

(b) The trial operation of Data Link Communication for pre-departure clearance of aircraft has been started at Mumbai airport from June, 2012.

(c) The aircraft equipped with Aircraft Communication and Addressing System (ACARS) are able to utilise the system for Pre-Departure Clearance (DCL), Automatic Terminal Information Service (D-ATIS) and meteorological Information for aircraft in flight (D-VOLMET).

(d) The scheduled flights equipped with ACARS system and using data link will be able to get departure clearance and weather information well in advance without using voice channel. This will also reduce congestion on the voice channels thus improving efficiency.

(e) Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru and Hyderabad.

#### **Poor facilities at Delhi airport**

†477. SHRI VIVEK GUPTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the steps being taken by Government to improve the degrading standard of the facilities and even normal amenities like toilets at Delhi Airport, despite charging heavy fees from the passengers as service tax;

(b) whether Government monitor these services in order to upkeep them; and

(c) whether appropriate arrangement is being done to address the grievances of the passengers?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA), New Delhi is equipped with world class facilities to cater to the needs of passengers and have more than 170 washrooms/rest rooms with facilities for baby care & physically challenged passengers. Over 1100 people can use the washrooms simultaneously, which are maintained round the clock. These washrooms have eco-friendly features and all products used in the washrooms are Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified. Appropriate signages are also provided to guide passengers to the facility.

(b) and (c) IGI Airport, New Delhi has a dedicated Customer Response Management (CRM) Cell which monitors the grievances/complaints received from

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

users of airports on day to day basis. Besides, various mechanisms e.g. complaint register, feedback Kiosks, feedback Forms, Email ID, Public Grievance Officer, Call Centre, Social media network sites, etc. is being used for gathering the customer feedback including grievance/complaints. Compliance report submitted by M/s Delhi International Airport Pvt. Ltd. (DIAL) are regularly monitored by Government of India through Airports Authority of India.

#### **Higher operating cost of air carriers**

478. SHRI Y.S. CHOWDARY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether operating expenses of the country's various airlines are much higher than that at many developed countries of the world;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that airfares here are lower by between 113 per cent and 280 per cent and there is a massive gap in cost and revenue and the airlines are struggling to survive; and
- (c) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) to (c) No such comparison is possible because the countries are different in terms of stage of development of economy, degree of maturity of market, entry conditions for aviation licensing, tax regimes governing aviation sector, purchasing power of respective currencies, general wage/salary levels of employees, rate of inflation and general price levels and rate of interest etc. However, the civil aviation sector in India is passing through a phase of crisis. To revive the aviation industry and ensure long term viability of the sector, the Government has taken several measures, such as:

- (1) A Working Group was constituted under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Civil Aviation with Finance Secretary; Secretary, Financial Services; Secretary, M/o Petroleum & Natural Gas; DGFT and Joint Secretary, Civil Aviation to discuss the factors causing stress in civil aviation and to suggest solutions to the same. Based on its recommendations following steps have been taken by Government.
  - (i) The issue of rationalization of VAT on ATF, has been taken up with the State Govts.
  - (ii) Director General of Foreign Trade has allowed direct import of ATF by airlines on actual user basis.