courts of enquiry. We do not want to commit the same mistake of showing haste while taking such sensitive decisions. Well, if some people thought that they have the right to show this kind of hastiness while taking the decision for the acquisition of this aircraft, well, it is for them to take the decision. But as far as we are concerned, we do not like to interfere. I would like to repeat again that when I was quoting an article from the French papers, all the information about the technical snag, the problems which have been experienced in the operation of this aircraft, my purpose was not to condemn this aircraft. I would rather wait for the report of the court of enquiry to come and I would like the court of enquiry to apply its mind with all calm... *(interruptions)*... You don't allow me to complete. That is the problem.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI :
He is concluding.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN :
I am not concluding. Well, that is the problem.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH : Mr. Minister, just now you have appreciated that Mr. Suresh Kalmadi was a pilot. He is prone to occasional take-off. He cannot remain in his seat.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN :
The hon. Member said "Is it not a fact that the Inspector of Enquiry has come to the conclusion that

[Shri Arif Mohd, Khan]

it was because of the pilot error ?" I would like to inform the hon. Member, through you, Madam that under the law there is a statutory requirement that as soon as there is an accident the Inspector of Enquiry comes into it and he starts his investigation but the moment the court of enquiry is constituted the Inspector of Enquiry becomes part of the court of enquiry. When the court of enquiry is constituted, the report of the Inspector of Enquiry is not the conclusion. It is merely a part of the evidence which will be subjected to examination, cross-examination and other procedures which are prescribed like in other evidences.

I have already conceded to many hon. Members on the other side, particularly, Shri Suresh Kalmadi that they have technical knowledge. I would like to pass my judgement on the report which has been submitted to the court of enquiry. For coming to any conclusion, whether it was a pilot error or whether it was because of the technical failure I would rather wait for the report of the court of enquiry to come and then only I would like to make my decision. I would not like to show the same hastiness which was shown by them. Since Mr. Hanumanthappa has asked me this question, that is why I am mentioning it. He wanted to know whether both these offers were available to the Indian Airlines. Yes, both these offers were available. This unsolicited offer which had come from Airbus Industries was not considered by the Dilbagh Singh Committee. This was an unsolicited offer which came much after the Dilbagh Singh Committee had submitted its report to the Indian Airlines and a decision had already been taken and a letter of intent was placed. . . . (Interruptions).

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA:
Mr. Minister . . . (Interruptions).

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN :
I have understood your point. Let me reply. If I do not meet your point, I will yield to you.

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA:
There is some misunderstanding.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN :
If I do not meet the point which you had raised, I will yield to you. But in this unsolicited offer, both these engines were offered. And who evaluated this unsolicited offer? Not any High Power Committee like the Dilbagh Singh Committee which had evaluated the earlier offers, which had assessed the requirements of the Indian Airlines, which had recommended the kind of capacity which will be needed by the Indian Airlines. Who made the evaluation? The evaluation was made by an Evaluation Cell and when I tried to know who had created this cell and whether it is a regular sort of a procedure, I was informed, no, this is not. This evaluation cell was created on an informal basis. Who were the members of this evaluation cell. Only one member was there in evaluation cell was created on an informal basis. Now this one-member evaluation cell which was created on an informal basis made this technical recommendation that overruled the recommendation which was made by the High Power Committee which consisted of people like Air Marshal Dilbagh Singh. It overruled the recommendation of that Committee which had considered the question not for months but for years and then it had come to a certain conclusion. But this unsolicited offer was evaluated by this informal evaluation Committee. They came to this conclusion, overruled the earlier decision on the two engines which were offered. . . . (Interruptions). I am coming to that only. Let me give the other details. You will find it interesting. It is very interesting. The CFM engine and the V-2500 engine. . . . (Interruptions).

