

## RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday, the 15th April, 1987/  
25 Chaitra, 1909 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock. [Mr. Chairman in the Chair].

### ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

#### Opening of the door of a Dornier in mid-air

\*21. SHRI J. P. GOYAL:†  
SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the door of a Dornier plane in operation with Vayudoot opened in mid-air when it was on a scheduled flight between Ludhiana and Delhi;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(c) what remedial measures have been taken to avoid such accidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER):

(a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

#### Statement

The main entry door of Dornier VT-EJF aircraft operating scheduled Vayudoot flight from Ludhiana to Delhi on 30th March, 1987 opened while in flight. The Commander reported that about 25/30 minutes after the take off from Ludhiana the door 'open' warning light came in the cockpit. Subsequently, the door opened. The Commander reported this to the Air Traffic Control of Palam and full emergency was declared at the airport. The aircraft landed safely with the open door at 19.57 hours. There was no injury to anybody on board the flight. The Director of Air Safety and Regional Controller of Air Safety, Delhi carried out an inspection of the door involved in this incident, and also those of the three other aircraft stationed at Delhi Airport. It was found that the front plungers of the door locking system were not engaging fully while the door handle was put in 'lock' position. Vayudoot was advised to rectify the snag before releasing the aircraft for flights. They were also advised to issue instructions to their out-station establishments to carry out similar checks and rectifications immediately. Vayudoot has since carried out necessary inspections of all the Dornier aircraft in its fleet to check the proper operation and locking of the door mechanism. In addition, it is now sending a technician on board on all Dornier flights to obviate recurrence of such incidents.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Today, it is from right to left.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Alternate days. Question No. 21.

SHRI J. P. GOYAL: Sir, the newspaper reports dated 1st April, 1987 clearly show that Vayudoot aircraft is not worthy of travel by our passengers. It so happened that on 30th of March, 1987, when the Vayudoot aircraft PF-102 was flying on a routine flight from Ludhiana to Delhi, its door suddenly opened. A similar thing happened on 25th March, when the Vayudoot aircraft was flying over Calcutta. It has also been reported that 19 cases of engine failure in Vayudoot aircraft have taken place during the last one year. This was reported by the Vayudoot Pilots' Association to the authorities. Instead of rectifying the irregularities and grounding the aircraft which is so dangerous for the passengers and the pilots, the authorities have suspended some active members of the Association.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Two minutes over. Please sit down.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Sir, it is a fact that in the first instance

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri

when the aircraft was flying along the Passighat sector in the North-East, it was seen that a child was fiddling with the emergency window and the window fell out. It is a fact, Sir. We have taken measures under the Air Safety Act that we are supposed to carry an air-hostess or attendant in a 10-seater and we have seen to it that we carry an attendant.

In the second incident which the hon. Member has mentioned over Jalandhar, it is true that when the aircraft took off, after 25 minutes the red light sign came that the door was open. The Captain sent his co-pilot to check up. The co-pilot went and he noticed that it was closed, but as soon as he turned it opened. The emergency procedure was followed to bring the plane down to 6000 feet and to land at the nearest airport. The nearest airport was Delhi. All the emergency precautions were taken and the aircraft landed safely. As soon as the aircraft landed, the full inspection procedures were done on the aircraft and all the other three aircraft which were also standing on the ground were also done by the Director General, Civil Aviation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Second supplementary.

SHRI J. P. GOYAL: The engine manufacturers of Vayudoot are a company named Garret and the name of the other company is Dornier Aircraft Company. These are foreign companies. So is it that we have purchased defective aircraft from them? Why should we purchase defective aircraft? Why should not we ask these companies to improve the aircraft? And is there any such thing which we are raising today and what percentage of commission and to whom has been given while purchasing these aircraft?

