

is not implementing any programme for providing free nutritious food to the pregnant women and children in the country. However, under the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, supplementary nutrition is provided to children below six years of age and pregnant women and lactating mothers at the Anganwadi Centres.

(d) No cases of corruption/ irregularity/ malpractices in the FNB have come to the notice of Government.

The House then adjourned at one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at two of the clock,

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN *in the Chair.*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We now take the Calling Attention to the matter of urgent public importance. Shri Naresh Agrawal.

**CALLING ATTENTION TO THE MATTER OF
URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

**Situation arising out of huge disparity in air fares of airlines
to various destinations in the country**

SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Civil Aviation to the situation arising out of huge disparity in air fares of airlines to various destinations in the country.

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ASHOK GAJAPATHI RAJU PUSAPATI): Sir, air fares are not fixed by the Government as they are determined by the interplay of market forces. Under the provision of Sub Rule (1) of Rule 135, Aircraft Rules, 1937, airlines are free to fix reasonable tariff having regard to all relevant factors, including the cost of operation, characteristic of service, reasonable profit and the generally prevailing tariff. Air fare so established by the airlines is published on their respective website under the provision of Sub Rule (2) of Rule 135, Aircraft Rule, 1937. Airline remains compliant to the regulatory provisions of Rule 135 as long as the fare charged by them does not exceed the fare established and displayed on their websites.

The domestic airline pricing runs in multiple levels which is in line with the practice followed globally. The lower fare in the fare bucket is available for advance bookings much earlier. As time lapses and date of journey approaches closer, the fare in higher side of fare bucket is made available as per the respective airline policy.

Though the government does not regulate the fares that are charged, yet it ensures that considerable information is provided to the public in a transparent manner with respect to airline fares :

- (i) Air Transport Circular 05 of 2009 was issued for scheduled domestic airlines to display the airfare as per the template given in the circular, compliant to Rule 135, Aircraft Rules, 1937.
- (ii) To ensure transparency and aid the traveller, make an informed choice, DGCA *vide* Air Transport Circular 02 of 2010 has directed the airlines to upload fare sheet displaying fare offered across their network. The fare sheet contains information on various levels of fares starting from the lowest to full fare offered on all sectors. This is done on a monthly basis and updated whenever there is any revision of fares.
- (iii) Air Transport Circular 03 of 2013 requires carriers to disclose all fees for optional services on 'opt-in' basis through a prominent link on their homepage.
- (iv) DGCA has set up a Tariff Monitoring Unit in 2010 that monitors airfares on certain routes selected on a random basis to ensure that the airlines do not charge airfares outside the range declared by them.

Further, in terms of Rule 135 (4) of Aircraft Rules 1935, if the Director General is satisfied that any air transport has established excessive or predatory tariff or has indulged in an oligopolistic practice, he may, by order, issue directions to such air transport undertaking.

- (v) The tickets constitute *prima facie* evidence of the contract of carriage between Carrier and the passenger named on the ticket. However, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) *vide* Civil Aviation Requirements (CARs) Section 3—Air Transport Series 'M' Part-II issue 1 dated 22.5.2008 has prescribed minimum requirements for refund of ticket purchased by persons/passengers with respect to air transport undertaking including scheduled and non-scheduled operators. As per these requirements, (a) the airlines should indicate, in an unambiguous manner, the amount of refund of money admissible on cancellation of a ticket for the purpose. The amount and its break-up need to be indicated on the ticket itself, or through a separate form used for the purpose, and the policy and amount of refund shall also be displayed by the airlines on their respective websites. (b) Airlines shall necessarily return the Passenger Service Fee (PSF) collected by them from the passengers on non-utilization/cancellation of tickets. (c) Airlines shall refund any charges such as congestion charge, fuel surcharge, etc., along with the refund of the ticket, unless these are clubbed with basic fares.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, Shri Naresh Agrawal. Please take less than five minutes.

