

chairmanship of Directorate General of Civil Aviation on 07th January, 2014 to review low visibility operation during winter season. Following decisions were taken for compliance of airlines:

- All airlines will have to ensure that aircraft deployed to/from Delhi during low visibility conditions are CAT-III compliant and both the commander and co-pilot are also CAT-III trained.
- Only CAT-III flight crew will operate the flights to/from Delhi in case weather predictions of CAT-III conditions are made by IMD. Failing to do so, such operations of the defaulting airline will be stopped to/from Delhi during low visibility conditions.
- Airlines must take adequate care of providing basic amenities of water and refreshment to passengers during such conditions if the flights are delayed.
- All stakeholders should have better communication procedure so that level of interaction with passengers increases during the fog and they are aware of flight delays.
- One representative each from DGCA and IMD will be positioned at AOCC, DIAL who will interact with airlines, AAI and DIAL. DIAL will organise conference on daily basis wherein fog forecast for the day and next day will be provided by IMD.

All these decisions have been implemented with immediate effect.

Further, on 29th/30th Jan 2014, six flights belonging to Jet Airways, Go Air and IndiGo diverted from Delhi in violation of the above instructions. Accordingly, six slots, two each of Jet Airways, Go Air and IndiGo at Delhi Airport were withdrawn by DGCA.

Dropping of voluntary retirement scheme in Air India

2030. SHRI T.M. SELVAGANAPATHI : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Air India (AI) has decided to drop its Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS);

(b) whether it is also a fact that one of the reasons for dropping of the said plan was Government's refusal to shell out a whopping 10,000 crore for the said purpose;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Air India had been considering to shed more than 5000 of its employees; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI K.C. VENUGOPAL) : (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. As part of the Turn Around Plan, Air India had formulated a Voluntary Retirement Scheme for its permanent employees other than those belonging to licenced categories wherein the estimated number was approximate 5000 employees and the estimated out go approximate Rs.1090 crores. Meanwhile, consequent upon Cabinet approval, Air India had hived its maintenance, repair and overhaul and ground handling activities into two subsidiaries as a result of which nearly 8200 permanent employees have been transferred to Air India Engineering Services Limited (MRO) and Air India Air Transport Services Limited (Ground handling) w.e.f. 01.01.2013.

In view of the above and the fact that on average around 1500 employees are superannuating per year during the next four years, the proposal of Air India to drop the Voluntary Retirement Scheme is presently under consideration with the Government.

Engagement of expatriate pilots by Air India

2031. SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) the number of expatriate pilots with much higher pay packages, have been engaged by Air India during the last five years even when experienced Indian cockpit crew were available for such positions at comparatively much lower package;

(b) whether there are any procedural constraints like slow management response or stationing of crew, etc.;