

Accident/crash of IAF aircrafts/helicopters

1391. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a MIG-21 fighter aircraft crashed near Bagdogra in West Bengal on 19 February, 2010;

(b) if so, whether the Court of Inquiry has been conducted to ascertain the exact cause of the crash;

(c) if so, the number of fighter aircraft/helicopters of IAF crashed in the past six months with the reasons therefor;

(d) whether Government has since taken any concrete steps to prevent such accident/crash of IAF aircraft/helicopters; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) Every IAF aircraft accident is investigated by a Court of Inquiry and remedial measures taken thereon.

In the past 6 months (September, 2009 to 4th March, 2010) six further aircrafts and one helicopter of IAF have crashed. Preliminary cause of the accidents were Human Error/Technical Defect.

Various measures to reduce aircraft accidents including operational risk management, crew resource management and improvised training on aviation safety have been implemented to generate a safer flying culture. Visit of all flying bases by senior aviation safety functionaries of IAF have been undertaken to apprise and caution operating units about the causes of accidents. Continuous and multi-faceted effort is always underway to enhance and upgrade flight safety. Constant interaction with Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs), both indigenous and foreign, is also maintained to overcome the technical defects of aircraft. In addition, anti-bird measures are also undertaken.

Upgradation of existing fleet of fighter aircrafts

1392. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that MIG-29 fighters are likely to be upgraded;

(b) whether Government has signed an agreement with Russia to implement upgradation plan;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether Government has also signed agreement with other countries to upgrade its existing fleet of aircrafts, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Government has signed a contract for upgrade of the MiG-29 aircrafts with M/s. Russian