श्री नरेश अग्रवाल: अब शुरू में ही बंदिश लग जाती है तो थोड़ा सा ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री उपसभापति : आपके 5 मिनट हैं।

श्री नरेश अग्रवाल : शुरुआत में बंदिश न रहे, वैसे भी सब मानक तोड़कर हम लोग यहां आते हैं।

माननीय उपसभापति जी, क्योंकि जाति के राजा हैं, मन के राजा हैं, दिल के राजा हैं। मैं मंत्री जी का बयान पढ़ रहा था कि मैं तो सिगरेट और माचिस साथ में लेकर चला जाता हूं, मेरी स्कीनिंग नहीं होती है। श्रीमन्, जब इस देश में प्राइवेट एयरलाइंस को लाइसेंस दिया गया, उस समय यह कहा गया था कि जब एयरलाइंस में कम्पटीशन होगा, क्योंकि एयर इंडिया का एकाधिकार था, कहा गया कि कम्पटीशन मार्केट में होगा तो यात्रियों को अधिक सुविधा मिलेगी, सही किराया मिलेगा और जो यात्रियों की लम्बी-लम्बी लाइनें लगी होती हैं, स्पर्धा के दौर में उनसे दूर होगा। लेकिन हो बिल्कुल विपरीत रहा है। श्रीमन्, एक एक्ट इनके यहां बना हुआ है, Aircraft Act, 1937, करीब 80 साल पुराना एक्ट हो गया। पार्लियामेंट की टूरिज्म कमेटी ने भी जो अपनी रिपोर्ट दी है, उस रिपोर्ट में लिखा था, "The Committee found that currently there is no transparent mechanism to regulate the airfare in the country. As a result, airlines are free to charge as much as they can and the travellers are also caught unawares about it. The Committee did not agree with the argument of the Ministry that some rules and regulations under the Aircraft Act, 1934 regulate airfare in the country...." उसके बाद और भी चीजें उन्होंने कही हैं। हम अगर दिल्ली से लखनऊ जाना चाहें और इंडियन एयरलाइंस का "जे" क्लास का टिकट लेंगे तो फेयर आएगा 21 हजार, जेट का ले लें तो 26 हजार आ जाएगा। यहां से देहरादून हम जाना चाहें तो इस समय "वाई" क्लास का टिकट 18 हजार में मिलेगा। इतने में दुबई होकर लौट आए "वाई" क्लास में। चूंकि गर्मी की छुट्टियां आ रही हैं, इसलिए इस समय हिल स्टेशन के किराए बहुत ज्यादा बढ़ गए हैं। महोदय, इस समय लोग परिवार के साथ हिल स्टेशंस जाते हैं। मैंने पता किया कि देहरादून का किराया कितना है, तो बताया गया कि "वाई क्लास" का 18,000 रुपए किराया है। मंत्री जी, एयरलाइंस विज्ञापन निकालती हैं कि 999 रुपए में आप हिंदुस्तान में कहीं भी चले जाएं। अब उन्होंने 1 लाख रुपए के टिकट जारी कर दिए, लेकिन उसका फायदा किसे मिलता है, यह आज तक मेरी समझ में नहीं आया? महोदय, आज दुनिया में हर जगह रेगुलेटरी कमीशन बने हुए हैं। आप जहां भी प्राइवेट सेक्टर को लाए, आपने रेगुलेटरी कमीशन बनाया और वह इसलिए बनाया ताकि रेगुलेटर लोगों से बात कर के चार्ज तय करे, लेकिन आपकी एअर लाइन में तो फ्रीडम है कि वह जो चाहे कर ले। हमारे यहां गांव में लोग बात करते हैं कि देश कौन चला रहा है, तो लोग यह नहीं कहते कि मोदी जी चला रहे हैं, कहा जाता है कि भगवान चला रहा है। ऐसा न हो कि कोई पूछ ले कि Civil Aviation Department कौन चला रहा है तो ऐसा न कहा जाए कि भगवान चला रहा है, मंत्री जी नहीं चला रहे हैं।

