

(d) the steps taken by Government to safeguard the airports and other major transit places in the country in view of airline staffs involvement in smuggling cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI K.C. VENUGOPAL) : (a) and (b) The details of smuggling of red sandalwood cases out of the country by airline staff detected by the Customs Department at the Delhi Airport and action taken therein is as under:

- (i) A case of smuggling of Red Sandal weighing 52 kgs, valued at Rs. 52,000/- was booked against two Crew members of Air India Airlines on 21.10.2013. The goods were absolutely confiscated and adjudicated on the spot. Penalty of Rs. 40,000/- (Rs. 20,000/- each) was imposed on them.
- (ii) A case of smuggling of Red Sandal weighing 90 kgs, valued at Rs. 90,000/- was booked against employee (CSA) of Jet Airways on 16.09.2013. The goods were absolutely confiscated and adjudicated on the spot. Penalty of Rs. 40,000/- (Rs. 20,000/-each) was imposed on them.
- (iii) A case of smuggling of Red Sandal weighing 12 kgs, valued at Rs. 12,000/- was booked against employee (CSA) of China Airways on 01.12.2013. The goods were absolutely confiscated and adjudicated on the spot. Penalty of Rs. 12,000/- was imposed on them.
- (iv) A case of smuggling of Red Sandal weighing 140 kgs, valued at Rs. 1,40,000/- was booked against employee (CSA) of Air India on 23.10.2013. The goods were absolutely confiscated and the case is under investigation.

(c) No cases have been detected by the Customs Department in regard to smuggling of Sandal Wood by the Airlines Staff.

(d) The Customs Officers at Airports are on alert to prevent such cases of smuggling.

#### **Privatization of airports**

490. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN :  
SHRI D. RAJA :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has decided to privatize six airports *i.e.* Chennai, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Guwahati, Jaipur and Lucknow;

(b) if so, the details thereof and at what stage is the process for privatization of these airports;

(c) whether the Standing Committee on Transport and Tourism has opposed the privatization of airports; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI K.C. VENUGOPAL) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As per the recommendations of the Task Force on Financing Plan for Twelfth Plan Period, Government of India (GoI) has 'in principle' decided to bring operation, management and development of twenty airport at Chennai, Kolkata, Lucknow, Guwahati, Jaipur, Ahmedabad, Bhubaneswar, Coimbatore, Trichy, Varanasi, Indore, Amritsar, Udaipur, Gaya, Raipur, Bhopal, Agartala, Imphal, Mangalore and Vadodara in Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode in a phased manner. GoI has invited the applications from the prospective parties seeking their qualification. For this, Requests for Qualification (RFQ) have been issued for six airports namely Chennai, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Guwahati, Jaipur and Lucknow.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The recommendations of the Standing Committee on Transport and Tourism have been received recently and are being examined.

#### **Survival of domestic flight operators**

491. SHRI PARSHOTTAM KHODABHAI RUPALA :  
SHRI BHARATSINH PRABHATSINH PARMAR :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of action taken by Government on the fact that most of domestic flight operators are passing through extremely tough time due to various reasons and also keeping in view that, it is quite essential to boost up our tourism sector and economic development that these flight operators should be survived; and

(b) the number of application to begin domestic flight operations which are pending with the Ministry and by when these will be approved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI K.C. VENUGOPAL) : (a) The Government has taken several measures to revive the aviation industry and ensure long-term viability of the sector which include: