

[12 December, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

planning to exempt their carriers from paying airport and navigation charges in the first five years of operation;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government are also contemplating to extend subsidy to airlines on bidding basis to promote regional connectivity including the North East and Jammu and Kashmir; and

(c) If so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) The proposals to promote regional connectivity and regional airlines are under consideration of the Government as part of New Draft Civil Aviation Policy.

New airport at Ludhiana

2113. SHRI TARLOCHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government have given the approval of an airport in Ludhiana in Punjab;

(b) if so, the details of the project; and

(c) whether this new project will affect the working of airport at Amritsar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) There is proposal for construction of a Civil Enclave at Halwara Defence Airfield near Ludhiana in the State of Punjab.

(b) The project, *inter-alia* includes construction of a terminal building, civil apron, strengthening of runway, installation of ground lightings, installation of communication equipments, construction of cargo and extension of runway etc.

(c) No, Sir.

Operation of Pune airport

2114. SHRI RAHUL BAJAJ: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state the Government's decision on a civilian airport at Pune and by when it would be operational?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): Earlier, the site identified at Chakan in Pune was not acceptable to Ministry of Defence from operational point of view with reference to existing Defence airfield at Lohengaon in Pune. In the month of October 2006, a team comprising officials from Airports Authority of India (AAI), Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) carried out preliminary site inspection of an alternate site near Rajguru Nagar, 6 K.M. north of the initially proposed site at Chakan. This site is acceptable to the Ministry of Defence.

MIDC has been requested to provide the meteorological data of the new site in coordination with Indian meteorological Department. After receipt of these details, a technical study will be carried out and thereafter appropriate decision will be taken by the Government in the matter.

Introduction of airbus service in North East

2115 SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Airlines cannot maintain its schedule for want of sufficient number of aircrafts and pilots;

(b) what steps are being taken to overcome this problem;

(c) whether the services of airbuses will be increased in the North East; and

(d) if so, the details of the programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) The schedule of Indian Airlines is drawn based on aircraft and crew availability, market forces like demand and supply and capacity deployment by the competitors, seasonality, route dispersal guidelines of Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), other operational constraints and its commercial viability. However, changes in the schedule of operations are sometimes necessitated due to availability of resources on a particular day. Indian Airlines has sufficient number of pilots to cater to the present schedule requirement. Additional aircraft are being inducted for introducing/increasing operations.