

conomic, would the hon. Minister find more economic ports in the eastern zone like Paradip and Haldia and improve them instead of taking the matter lightly ?

PROF. V.K.R. V. RAO: Sir, I did not suggest that the Calcutta Port has become uneconomic. I was referring to the fact that over the last 15 or 20 years on account of the siltation that has taken place and the water not coming into the Bhagirathi the river Hooghly has been having difficulties. But we know that the Faraitka Barrage is now under construction. When the Farakka Barrage is completed, the position will improve. As regards the Paradip Port in which I have no doubt my hon. friend has great interest, I can assure him that it will not be allowed to suffer on account of this.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Next question.

SHRI A. P. JAIN: Sir, I have been wanting to put a question.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The whole trouble is that I would like to give not more than 5 minutes to an ordinary question.

SHRI A. P. JAIN: That is true, but, Sir, these five minutes must be evenly distributed on all sides of the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If a Question is important, I shall give 10 minutes and if it is more important, I shall consider whether there can be further discussion on it or half-an-hour discussion. I am sorry I did not notice 3'Ou. You are a senior Member of this House. If I had noticed you, I would have allowed you. I hope you will excuse me. Next question now.

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY OF INDIAN AIR- LINES AND AIR INDIA

♦471. SHRI A. G. KULKARNI : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state the details of improvements made by the Indian Airlines and the Air India in regard to the operational efficiency during the years 1966-67 and 1967-68 respectively ?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (DR. KARAN SINGH) : I lay on the Table of the House a comparative statement for the years 1966-67 and 1967-68 which would indicate the progress made by the two Air Corporations during this period.

STATEMENT

	Air India		I. A. C.	
	1966-67	1967-68	1966-67	1967-68
1. AT k.m. (Available Tonne km) (million)	352.685	434.452	165.120	205.847
2. Operating cost per AT k.m. (Rs.)	1.172	1.140	1.80	1.62
3. Operating revenue per AT k.m. (Rs.)	1.30	1.266	1.64	1.69
4. AT k.m. per employee	46,700	54,100	13,371	15,952
5. No. of revenue passengers carried	2,54,736	2,85,459	1,409,503	1,657,671
6. Total Revenue (Rs. in lakhs)	47,01.55	55,22.00 (Revised estimates)	28,09.52	34,62.00 (Revised estimates)
7. Total Expenditure (Rs. in lakhs)	43,12.40	52,93.00 (Revised estimates)	32,33.02	34,88.30 (Revised estimates)
8. Profit/Loss (in lakhs)	3,89.15	2,29.00 (Revised estimates)	423.50 (Loss)	26.30 (Loss) (Revised estimates)

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI : In the statement there are certain figures given for 1967-68. But is it a fact that the gross receipts have risen from Rs. 23 crores to Rs. 27 crores while the operating expenses have increased from Rs. 23 crores to Rs. 29 crores and therefore the increase in the operating expenses is not commensurate with the increase in productivity and may I know whether the Government has given thought to this matter ?

DR. KARAN SINGH : Which of the two Airlines is the hon. Member referring to ?

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: The Indian Airlines.

DR. KARAN SINGH: Well, Sir, all I can say is that the performance of the Indian Airlines this year has been very much better than its performance in the year that has gone by, in 1966-67. As the Statement will show, there was a loss of Rs. 4 23 crores whereas in the 'ast year, 1967-68, that loss has come down only to Rs. 26 lakhs. And I can say with some confidence for the information of the hon. House that in the current year we expect to make a clear profit of more than half a crore of rupees.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI : May I know from the Government whether the number of employees has increased from 9390 to 12349 and due to this increase in the number of employees the available ton kilometres per employee have not been appreciably increased and may I know whether this new Chairman who is supposed to be an expert on industrial management wiH take care of increasing the operating efficiency ?

DR. KARAN SINGH : Yes, Sir. A certain amount of expansion in our employees is essential as a result of the general development of the Airlines, but I can assure the hon. Member that attempts will always be made to get the maximum possible advantage of these employees to increase the efficiency.

SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHARAN: The hon. Minister will kindly recollect that on one of the previous occasions, while referring to the overall efficiency of the Indian Airlines particularly, the hon. Minister told this House that amalgamation of the Indian Airline^ and the Air-India would be one of the things to be considered by the new chiefs of the two Airlines. I would like to know from the hon. Minister how far this aspect of amalgamation of the Air-India and the Indian Airlines has been considered. What is the position today ?

DR. KARAN SINGH : Sir, the suggestion with regard to amalgamation is coming up for many years, ever since the two Airlines were nationalised. But the present thinking is that there is no immediate advantage in amalgamation because the Air-India runs entirely a different type of airline; it is an international operation in competition with very big and very wealthy international airlines against which the Air-India is a very small unit. Therefore we felt that if we amalgamated them, perhaps it might bog the Air-India down. Secondly, the Indian Airlines is also a different type. So, the present thinking is that there should be complete co-ordination and co-operation and that has been ensured by having common Boards for the two Airlines. Therefore, the question of amalgamation as such is not at present under consideration.

SHRI A. P. JAIN : May I know what increase in the tariff there has been in the Indian Airlines since 1960, percentage ?

DR. KARAN SINGH : I do not have that information, Sir.

SHRI JOACHIM ALVA: On a previous occasion in the other House I had pointed out that the Estimates Committee had stated that in one particalar year Rs. 30 lakhs were paid as commission by the Indian Airlines to Travel Agents for booking tickets and it was considered to be an enormous sum. What investigations have taken place to cut down the payment of the Travel

Agents and make a saving on this ground ? Then is it true that the World Bank has raised objection to the amalgamation of the Indian Airlines and the Air-India ? Is that one of the considerations why you cannot proceed with the amalgamation ?

DR. KARAN SINGH : Sir, the Travel Agents always get a percentage of the booking everywhere in the world and we do not think that their genuine share should be cut down. In fact, the share had been cut down, if I recall correctly, from 5 per cent, to 4 per cent, and that created a lot of heartburning and trouble. I think we have got to follow the international procedure in these matters, because after all Travel Agents do play a very crucial role in the whole development of tourism and of travel. It is nothing unusual that we are doing. In fact my present recollection is, subject to confirmation, that the percentage of the Travel Agents' commission has still not been raised to the original 5 per cent.; it is 4.5 per cent, at present. I do not think we should grudge that because with the overall growth. Travel Agents have got to play an important role.

So far as the World Bank is concerned, to the best of my recollection no such opinion has been expressed and we will take a decision with regard to amalgamation on our own and we would not be dictated to by any foreign agency.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA : May I know if the Minister is aware of the fact that ever since the Indian Airlines came into being their fare has constantly been rising ? To give one example of my humble city of Kanpur, before the Indian Airlines came into being the fare was Rs. 46 and now it is Rs. 99, from Delhi to Kanpur. May I know if the Minister will take some steps to reduce the fares or at least not to increase them in the near future ?

DR. KARAN SINGH: Sir, there are several reasons for the increase in fares. As you know, the cost of fuel is constantly rising, salaries to our employees are constantly rising, there

are constant demands; over the last 10 or 15 years the salaries have also increased considerably. But I would like to say that on comparison with other national airlines, not international airlines, our fare per kilometre is still extremely low. I am not threatening a further increase in it. I can say that at present there is no immediate plan for any increase.

SHRI A. D. MANI : May I ask the Minister what is the operational efficiency of a Viscount aircraft which is being used on many of our routes ? Are we breaking even in the flying of a Viscount aircraft ? I want the hon. Minister to give us some details about the operational efficiency of the Caravelle. Are we breaking even on that and, if so, to what extent ?

DR. KARAN SINGH : I am not sure whether I have the detailed figures for each of the different types of planes but I can give this information that the Viscounts on the whole have become uneconomical and that is why gradually it is our policy to phase them out in the course of the next 3 or 4 years. The Caravelles, on the other hand, as compared to Viscounts, are very much more profitable.

SHRI A. D. MANI : Are you making profits through them ?

DR. KARAN SINGH : We are. The old piston-engined aircrafts—the Dakotas and the Skymasters—are very uneconomical. We lost every hour those planes were out. So we have to virtually completely phase them out. In the course of the next year there will be no piston-engined aircraft.

DEMANDS MADE BY DELHI METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

*472. DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the various demands made from the Central Government by the Delhi Metropolitan Council through resolutions or otherwise during the period from April, 1967 to April, 1968 ; and