SHRI SURESH KALMADI :
Please don't conclude. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE : Madam, let us not cut it unnecessarily. Let him take 45 minutes. He has taken us to Cyprus, to Frame, to USA.... (*Interruptions*) He is so knowledgeable. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN :
Madam, they are finding snags in my speech, I think.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI :
No, no, you are doing well.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :
They are not finding any snags in your speech. That is why I am not grounding you.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN :
Madam, the question raised by Mr. Hanumanthappa is very important. In fact it was considered at great length by that evaluation cell and it came to the following conclusion :

"Airbus A-320 aircraft fitted with V-2500 engine would consume 19.06 per cent less fuel than Boeing 737 aircraft." It is further said, "Airbus fitted with this engine because it incorporates improved technology and fuel efficiency of 6 to 7 per cent over the CFM 565 engine apart from the fact that the maximum permissible range of the aircraft fitted with V-2500 engine would be longer...." Another interesting ground in favour of the decision to go in for the Airbus was, "no additional investment on airfield infrastructure." Now, many hon. Members have made this point that our airports do not have adequate facilities on the ground. Another reason was given in favour of the Airbus. What was the reason ? The Indian Airlines confirmed that

Airbus A-320 aircraft would be capable of operating in all airfields currently being operated by Boeing 737 aircraft without any additional investment on the airfield infrastructure. So, one of the reasons why no investment was made on the ground was that we are going to acquire this futuristic design, this 21st century aircraft and it will run on 18th century airfields. This was one of the grounds which was given in support of this decision to acquire 21st century aircraft and Madam, this claim that this will be 6 to 7 per cent more fuel-efficient, this claim was made when even the prototype of the engine was not created. What happened after the prototype was ready? What happened at the time of delivery? Even Airbus Industries was not in a position to make that claim. They brought it down to 4 per cent and you will be surprised to know, Madam—I do not know if it was a conscious decision—that there was no evaluation at the level of the Airline. There was no cell created, no mechanism was created to watch the performance guarantees which were given by Airbus Industries. Not merely that, at the time when an agreement was signed with Airbus Industries, the Cabinet had taken the decision that in the agreement, there will be a provision for counter trade which was not incorporated into the agreement. Again at the time when option for the acquisition of 12 additional aircraft was exercised, the Cabinet made this point again that at the time of the signing of the first agreement, they omitted to incorporate this provision about counter trade. Now, at least while exercising the option, the provision for counter trade must be there. Even that was neglected and no action was taken against anybody. These details are there and when you asked me about this, basically I have always maintained this that as far as the Civil Aviation Ministry is concerned, our basic responsibility is to provide efficient air service. In the process, after this crash, whe

[Shri Arif Mohd. Khan]

so many reports started appearing in the press, we definitely took note of that. We also noticed that while procedures have been violated, we also noticed that the decisions of the Government have not been honoured. It is because we noticed all these irregularities, we noticed violation of the procedures, that we referred the matter to the investigating agency and we handed over the records to them and because this point had also been made by the hon. Members about the missing file and this Government could not protect the file, I would like to ask you where is the question of protecting the file? We don't have a suspicious eye. When we came to office, we were not suspecting that there is something wrong with this deal. But when the newspapers started reporting, when we started noticing these violations of the procedure, then we started looking for the records and when we started looking for the records, immediately it came to the notice of the Government that one important file is missing. In fact, I clarified the other day that this was not a statement which I had made in Parliament. This statement I made at the time when some hon. Members were insisting for laying all the papers on the Table of the House and this is a fact which has been stated in the FIR itself which was registered much earlier. This is not a fact which I have disclosed at this stage. This is a fact which has been mentioned in the FIR that one file is missing from the records.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH : What was the name of one Member of the Evaluation Committee ?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : Well, I do not remember. I do not think individuals are important. The basic thing is, this evaluating cell was created on an informal basis. It was not formally created. (Interruptions).

DR. JINENDRA KUMAR JAIN : Where does the needle of suspicion point to ?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : I don't have a suspicious nature. I don't suspect people.