श्रीमन्, मैं अभी पढ़ रहा था कि इंडिगो और जेट - दोनों एअर लाइंस ने अपने टिकट रद्द करने की नीति में बदलाव किया है और पहले जो सौ प्रतिशत पेनल्टी थी, उसे डबल कर दिया यानि

अगर आप अब टिकट रिफंड करेंगे, तो वह स्थिति भी आएगी कि आपको जीरो किराया मिलेगा। उन्होंने उस में कुछ क्लार्ज डाल दिए कि एक्स, वाई, टी, सी, क्लास के टिकटों में कोई रिफंड नहीं होगा। अब हमें तो पता नहीं कि हमें कौन सी क्लास का टिकट मिला है। अब उन्होंने बहुत सी श्रेणी टिकटों की कर दी हैं। श्रीमन्, आपको मालूम है कि करीब 20 लाख पैसेंजर्स प्रति माह इंडिगो और जेट ढो रही है और 10 परसेंट मिनिमम इनका cancellation होता है। अब आप जोड़ लीजिए कि इनको कितना प्रॉफिट हो रहा है। आपने कहा कि अगर पहले टिकट बुक कराओगे तो किराया कम लगेगा, बाद में किराया ज्यादा लगेगा। अब एक महीने पहले हमने किराया दे दिया, तो आप उसमें ब्याज भी जोड़ लीजिए। इस तरह पैसेंजर को तो किराया तो वही पड़ा। यह कहाँ हुआ कि एक महीने पहले टिकट लिया तो हमें किराया कम लगा?

श्रीमन् एटीएफ के दाम कम हुए, पूरे विश्व में क्रूड ऑइल के दाम कम हुए, लेकिन आप बताएं कि किराए में एटीएफ के दाम कहाँ कम हुए? उस दिन यह मामला राजीव शुक्ल जी ने भी zero hour में उठाया था, तब भी यही बात आई थी।

मंत्री जी, अगर खाली अधिकारियों के कहने पर स्टेटमेंट दिए गए और अधिकारियों के कहने पर निर्णय लिए गए, तो फिर पॉपुलर गवर्नमेंट का मतलब क्या हुआ? आपको आज बहुत बड़ा mandate मिला है, लेकिन इस का मतलब क्या है? आपकी एअर इंडिया कितने घाटे में है? आज ही एक क्वेश्चन के जवाब में आया है कि एअर इंडिया करीब 52 करोड़ रुपए के घाटे में है। क्या आपने कभी एअर इंडिया की समीक्षा की है कि वह इतने घाटे में क्यों है? आपके विदेशों में ऑफिस वहां-वहां खुले हैं, जहां आपकी एअर-लाइंस जाती नहीं है, लेकिन कुछ अधिकारियों को adjust करने के लिए उन्होंने वहां एअर लाइंस का ऑफिस खोल दिया है। आपके यहां एक डायरेक्टर, (कॉमर्शियल)* थे। उन्होंने तमाम फ्राड किए और करीब 40 करोड़ रुपए के फ्राड की उनके ऊपर जांच हो रही है, लेकिन रिटायरमेंट के बाद आपने उन्हें ओएसडी बना दिया। आप जांच करवाइए, उनके ऊपर 40 करोड़ रुपए का आरोप है कि उन्होंने अपनी नौकरी में हेरा-फेरी की। आप चाहेंगे तो मैं सारे आरोप लिखकर दे दूंगा, लेकिन आपने उन्हें ओएसडी बना दिया। आपने विदेश में एअरलाइंस की ग्राउंड हैंडलिंग तमाम उन कंपनियों को दे दी, जिस से उनको लाभ हो रहा है। मैं पूछना चाहता हूं कि आपको उससे क्या लाभ हो रहा है? इसलिए मैं मंत्री जी आप से कहना चाहता हूं कि अगर आपने रेगुलेटरी अथॉरिटी नहीं बनाई और आपने सब कुछ अधिकारियों के ऊपर छोड़ दिया है, तो यात्रियों को सुविधा नहीं मिलेगी।

