

Bagdogra and Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Sikkim for connecting Darjeeling with hill areas and to facilitate the tourists; and

(b) whether Government will take any positive steps to construct a separate helipad in Darjeeling and Sikkim for the helicopters to take off from Bagdogra?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Pawan Hans Helicopters Limited (PHHL) has carried out a joint survey alongwith West Bengal Tourism Department officials for starting helicopter services to Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Mirik by the State Government. A report in this regard has been submitted to the State Government by the PHHL.

(b) There is no proposal with Airports Authority of India (AAI) for construction of helipads at Darjeeling (West Bengal). However, in case of Sikkim, AAI is constructing a Greenfield Airport at Pakyong which is likely to be commissioned by June, 2012, from where helicopters can also operate.

Cancellation of flights

2954. SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the several flights to and from Delhi and other airports in the country were cancelled, delayed and disrupted due to technical, fog and change in direction of winds;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the estimated loss suffered and the number of passengers affected thereby during the last two year, airport-wise;

(d) whether the affected passengers have been provided any compensation by the concerned airlines; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. 200 flights diverted from Delhi airport due to fog in 2010. 40 flights were delayed, 4 flights were diverted, 17 flights were cancelled at Guwahati airport and 147 flights were delayed/diverted/cancelled due to fog/technical/change in direction of winds from Lucknow airport in 2010.

237 flights were delayed/diverted from other airports due to fog and poor visibility in 2010, 113 flights were delayed/cancelled due to technical in 2010 and 7 flights were affected due to change in direction of winds in 2010 from airports other than Delhi.

(c) to (e) Due to visibility falling below operating minima during fog, many a time flight get delayed/cancelled with consequential basis. Some airlines do not maintain

details related to delays due to 'landing restrictions' or late clearance for take off. It is, therefore, not possible to compute loss and passengers affected on this account.

However, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued Guidelines to be followed by various agencies with regard to facilitation and timely information to be given by airlines to its passengers.

The guidelines contain the following directions for Airlines:—

- (I) Airlines shall augment their ground staff and position them at the airport with proper briefing for handling various passenger facilitation processes in coordination with the other airport agencies.
- (II) The Airlines, particularly Low Cost Careers (LCC) shall provide facilitation in terms of tea/water/snacks to the passengers of delayed flights. The coupon scheme extended by DIAL may be availed by airlines for the passenger facilitation purpose.

Daily flight from Amritsar airport

2955. SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that a large number of the passengers fly daily from Amritsar international airport;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the number of international airports in India;
- (d) the number of international flights Air India is operating;
- (e) the reasons for stopping flights to other countries from Amritsar by Air India;
- (f) whether Air India is resuming its flights again from Amritsar; and
- (g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) The daily average number of passengers who flew through Amritsar Airport in 2009-10 was 1924.

(c) There are 17 airports in India which have been declared as International airports.

(d) Air India and its subsidiary Air India Express operates to 33 international destinations.

(e) and (f) Air India has not stopped operation of international flights from Amritsar Airport, however, effective October 31, 2010, Air India has restructured 4 weekly