Operation stopped at Hal Airport in Bengaluru

3730. DR. PRABHAKAR KORE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the HAL Airport in Bengaluru, has stopped operating for the last few years;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a Parliamentary Committee has recommended for the retention of HAL Airport in Bengaluru, even after the Devanahalli International Airport started functioning;

(c) if so, the response of Government in this regard; and

(d) whether Government is taking steps to start operation of the said Airport?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) No, Sir. General aviation services (other than those relating to commercial aircraft, charter flights, aircraft hired or operated under commercial arrangements) continue to be provided at the existing HAL airport.

(b) Yes, Sir. The Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture in its 131st report, *inter-alia*, recommended that the old airport at Bengaluru should be made operational.

(c) The recommendations of the Committee was considered by the Government and it was informed that the decision to close civil commercial operations at HAL, Bengaluru from the date of commissioning of the Greenfield airport at Devenahalli was taken in the year 2000. Accordingly, Government of India (GoI) has entered into a Concession Agreement (CA) with M/s. Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) for construction and development of a new international airport at Devanahalli near Bangalore. In the CA, the Got has agreed to close commercial civil aviation operations at the existing Bangalore airport once the new airport becomes operational. However, the existing airport would continue to remain operational for general aviation (barring certain categories) defence purposes, national emergencies, etc. The Greenfield airport has commissioned its operation w.e.f. 24.05.2008.

(d) There is no proposal under consideration to operationalize the old airport at HAL, Bengaluru.