श्रीमन्, उत्तर प्रदेश के लखनऊ एअरपोर्ट पर सिर्फ दो एअरो ब्रिज लगाए गए हैं। मैं पिछले मंत्री जी से कहता रहा कि आपके पिता जी चौधरी चरण सिंह जी के नाम का हवाई अड्डा उत्तर प्रदेश की राजधानी में बना देते। वहां पर बहुत सी फ्लाइट्स जाती हैं, लेकिन एअरो ब्रिज सिर्फ दो ही हैं। इस के अलावा न वहां बस की सुविधा है और न कोई दूसरी सुविधा है। वहां का इंटरनेशनल एअरपोर्ट बहुत बुरी हालत में है। इसलिए मंत्री जी आप आज किसी स्पष्ट नीति की घोषणा कीजिए कि पैसेंजर को किराया हरेक कंपनी का same लगेगा। आज हरेक का same किराया है, लेकिन आपके यहां इंडियन एअरलाइंस का दूसरा किराया है, इंडिगो का दूसरा है। आज जेट, गो एअर, स्पाइस जेट और तमाम कंपनियां हैं। अब टाटा भी एक ले आई है। क्यों न पैसेंजर को पता लगे कि अगर हम इतनी दूरी तक ट्रेवल करेंगे, तो इतने रुपए हमें किराए के देने

* Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

[श्री नरेश अग्रवाल]

होंगे। यह जो किराए का वेरिएशन है और जो तमाम उन्होंने कैटेगरी कर दी हैं कि इस कैटेगरी का इतना किराया होगा, उस कैटेगरी का इतना होगा, इन सबको रेगुलेट करिए। ...**(समय की घंटी)**... देश के नागरिकों को आप सुरक्षित करिए। ...**(समय की घंटी)**... सर, खत्म कर रहा हूँ इंडिगो, जेट ने जो रिफंड पालिसी लाई है, इसकी कॉपी मेरे पास है, इसमें उन्होंने बताया है कि तीस दिन पहले अगर कैन्सिल करेंगे तो 1250/- रुपए देंगे, इतने दिन में करेंगे तो इतने मिलेंगे और दो घंटे पहले अगर आप यात्रा कैन्सिल करेंगे, तो आपको जीरो रिफंड होगा। यह उन्होंने अपनी नई पालिसी घोषित की है। कम से कम आप इस पर विचार कर लीजिए और मुझे आपसे उम्मीद है। अगर आप आज उत्तर न दे सकें, तो बाद में दे दीजिएगा, लेकिन उत्तर पॉजिटिव दीजिएगा, जिससे लोगों को लगे कि राजा राजा के तरीके से है, क्योंकि जंगल में एक ही शेर रहता है। यहां दो राजा हो गए हैं, इसलिए मैं कह रहा हूँ कि आप ऐसा जवाब दीजिए, जिससे लगे कि एक ही राजा है। इतना कहकर मैं अपनी बात खत्म करता हूँ। धन्यवाद।

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have fourteen names for seeking clarifications. Kindly take two minutes each. Now, Shri D. Raja.

SHRI D. RAJA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, the first line of the Minister's response says that the air fares are not fixed by the Government as they are determined by the interplay of market forces. There, I have strong objection, Sir. You cannot leave everything to market forces. Then, what is the point in having an elected Government? Government intervention is necessary. There, I agree with my previous speaker that a regulatory authority is necessary. What happens in the name of baggage, in the name of supply of food or non-supply of food, in the name of timing of booking of the ticket, is known to all. There are huge disparities. Now, air travel has become a mode of transport for a large number of people and people have to travel by air for all their jobs and other requirements.

