

FDI cap for foreign airlines

*60. SHRI M. P. ACHUTHAN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) under the Ministry of Commerce has circulated a proposal recommending allowing foreign airlines to pick up stakes in domestic carriers with 26 per cent Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) cap; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Ministry thereto?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) and (b) As per extant FDI policy, as contained in Circular 2 of 2011-Consolidated FDI Policy issued by Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), no foreign airlines would be allowed to participate directly or indirectly in the equity of an Air Transport Undertaking engaged in operating Scheduled and Non-Scheduled Air Transport Services except Cargo airlines. A proposal to allow Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) by foreign airlines in Domestic Airlines is under examination of Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP).

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Damage to Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project

311. SHRI BAISHNAB PARIDA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a serious concern about the damage to the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project with blockades creating a major impediment in ensuring that the plant systems functioned at a minimal level;

(b) whether it is a fact that local sentiments are being exploited by environmentalists from Finland, Australia, France and the United States; and

(c) if so, the concrete steps Government is taking to allay the fears of the villagers of the Kudankulam?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) Recently there have been protests against the starting of Kudankulam nuclear power project by sections of the local people which have hampered normal work at the site. Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plants (KKNPP) Units 1&2 are at advanced stage of commissioning. Several reactor and auxiliary systems have been made functional. These systems, which also include sophisticated computer based systems, require certain minimum maintenance to keep them in a healthy state. Efforts are underway, in consultation with the

district authorities, to ensure that personnel required for carrying out the minimum maintenance activities are able to go to the plant and carry out the necessary activities smoothly.

(b) There have been reports in the press to this effect.

(c) The Central Government has taken several steps to allay the fears of the local villagers about the project. These include;

- Several high level meetings with the state government officials and representative of the local people.
- Constitution of an Expert Group of 15 specialists, comprising renowned academicians, scientists, doctors and engineers to interact with the officials of the state government and spokespersons of the people in the neighbourhood of Kudankulam. The expert group has already had two meetings with the spokespersons of the local people and the nominees of the Government of Tamil Nadu.
- Directives to Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) to enhance public awareness and outreach programmes in the area around the plant to allay their fears which are being implemented.

Agitation against nuclear projects

312. SHRI K.N. BALAGOPAL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government has noticed the massive agitation by people against Kudankulam and other nuclear projects in the country;

(b) if so, the steps that were taken to address their demands; and

(c) whether India would re-look into the Nuclear Power Policy in the backdrop of recent incidents in Japan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) There have been agitations against nuclear power projects by some sections of people at Kudankulam and Jaitapur.

(b) In respect of Kudankulam, the Central Government has constituted an expert group of 15 specialists for interacting with officials of the state government of Tamil Nadu and people in the neighbourhood of Kudankulam project. The expert group had two meetings so far to explain the factual position on various aspects of the project and dispel apprehensions of sections of the local people. The opposition to nuclear power projects is largely due to apprehensions about safety of the nuclear power reactor and effect on their livelihood. Issues related to rehabilitation are also a major factor at Jaitapur. Public Communication and outreach activities have been intensified to allay the fears about safety of nuclear power and fears of loss of livelihood. The