

(b) if so, the present status of the proposal?

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

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Union Government has approved the proposal to declare Tirupati airport as an International airport subject to the condition that the airport will be made operational only after requisite facilities have been put in place.

Out of total requirement of land measuring 718 acres, 293 acres has been handed over by the State Government to Airports Authority of India (AAI). Extension of runway and allied works is subject to handing over of balance land free from all encumbrances by the State Government. Presently, the project estimate is Rs. 174 crores and includes:—

- (i) Construction of new terminal building of cater 700 passengers (500 domestic + 200 international).
- (ii) Construction of new apron and link taxiway to park 4 nos. aircrafts (AB-321/AB-320/B-737-900W)

Airports unsafe for landing

870. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that some of the airports in the country are unsafe for landing; and

(b) if so, the names of those airports and what steps are being taken to ensure safe landing?

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

(a) There is no aerodrome which can be termed as unsafe.

(b) Does not arise.

Non-availability of qualified technical personnel at DGCA

871. SHRI B.S. GNANADESIKAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the US Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) has informed Government that India continues to remain in Category I of the FAA's International Aviation Safety Assessment Programme;

(b) whether the FAA has also raised its concern about availability of qualified technical personnel in the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA); and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government to place qualified technical personnel in DGCA?

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

(a) Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has informed that India not only continues to meet FAA's International Aviation Safety Assessment (IASA) category-I status but is also considered to be a Role Model for other nations in Asian aviation environment.

(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?