Sir, my point is that successive Governments have succeeded in undermining Air India, the national air carrier. You have not provided a level-playing field to Air India, and, in the name of promoting private sector, in the name of allowing private players in the civil aviation sector, you have already destroyed Air India, which needs to be protected.

Only Air India can provide stability in prices and only Air India can help the common people. I do not understand as to why the routes are cancelled for Air India just to help certain private airlines.

From Coimbatore to Delhi, we do not have a regular morning flight of Air India. From Chennai to Port Blair, there was flight. Now, the Air India does not fly in the morning. Why did you cancel the Air India routes? Just to help the private airlines! You projected many private airlines as success stories. Where are those

private airlines? Kingfisher airline, you projected it as a success story. Where is it? Similarly, other names are Paramount, East West, SpiceJet and several airlines. What happened to those airlines?

Sir, if you want to maintain price stability, if you want to give good service to the common people, the dependable airline is our public sector airline, Air India. My question is whether the Government is having any commitment to protect Air India and provide suitable routes for Air India, and, then, Air India can take care of all these difficulties. The fundamental issue is the commitment of the Government towards Air India, the national air carrier. ...(Time-bell rings)...

I am opposed to privatization of Air India. I am stoutly opposed to the privatization of Air India, and, even the privatization of Airports. Do not privatise Chennai Airport or Kolkata Airport, which are in the public sector under the Airport Authority of India. ...(Time-bell rings)... So, the Minister will have to respond to these pertinent questions.

श्री विजय गोयल (राजस्थान): माननीय उपसभापति जी, 10 मार्च को आपने ही कहा था कि festival season में airlines बहुत ज्यादा रेट्स बढ़ा देती हैं और extortion करती हैं। वर्ष 1999 में, श्री पी.पी. नरसिंहराव जी के समय में जब civil aviation के संबंध में यह पालिसी आई, तब इसी कारण से आई थी कि competition के अंदर फेयर कम होंगे।

महोदय, अभी यहां आने से पहले मैंने, दिल्ली से मुंबई का एयर फेयर देखा था। एक घंटा पहले दिल्ली से मुंबई की फ्लाइट का एयर फेयर ₹ 5,000/- था और उसके ठीक एक घंटे बाद यह फेयर बढ़कर ₹ 9,000/- हो गया। मंत्री जी ने जो कहा और हमें 135 और दूसरे रूल्स गिनाए, हम उन रूल्स की बात नहीं कर रहे हैं। हम तो उन रूल्स को बदलने की बात कर रहे हैं।

महोदय, आज आप देखिए कि एयरलाइन्स मनमाने दाम वसूल कर रही हैं। हमें यह पता नहीं लगता कि कब लॉटरी में टिकट सस्ती निकलेगी या कब महंगी निकलेगी, जबकि एक टैक्सी वाला, जो एयरपोर्ट से कनाट प्लेस तक जाता है, उसके चार्ज फिक्स कर रखे हैं कि आपको इतने फिक्स चार्ज मिलेंगे। इसी प्रकार जो ऑटो वाला है, उसके भी चार्ज फिक्स कर रखे हैं, किन्तु एयरलाइन्स के चार्ज फिक्स नहीं हैं। इसलिए मेरा मंत्री जी से अनुरोध है कि कम से कम एयरलाइन्स के किराए की अपर लिमिट तो तय कर दीजिए कि इससे ज्यादा फेयर आप चार्ज नहीं करेंगे।

महोदय, अभी कश्मीर के अंदर बाढ़ आई, उस समय इतने ज्यादा एयर फेयर वसूले गए, जिसकी कोई हद नहीं। हमारे परिवार के एक आदमी ने नेपाल जाने की अपनी टिकट बुक कराई थी और वहां भूकम्प आने के कारण त्रासदी हो गई और वह टिकट कैंसिल कराई, तो उनके ₹ 1,850/- कैंसीलेशन चार्ज के रूप में काट लिए गए। पहले कैंसीलेशन चार्ज जो ₹ 1,500/- थे, वे अब बढ़कर ₹ 2,250/- हो गए हैं, यानि कि सीधे 50 प्रतिशत बढ़ गए हैं। मैं मंत्री जी से कहना चाहता हूं कि इनके ऊपर कोई लगाम लगानी चाहिए और अपर लिमिट जरूर बनानी चाहिए।