I would rather leave it to the investigating agency . . . (Interruptions) . . .

7 P.M.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH : We would like to know the expert who could judge and who could well appreciate why the proto-type was not made. We would like to know that expert.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : Well, I won't like to discuss the individual. Madam, another point which Shrimati Margaret Alva has made with great force is—she has said—that the country should not be totally dependent on one country; we should not be dependent on one country alone. We had problems in the past. we had a Fleet of Boeings and then spare-parts were not given, etc. etc. Madam, I totally agree with her. I agree with her, but my feeling is that she did not realise the implications of the statement which she made. I totally agree with her. Madam, according to the facts which I have, the Indian Airlines, at no time, took a decision to acquire more than six or seven aircraft. Here, we have a case where, not one of the, but the most modern aircraft anywhere in the world, its engine is still on the design board, yet we take a decision to acquire 31 aircraft. We are now reducing ourselves to be totally dependent on one country. Now this fleet is not going to remain mixed. Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad has also said :

“एक ही टोकरी में सब अंडे नहीं रखने चाहिए”, बिल्कुल सही बात है । एक ही टोकरी में सब अंडे नहीं रखने चाहिए थे । लेकिन यहां तो न सिर्फ सारे

अंडे एक टोकरी में रख दिए गए बल्कि यहां इंडियन एयर लाइंस को यह मान लिया गया कि यह सोने की मुर्गी है, इसमें जिने अंडे हों, एक साथ निकाल लिए जाए। इसलिए इन कठिनाइयों का सामना हमें करना पड़ा है।

महोदया मुझे मालूम है: मैंने बहुत ज्यादा टाइम लिया है। मैं इसके साथ खत्म कर रहा हू अपनी बात को। ... (व्यवधान)...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
What about the leasing of aircraft.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN :
लीज पर मैं और बता दूँ। Because we have taken the decision, the Government has taken the decision that we are not going to operate these aircraft till the report of the court of Inquiry comes and as I have already said, when we take a decision not to fly any particular aircraft, it is not necessarily that you are questioning the airworthiness not necessarily. May be I am questioning my capability. There are several other factors which are equally important for the safe operation of any type of aircraft. ... (Interruptions). Please let me complete. So I am incurring a loss of two and a half crores. Already according to the recommendations of the Ramdas Committee, I am trying to meet all the deficiencies which have been pointed out by it. We have enhanced the training programme when I have already said that we are taking steps to ensure that the instrument landing system of category II becomes operational at Delhi airport. We have already taken the decision to reduce the import duty on the equipment. We have already taken the decision to modernise and upgrade the Delhi airport and Bombay airport. In the meantime, during this period when are taking steps to meet all these shortcomings which have been pointed out by the Ramdas Committee regarding our own

capability, at the same time waiting for the report of Court of Inquiry to come, if for that period before we take the decision, if we can to avoid this loss of leasing out the planes or making some other arrangement we would like to do it and it does not mean that we are disposing of these planes. You are unnecessarily agitating. ... (Interruptions)...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
You are going to dispose of four planes. ... (Interruptions) ... I would like to say that you are going in for a global tender. You are aware that global tender also will take four months or so. I do not know how you are going to wait for that tender to come and lease it out after four months.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN :
Well, Madam, let me point out first that whether it takes four months or four years, we are not going to shortcircuit the procedures, we are not going to violate the procedures, but we have respect for the norms, we have respect for the rules and we have respect for the procedures. Whatever time it takes, let it take, but we will not shortcircuit the procedure. But these four aircraft, which were ready for delivery we have not received so far. The fourteen aircraft which are standing at our airports here, parked here, we are not operating. The Ramdas Committee says that the rate of induction was too rapid for the Indian Airlines staff to prepare themselves, to assimilate, that is, impossible for the Indian Airlines staff to be in a position to operate safely these totally computerised planes. My point is that if I take delivery of these planes and if I am not in a position to operate them, then it means an additional burden on the Indian Airlines. So, I will have to take some decision. These are the planes in which I do not run the risk of losing anything financially. (Interruptions)...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
Do you agree with me or not...
(Interruptions)...

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH : Madam
there is a limit to this...(Interruptions)...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
Do you agree with me or not that...
(Interruptions)...if these four air-
craft are going to fetch you...
(Interruptions)...double the price
now...(Interruptions)...then the
purchase was not wrong...
(Interruptions)...Do you agree or
not ?...(Interruptions)...

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Madam,
what interests me most is that it is
not clear whether they are defending
the crash or the Airbus Industries
or the person who ordered the pur-
chase... (Interruptions)...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
You are not the Minister. Let him
reply... (Interruptions)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :
Let the Minister complete his
reply...(Interruptions)

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN :
Madam, I have already admitted...
(Interruptions)...that I am not so
well-versed with these commercial
aspects...(Interruptions)...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
You cannot avoid the issue by say-
ing this...(Interruptions)...

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN:
This exactly is the difference in the
approach. It is not the job of the
Minister..(Interruptions)...It is not
the job of the Minister. We have
technical experts and I would like
to assure the House, Madam, that
we will not allow the Indian Air-
lines to suffer in any way. (Interrup-
tions)...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI :
Do you admit or not that you are
getting a higher price ?... (Interrup-
tions)...

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN :
Madam, the honourable Member,
Mr. Kalmadi, may be aware of the
offers which are contained in the
brief, which we have received; but
I am not aware of the offers which
have been made. How can I possi-
bly say anything?...(Interruptions)
...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
You only concede that the price
will be much higher. That is what
I want to know...(Interruptions)...

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY : That
will not justify the purchase...(In-
terruptions)...You have risked the
lives of the people...(Interruptions)

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN :
Madam, I would like to thank all
the honourable Members...
(Interruptions)...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
Madam, what about the Vayudoot?
He has not said anything at all. You
cannot cut short the discussion like
this...(Interruptions) What about
Air-India ?...(Interruptions)...

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN
If you get the time, I am ready.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
Madam, I initiated the discussion on
the working of the Ministry of
Civil Aviation...(Interruptions)...
Madam, I am on a point of order...
(Interruptions)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :
How many points of disorder are
there ?...(Interruptions)...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI :
There is only one...(Interruptions)
...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :
Then let me here that.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI :
Madam, I raised this discussion and
there were many points raised by
many speakers. It has gone over a
few days and reply cannot be so

short..(Interruptions).. He has dealt with only one aspect, Indian Airlines. He has not dealt with Air-India, Vayudoot, etc..(Interruptions)..The state of affairs in the Vayudoot is very dismal and the Managing Director has resigned...(Interruptions)...I want to know what he has to say on that, whether he has accepted his resignation....(Interruptions)...Have you accepted his resignation?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Your point of order is addressed to me or to him?...(Interruptions)... There is no point of order. It is overruled. Yes, Mr. Minister, I would request you to finish your reply in two or three sentences.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Has he accepted his resignation or not ?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If you don't intercept his landing, he would have finished the work by now. You get yourself grounded permanently.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: He is asking me to give a long reply and you are asking me to give a short reply. In fact, I have been waiting for three weeks for this debate to conclude and I want to conclude it as soon as possible....

SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU (Bihar): Madam, there is a business listed for 6 o'clock. There is a half-an-hour discussion. It is already past 7. The House should be adjourned otherwise.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I have taken note of all these points which have been made by the honourable Members regarding Vayudoot and Air India. I will come to Vayudoot and Air India specifically. After that I would like to say about Centaur Hotel and about various airports. I would like to assure the honourable Members, through you, Madam,...