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: First of all, I would like to inform the hon. Member that the Garret company is not as bad a company as is being made out. No doubt I had mention-

ed this in the Lok Sabha that there were 19 premature engine removals, out of which nine the company has accepted as a defect in the engine. Four were due to bird-hit, which nobody could help. There were six which partly we could take responsibility for, out of which two were because of low battery voltage operation and other operational reasons. But at no time did we compromise on the safety and security of the passengers. We have always made sure that whenever the aircraft is flying, it is flying with good engines. No doubt, it is only because the Vayudoot engineers noticed all these things were wrong that we were able to point out these known failures to the company, which they have accepted and are working on them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Was any commission paid?

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Sir, this has nothing to do with our Ministry... (Interruptions)...

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the March 30 incident has legitimately aroused concern, and although the Minister has assured Parliament that safety is his first concern yet a few important questions arise, which should be answered to generate public confidence. While Vayudoot is serving 84 stations, it does not have proper facilities for maintenance, spare parts are not readily available the pilots have to work under instructions to fill in "snag nil" report in the log-book. On two occasions planes travelled with a defective engine and yet the report was not lodged by the pilot, and the Himachal Pradesh Safari has not established any location point in the air to communicate messages in case of any emergency. I would like the honourable Minister to inform the House regarding the steps taken to eliminate these shortcomings which can be dangerous for the flights.

**SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER:** Sir, I am surprised that the captain who reported this had flown with all these defects which he had seen. He is not worthy to be a Captain and take a risk with the security of the people. But, anyway, some other pilots had raised a few questions which they had written to me also and which have been very well raised in the newspapers. But, I would like to inform, Sir, that I have got all the details. But there has never been overloading as has been alleged—because this is one of the questions raised. This has all been within the rules which permit to carry passengers, cargo and night mail.

श्रीमती प्रतिभा सिंह : मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहूंगी कि डी०जी० सी० ए० ने जो तीन सदस्यों की समिति बनाई थी और उसने जो रिपोर्ट दी है उसमें डोरनियार के मैनुफैक्चरिंग के बारे में क्या-क्या बातें कही गई है? दूसरी बात मैं यह जानना चाहती हूँ कि इसके पुर्जे बाहर से मंगाने पर कितनी राशि खर्च हुई है? जहाँ तक मेरी जानकारी है, इस पर 3.84 करोड़ रुपये खर्च हुए हैं। क्या स्पेयर पार्ट्स भेजने में भी उन लोगों ने देरी की है?

**SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER:** Sir, no doubt this question relates to the door, but I am prepared to face other questions also raised by the honourable Members. Sir, first of all, the Committee had made certain recommendations which the Government has accepted and we are instructing the Vayudoot people to implement. The third report is which the Garret Company people gave on our instructions—which I have got yesterday or the day before yesterday—and we are looking into it and we would like to see it. As far as spending money is concerned, we buy our spares mostly from Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, and some we purchase directly also. Now, initially we purchased over Rs. 83 lakhs worth of Dornier,

and for engines thereafter we purchased from Garret Corporation the Dorniers for Rs. 2.34 crores. The cost of two Dornier engines is Rs. 59.5 lakhs and two spare propellers we got for Rs. 6 lakhs. The total is Rs. 382.51 lakhs. No doubt, we had some problems in getting spares, but now we have enough spares and there is no problem.

**SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE:** Sir, pilots have all flocked to that side.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** So, passengers are on this side.

**SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE:** Passengers are on this side. We always suspected and stated so. Now it has been discovered by the Government also that whenever we buy anything from outside whether it is a submarine or an aircraft there is an Indian agency involved. And quite often...

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The question does not arise.

**SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE:** I am putting the question in this manner. The Indian agencies so surprise us that the virtues of the purchase are often clouded. Now this may have happened in this case also. So, what I want to know is who the Indian agencies are of the parent company in this case.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Not allowed. This is with regard to door opening.

**SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE:** The door has opened for the Indian agencies also.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** You put a separate question.

**SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE:** My submission is, something defective has been purchased. There is a go-between. I want to know who the go-between is.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** You put a separate question.

