

law. All such matters which are brought to the notice of this Ministry are also duly forwarded to the concerned agencies for further necessary action.

(d) No such information has been received by this Ministry.

Cancellation of flights in the Gulf Sector

325. DR. T.N. SEEMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:-

(a) whether the Air India Express has made large scale cancellations of flights in the Gulf sector in the recent weeks;

(b) if so, the details and reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government is aware of the hardships faced by the Kerala bound travellers due to the cancellations; and

(d) whether Government would ensure operation of adequate flights by Air India Express in the Gulf sector?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) to (d) Air India Express has been forced to curtail/combine some Kerala-Gulf flights *w.e.f.* 15th February, 2012, due to the severe shortage of cockpit crew as well as the new Civil Aviation Requirement issued by Directorate General of Civil Aviation. However, effective Summer 2012 schedule the Thiruvananthapuram - Salalah flight has been reinstated and also a connection provided from Thiruvananthapuram to Doha and, Bahrain over Kozhikode. Air India Express is also in the process of recruiting more pilots and will reinstate flights depending upon availability of resources and the commercial viability of its flights.

Import of ATF

† 326. SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI:

SHRI RAMCHANDRA PRASAD SINGH:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the civil aviation industry has been given assent by Government for direct import of Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF);

(b) if so, the facts in this regard;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the industry is estimated to get 20 to 25 per cent financial relief from this decision of Government; and

(d) if not, the facts thereof and the estimate of the amount of actual financial relief?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Directorate General of Foreign Trade has allowed import of ATF by or on behalf of airlines as actual users and on actual use basis.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) and (d) No such assessment has been made by the Govt. in this regard. However, sourcing of ATF through direct import has the potential to lower the overall procurement cost of ATF as the airlines will save on VAT on ATF, which varies between 4% to 29% from State to State.

Exodus of AI Pilots

327. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is an exodus of pilots from Air India to low cost carriers due to delayed salaries; and

(b) if so, the urgent steps the Ministry is taking to keep the flock together and keep the national carrier going high in the sky?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Amount due to Air India by Government

328. SHRI SABIR ALI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government owes Rs. 110 crores to Air India for VVIP flights;

(b) if so, the details of the flights undertaken by VVIPs for various destinations; and

(c) by when the aforesaid amount of dues would be made available to ailing Air India to help the carrier to come out of the red zone?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) Air India operates VVIP flights/evacuation flights as per requests received from Ministry of External Affairs (for the Vice-President), Ministry of Defence (for the President) and Prime Minister's Office (for the Prime Minister). As on 7th March, 2012, Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Defence and Prime Minister's Office owed Air India an amount of Rs. 274.17 crores.

(c) The Government has been making payments to Air India after verifying their bills and as soon as funds are available in the appropriate budget heads of the respective Ministries/Offices.

Revival process of Air India

329. SHRI R.C. SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons that the Ministry is delaying the revival process of Air India;

(b) the decision the Ministry has taken on the delivery of 787 Dreamliners,