एक माननीय सदस्य : नाइट लैंडिंग के बारे में ... (व्यवधान)

श्री अरिफ मोहम्मद खान : वही तो मैं भी कह रहा हूँ हुजूर, रांची आप मत पुछिये क्योंकि रांची में नाइट लैंडिंग फ़ैसलीटी है वहाँ लोग नाइट उठाकर ले जाते हैं ।

On all these points, specific points, which have been made by the honourable Members, since we do not have enough time now, I would like to assure the honourable Members that I will write to each one of them regarding the specific points, about the specific airports...

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: You have not touched many points. If there is no time today, why don't you take it up tomorrow?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : I am responding to the general points. Regarding the problem of particular places which the honourable Members have raised. I am saying that about those points I will be writing to the honourable Members separately. We have taken note of all the points which have been made by the honourable Members regarding Vayudoot. We know there have been many problems. Complaints were there. We are in the process of redefining the role and the objective of Vayudoot. We feel that Vayudoot should not only provide air services to remote and inaccessible areas but should also operate short and medium haul services to places of tourist interest, to smaller cities and towns also. It should also operate bigger aircraft on trunk routes to bigger cities so that its operations become viable. Just now the honourable Shri Santosh Bagrodia made a suggestion that the size of the airlines has become too big. Now we don't have any proposal to bifurcate the airline. At the same time, like we have in bank—the point made by Shri Hanumanthappa also, he said there is competition among the

[Shri Arif Mohd. Khan]

banks though they are all in the public sector—we could create some competitive atmosphere by giving strength to...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Vayudoot was started as a feeder airline, not to compete with Indian Airlines.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : We want to finish this reply and we have a half-an-hour discussion. If you have any points still and are not satisfied with the reply, you can go and ask him. But please don't interrupt.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I do not know, even after saying that we are in the process of redefining the role, how the honourable Member still needed to ask more questions. That was not the objective. This is what will come under redefining the role...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Are you changing the MD or not? This MD has bungled for years. He has submitted his resignation...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: This is too much. He is answering and he will answer provided you allow him to answer. Please have some restraint. Let him answer.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I have great respect for my honourable friend, Shri Suresh Kalmadi, and I would like to assure him that we will give due consideration to all these suggestions which he has made...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Madam, my question is whether he has submitted his resignation—the Managing Director of Vayudoot? (*Interruptions*) I want to know whether he has accepted his resignation or not accepted it? I do not want to comment about it... (*Interruptions*) This is my specific question.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Madam, he does not allow me to come to the area which will be part of the scope of the Vayudoot after this re-definition, that is, to operate bigger aircraft on trunk routes so that its operation becomes viable and it is able to some extent to cross-subsidise its profitable operations, which means that in profitable operations, that is, to provide air link to remote and inaccessible areas to function as feeder airlines. That basic function is to continue, but for that to allow them to operate on some routes so that they can earn something and they can cross-subsidise. If Vayudoot were taken solely on short operations it will have to be heavily subsidised.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI : This we cannot allow, Madam. I asked him whether he has accepted the resignation of the Managing Director, Vayudoot... (*Interruptions*)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him conclude.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: I want a specific clarification. He has to answer.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Madam, Mr. Suresh Kalmadi has given me much of information even outside. He can ask for some information even outside! (*Interruptions*)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I do not know. If it is a private discussion outside the House, we are not concerned with it. About what is happening in the House we will ask you to answer.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I will confine myself to that.

SHRI VISHVJIT P. SINGH (Maharashtra) : Mr. Arif Mohd. Khan has taken full advantage of the absence of Mr. Ahluwalia and myself from the House... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI N.K.P. SALVE: Madam, on a point of order.

About twenty-five times I have heard Mr. Arif Mohd. Khan saying about Mr. Suresh Kalmadi: I have great respect for him. The problem in the debate appears to be his excessive respect for him... (*Interruptions*)... and reciprocal respect for him... (*Interruptions*) Madam, he has taken one and a half hours already. And we have violated the Order Paper. Madam, he can go on as long as he wants.

