

Further, with a view to explore possibilities of launching of Seaplane services, Pawan Hans Limited has also conducted preliminary feasibility study in association with State Governments of West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh and Lakshadweep Administration.

Downgrading of India's aviation safety ranking by FAA

2526. SHRI A. W. RABI BERNARD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the US aviation safety regulator Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), has downgraded India's ranking to category-II after its finding of regulatory oversight to be inadequate in December, 2013 audit which blocked Air India and Jet Airways from expanding to US cities or collaborating with US airlines;

(b) whether the FAA has not upgraded India's air safety ranking again recently;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether it is a set back for India which was expecting a quick resolution of the crisis and could affect the plans of both existing and new airlines; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) Yes, Sir. Federal Aviation Administration conducted an audit of Directorate General of Civil Aviation in September, 2013 and came again in December, 2013 to confirm the actions taken by DGCA to address the findings raised by FAA in September, 2013. On 31st January, 2014, FAA informed that India has been placed in Category 2. The downgrade to Category 2 means that the country's safety oversight system does not meet minimum standards laid down by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). US does not permit any expansion/changes to the services of foreign air carriers to the US and the existing operations of foreign carriers to US are subjected to heightened FAA surveillance in case of FAA downgrade.

(b) to (e) As part of the actions for restoration of Category 1 to India, FAA team carried out a full audit of DGCA to ascertain that India's compliance with international aviation safety standards and recommended practices as laid down by ICAO by focussing on 8 critical elements of an effective aviation safety oversight covering primary legislation, operating regulations, State civil aviation system and safety oversight functions, Technical personnel qualification and training, Technical guidance, tools and the provision of safety, critical information, Licensing, certification,

authorization and approval obligations, Surveillance obligations and resolution of safety concerns.

The process after the completion of the assessment takes about 65 days wherein FAA would provide a written report in about 30 days, with a consultation meeting (final discussion) after about further 30 days (middle of February 2015). Based on the outcome of final discussions, FAA will make a Category determination and inform India by about March, 2015.

Air connectivity for Jamshedpur, Bokaro and Dhanbad

2527. SHRI DHIRAJ PRASAD SAHU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is least air connectivity in Jharkhand in comparison to other States of the country; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to connect Jamshedpur, Bokaro and Dhanbad by air services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) and (b) State-wise comparative analysis on the air connectivity is not maintained. The air connectivity depends on the factors like expected passenger load factor, infrastructure, state priority, operational viability, pattern of tourist movement etc. It is a dynamic phenomenon and keeps changing from time to time of different routes/sectors. At present, schedule air services are available to/from Ranchi as per details given below:

Airline	Route	Flights/Week
Go Air	Ranchi-Delhi and VV	14
	Mumbai-Patna-Ranchi-Mumbai	07
Jet Airways	Ranchi-Delhi and VV	06
	Ranchi-Kolkata and VV	14
Air India	Mumbai-Delhi-Ranchi-Delhi-Mumbai	07
	Ranchi-Mumbai	07
Indigo	Ranchi-Kolkata-Bengaluru and VV	07
	Delhi-Patna-Ranchi-Delhi	07
	Ranchi-Mumbai-Patna-Ranchi	04
	Ranchi-Delhi	07