(c) whether it is a fact that the State Government has approached the Ministry in this regard; and

(d) if so, by when action shall be taken?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI) : (a) Rourkela air strip belongs to Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL), which is a Central Government Public Sector Enterprise under the Ministry of Steel. The air strips is licensed by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, for private use. The airstrips at Jaypore in Koraput District and at Hirakund in (Jamadarpali) in Sambalpur District belong to Government of Odisha. These two airstrips are not licensed for operations.

(b) and (c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

US undertaking for Indian Interests

†*153. SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that though America advocates promotion of foreign capital investment in multibrand retail sector yet it does not say anything categorically about decision to be taken by it as per request made by Government of India regarding huge subsidy being given to agriculture sector and visa fees enhanced by it;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government in this regard; and

(c) whether Government would take any undertaking from America regarding above Indian interests in future?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S. M. KRISHNA) : (a) to (c) India's economic policies, including with regard to Foreign Direct Investment in India, are guided solely by national interest and economic development goals.

However, India and the U.S. hold regular consultations, including through their bilateral economic forums, on the global economic environment, multilateral trade negotiations and mutually beneficial opportunities for further expansion in their strong and growing investment and trade ties in

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

goods as well as services sector. During these discussions, Government has conveyed to the United States Government its concern on the possible adverse impact of the hike in the fees of HIB and L Visas. These discussions also provide an opportunity to address market access issues for agricultural products in the two countries.

As stated by Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and U.S. President Barack Obama in November, 2010 in New Delhi, the two sides remain committed to take steps to reduce trade barriers and protectionist measures, encourage research and innovation, and facilitate greater movement of professionals, investors and business travelers and to enhance their technological and economic partnership.

Regulatory authority to control Air Fares

* 154. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a need to have a regulatory authority to control the air fares; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken to set up such a regulatory authority in future?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI) : (a) and (b) Air fares applicable for domestic passengers are determined by market forces and are not fixed by Government. The framework for Regulation of Domestic Air fares in the Country is governed by Rule 135 of the Air Craft Rules 1937 which lays down broad principles including maintenance of transparency and tariff publication by the Airlines.

With a view to maintain transparency in tariff publication, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has taken following steps:

- Scheduled domestic airlines have been directed to display established tariff route-wise and fare category-wise in their websites, on monthly basis and also to notify any significant and noticeable changes to DGCA within 24 hrs. of effecting such a change.
- A Tariff Analysis Unit has been set up in DGCA to monitor tariff on regular basis at periodic intervals. DGCA has not noted any significant hike in fares beyond fare band communicated to it by airlines.