SHRI ARIF MOHD KHAN: Two minutes more.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: Why two minutes? If you have respect for him, it cannot be two minutes... (*Interruptions*)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No more discussion on it. He will finish in two minutes. And that's all. Please satisfy Mr. Kalmadi the way you can do.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: The Vayudoot depends on subsidy from the Government. That is why they are in the process of re-defining... (*Interruptions*). One point I would like to make about Air-India.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: I have not received the answer about the resignation of....

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Whether I have accepted the resignation by some official, I do not discuss. You will immediately come to know of it the day I accept a resignation. That won't remain a secret. Where is the question of...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Has he withdrawn it or is it lying with you?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I do not know. Madam, there is no reason for the hon. Member to feel so agitated. It was submitted when

he on the treasury benches and he should know better what happened to the resignation. I do not know what you did to the resignation.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Why is he shy of telling that?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I say that it was not submitted to me. It was submitted to my predecessor. (*Interruptions*) Madam, I would like to conclude by saying... (*Interruptions*)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please don't interrupt the House. It is all right that you have got a loud voice. Please don't interrupt the House. I want him to finish it.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I would like to conclude by saying that we will take all possible...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Since he is not replying to my query, I walk out of the House.

(*At this stage the hon. Member left the Chamber*)

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: We will take all possible steps to provide efficient and reliable air services. In the operation of the air services, the uppermost priority will be given to the safety of the passengers. Then comes the comfort of the passengers. Then comes the economy. It cannot be the other way round. No compromise will be made as far as the safety of the passengers is concerned. Thank you very much.

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : महोदया, मेरा एक स्पेसिफिक सवाल है और राष्ट्रीय सम्पत्ति का सवाल है। यह संतूर होटल में घपलेबाजी क्यों हो रही है ?

श्री आरिफ मोहम्मद खान : नहीं होगी।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि यह आस्ट्रेलियन कम्पनी को दिया जाएगा या नहीं दिया जाएगा ?

श्री आफि मोहम्मद खान : नहीं दिया जाएगा ।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :
The discussion on Civil Aviation is
Concluded.

MESSAGES FROM THE LOK SABHA

(I) Constitution (Sixty-sixth Amendment) Bill, 1990.

(II) Constitution (Sixty-eighth Amendment) Bill, 1990

SECRETARY GENERAL: Madam. I have to report to the House the following messages received from the Lok Sabha, signed by the Secretary-General of the Lok Sabha:—

(I)

“In accordance with the provisions of rule 96 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, I am directed to enclose the Constitution (Sixty-sixth Amendment) Bill, 1990, which has been passed by Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 30th May, 1990, in accordance with the provisions of article 368 of the Constitution of India.”

(II)

“In accordance with the provisions of rule 96 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, I am directed to enclose the Constitution (Sixty-

eighth Amendment) Bill, 1990, which has been passed by Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 30th May, 1990, in accordance with the provisions of article 368 of the Constitution of India.”

Madam, I lay a copy of each of the Bills on the Table.

RE. HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:
Now we take up Half-an-Hour Discussion.

SHRI N.K.P. SALVE (Maharashtra): Madam, I crave the indulgence of your permission to move...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If you want the indulgence, ask others to show indulgence to you.

SHRI N.K.P. SALVE: I crave the indulgence of your permission to move that the Half-an-Hour Discussion be taken up tomorrow at 6.00 P.M.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN
Today, just now, we have got the reporting of two Constitution Amendment Bills from the Lok Sabha. We have only two days. Mr. Salve. I request you to please take it up. It is an important matter and the Chairman has permitted it. I request you. Half-an-Hour Discussion will not take more time. (*Interruptions*) I must remind you of the procedure. In Half-an-Hour discussion. Mr. Salve and the other Member who has moved it, will speak and the others can only ask questions and that too not more than 2 or 3 Members. This is the procedure. Don't violate the procedure. I request you, Salve Sahib, to please continue. Let us finish it.