

(b) and (c) FAA did raise its concern about availability of qualified technical personnel in Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). Thereafter, Government has given sanction to create 427 additional Group "A" technical posts and 129 non-technical posts in Group "B" and "C" in May, 2009. As many as 132 posts were revived. DGCA has hired 40 safety inspectors on secondment for the industry. 48 technical officers have been hired on short-term contract basis and 178 technical officers have been selected for appointment as consultants on short - term contract basis. The FAA team has appreciated the initiatives taken by DGCA and has stated that DGCA has demonstrated amazing improvement in continuing to enhance and improve its safety oversight system beyond expectation.

Life jacket for every air passenger

872. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that economy class passengers in the aircrafts have not been provided with life jackets, but are advised to hold on to their seat cushions and the business and first class passengers are asked to take out the life jackets placed below each premium class seat;

(b) whether the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has now made it mandatory for Indian carriers to provide life jackets for every passenger; and

(c) whether these orders have been issued to save Indian aviation International status of Category I accorded by Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA's) International Aviation Safety Assessment Programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL):

(a) and (b) Earlier, some private airlines provided individual flotation devices (seat cushion) in place of life jackets to economy class passengers. However, the regulation has been revised making it mandatory for airlines to provide life jackets for each person on board.

(c) No, Sir. The safety regulations are reviewed periodically and during review, the amendment was proposed and accepted.

Air-cargo centres at Surat and Rajkot airports

873. SHRI NATUJI HALAJI THAKOR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the national carrier proposes to set up dedicated air-cargo centres at Surat and Rajkot airports including perishable air cargo centres for improving their bottomline;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the modalities have been worked out for setting up of such centres;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?