**SHRI VISHWA BANDHU GUPTA:** Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is a question of the Dornier aircraft. In fact, it is a large question of the entire fleet of the Dornier aircraft. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he has called for experts from the company to look into all the aircraft that we have for certificate of airworthiness at the present moment and try to look into the defects of doors and other thing of the aircraft on the ground. Is there any rethinking on the part of the Minister and the Ministry to continue to use the Dorniers for Vayudoot and other civil aviation services?

**SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER:** Sir, no doubt, we had asked the experts committee to go into that. They have looked into all the aircraft. But no aircraft takes off the ground till the airworthiness certificate is given by our Directorate. It is under the Directorate of Civil Aviation.

As far as buying more aircraft is concerned, our initial buying was only for the 10 aircraft which we have got from the Defence Ministry. When the new requirements come, we will consider according to our requirements and our safety and so on.

**PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA:** Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Minister just now stated that an aircraft is given an airworthiness certificate before it takes off. In the two cases which he has mentioned, I would like to know whether the airworthiness certificate was given in spite of the fact that there was a problem, and, therefore, what action you have taken against those people who had given the certificate of airworthiness. That is the first part.

The second part is that the Garret and the Dornier companies have categorically stated that there is nothing wrong as far as they are concerned and a letter has been sent to the Minister and also it has been forwarded to all the people. The General Ma-

nager, Vayudoot has categorically stated that as far as the maintenance is concerned, it is perfectly all right, and that the defect is with the aircraft. In between, Sir only yesterday the seven pilots who are from the Hyderabad base have come out saying that there is much to be desired in the maintenance etc. Under these circumstances, I would like to know from the Minister what steps have been taken to reconcile the type of problems that have arisen because of the conflicting statements form the three operative agencies in this connection.

**SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER:** I had informed in my first supplementary which I replied to Mr. Goyal, about what the Garret people have accepted as their fault and what we have accepted as our fault.

**PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA:** It is not correct. The latest one which has been written to you and circulated to the DGCA people etc...

**SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER:** You did not allow me even to finish this. I have just told you. You should have listened to me.

**PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA:** I did.

**SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER:** You did not because this question would not have come.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** I listened to both of you. Please don't exchange.

**SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER:** I said that the first committee which we had formed under the Directorate of Airworthiness, a three-person committee, has submitted, given its recommendation which the Government has accepted. Recently, the Garret company has also given their report which I am looking into. I just got it yesterday, the day-before-yesterday. That is why I said, "I am looking into it." Let me tell you, no aircraft takes off

bill the airworthiness certificate is given. If something goes wrong, no doubt, I will have an enquiry. I am as much concerned as you are concerned about my aircraft as well as the passengers whom I carry on the aircraft.

**श्रीमती मनोरमा पांडेय :** माननीय मंत्री जी ने बताया सीरीज ग्राफ इंजन फैल्योर्ज और इनका दरवाजा भी खुल गया था। इन बातों को देखते हुए क्या वायुदूत सेवाओं के दूसरे जहाज जिसमें कि ज्यादा सीटिंग कैपैसिटी हो, इन जहाजों को उनकी जगह पर रिप्लेस करने का विचार रखते हैं ?

**श्री जगदीश टाईटलर :** नहीं, रिप्लेस करने का विचार तो नहीं है, मगर और जहाज लेने का विचार है।

**SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:** Mr. Chairman, Sir, this Dornier incident has sent alarming bells in the aviation circles. Even as the inquiry into the incident relating to the opening of the door of a Vayudoot aircraft is getting under way, the aircraft itself has been cleared by the DGCA and sent to Hyderabad which has surprised the aviation circles considering the seriousness of the incident and the possibility of sabotage voiced by the General Manager of Vayudoot, Mr. Harsh Vardhan. May I know from the Minister whether it is a fact that the Vayudoot Pilots' Association had written a letter on March, 24 six days before the incident drawing the attention of the General Manager to the hazards of flying without a flight attendant and observing that on several occasions, passengers had tried to open the exit door of the aircraft on flight? I would like to know from the Minister whether the management has replied to that letter. I would also like to know whether they have recognised the Pilots' Association. The General Manager of the Vayudoot itself has welcomed the formation of the Association.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** You are opening the gate for other items. The ques-

tion is with regard to opening of the door of a Dornier.

**SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER:** Sir, I would like to inform the hon. Member, the first information which he got is absolutely wrong. No aircraft took off as soon as it landed to avoid something defective. That information which is contained in the newspaper is very, very wrong.

**SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:** What about the Association?

**SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER:** Regarding Association, no doubt, they had written to me as well as to the General Manager. I had repeated this question that they have pointed out four things in the letter. One was the requirement of a Cabin Attendant. The first time when the emergency door was opened, the Cabin Attendant was there at that time. But the second time, Cabin Attendant was not there. I would like to tell one thing here that the Vayudoot is like a bush operation where all the facilities are not required, such as gigantic facility and so much money. It is just not possible. You will never have any airport connected with Vayudoot—if I were to go. But we have started this as a bush operation. The Polits have also mentioned overloading by the flight executive, servicing of the aircraft is poor because spare parts are not available and carrying of cargo is not airworthy. But pilots are also responsible. Are they following all the rules and regulations when the aircraft is taking off? Apart from that I had already mentioned that no aircraft which does not have any airworthiness can ever take-off. It is just not possible and a pilot or a ground engineer or other engineers would ever see to it.

**SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:** What about recognition?

**SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER:** It is for the management to consider it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is why you are opening the door for some other subjects. Now, Shrimati Jayanthi Natarajan.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: My question has already been asked.

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: It is reported that the fact-finding committee has submitted its report to the special committee. May I know from the hon. Minister whether this report states that the "engine and therefore aircraft performance in all cases are not upto the minimum specification requirements as outlined in the Pilot's Operation Handbook"?

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Sir, I did not catch his question. What was his question?

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: My information is that the fact finding committee has submitted a report to the special committee and this report states that the "engine and therefore aircraft performance in all cases are not up to the minimum specification requirements as outlined in the Pilot's Operation Handbook." Please confirm as to whether this is correct or not.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Sir, I am looking into the report and as soon as I have gone through it I will let you know.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next Question.

हवाई अड्डों पर रात के समय विमान उतारने संबंधी सुविधायें

\* 22. श्रीमती बोणा वर्मा : क्या नागर विमानन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) देश के उन हवाई अड्डों के नाम क्या हैं जहाँ पर विमान सेवाओं के लिए रात को जहाजों के उतरने की सुविधाएं उपलब्ध हैं ; और

(ख) क्या सरकार उन हवाई अड्डों पर रात के समय विमानों के उतरने की सुविधाएं मुहैया कराने का विचार रखती है, जहाँ पर अभी तक ऐसी

सुविधाएं उपलब्ध नहीं हैं ; यदि हां, तो कब तक ?

नागर विमानन मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री जगदीश टाईटलर) : (क) और (ख) एक विवरण सभा पटल पर रखा है ।

### विवरण

(क) राष्ट्रीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण तथा भारत अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण के निम्नलिखित हवाई अड्डों पर रात्रि अवतरण सुविधायें प्रदान की गई हैं :-

- (1) अमरतला
- (2) अहमदाबाद
- (3) अमृतसर
- (4) बेलगाम
- (5) भावनगर
- (6) भोपाल
- (7) भुवनेश्वर
- (8) बम्बई
- (9) कलकत्ता
- (10) कोयम्बतूर
- (11) दिल्ली
- (12) गुवाहाटी
- (13) हैदराबाद
- (14) इन्दौर
- (15) जयपुर
- (16) लखनऊ
- (17) मद्रास
- (18) मद्रुरै
- (19) मंगलौर
- (20) नागपुर
- (21) पटना
- (22) राजकोट
- (23) तिरुचिरापल्ली
- (24) त्रिवेन्द्रम
- (25) उदयपुर
- (26) बडोदरा और
- (27) वाराणसी