[श्री विजय गोयल]

महोदय, अभी आपने देखा होगा कि ग्लोबल रिसेशन के कारण लुपथांसा और अन्य दूसरी एयरलाइन्स हैं, उन्हें सब जगह लॉसेस हो रहे हैं, लेकिन उन्हें चायना और इंडिया के अंदर रेट बढ़ाकर प्रॉफिट हो रहा है। अलग-अलग कंट्रीज में हो रहे नुकसान को वे एयरलाइन्स यहां रेट बढ़ाकर पूरा कर रही हैं। मैं यह चाहता हूं कि ऐसा नहीं होना चाहिए।

महोदय, अब आप बैगेज को देखिए। बाहर से जो यात्री हिन्दुस्तान आ रहा है, वह 20 किलोग्राम का बैगेज लेकर आता है। अब जब वह यात्री दिल्ली उतरता है और उसे दिल्ली से गोवा जाना है, तो उससे कहा जाता है कि इस रूट पर केवल 15 किलो का ही बैगेज अलाउड है। अब उसके लिए यह कितनी कठिनाई की बात है कि वह अपने 5 किलोग्राम के बैगेज का क्या करेगा। इसके कारण हैंडीक्राफ्ट का सामान जो कश्मीर या राजस्थान के जयपुर से खरीद कर यात्री विदेश ले जाते थे, उनके बिजनेस को बहुत नुकसान हो रहा है। अब इन्होंने 15 किलोग्राम का बैगेज कर दिया है। इसलिए अब यात्री कम सामान ले जाते हैं और इससे देश के हैंडीक्राफ्ट उद्योग को बहुत नुकसान हो रहा है।

महोदय, मेरा मंत्री को सीधा-सीधा सुझाव है, जैसा आपने उन्हें कहा है कि रीजनेबल फेयर हो, Than what is the definition of 'reasonable fares'? Who will decide this? वह आपको बताना चाहिए। इसलिए मेरा आपको सुझाव है कि **...(समय की घंटी)...** सर, मैं एक मिनट में खत्म कर रहा हूं।

श्री उपसभापति: नहीं, नहीं। समय हो गया। कृपया समाप्त कीजिए। Please put your question.

श्री विजय गोयल: महोदय, मेरा सीधा प्रश्न यह है कि एयरलाइन में आपने जो Ombudsman की बात कही थी, लोकपाल की बात कही थी, उसके बारे में क्या किया जा रहा है, **...(समय की घंटी)...** और प्राइवेट कंपनीज जो कार्टेलाइजेशन कर रही हैं, इसे रोकने के लिए आप क्या कर रहे हैं और अगर यह मार्केट ड्रिवन है, तो इसका बैनीफिट कम से कम नीचे तक आना चाहिए और कंज्यूमर को मिलना चाहिए। **...(समय की घंटी)...** और इसमें जो लूट मची है, उसे खत्म किया जाना चाहिए।

SHRI K.N. BALAGOPAL (Kerala): Sir, three aspects are there. It has been already discussed here. One is about charges. These are very high. They are varying from ₹ 6,000 to ₹ 60,000 or ₹ 80,000. It is happening not in the case of domestic flights only; it is also happening in the case of international flights, especially from Gulf countries, when the season comes. Now, the summer vacation season is there. Sir, people are getting a ticket for ₹ 60,000 from any Gulf country to India. Maximum people are coming to Kerala. Whether it is Hyderabad or any other place, it is very costly. They are charging ₹ 60,000 to ₹ 80,000. Air India is also charging high prices. This is in a way helping the foreign carriers because 20 per cent or 30 per cent of the international travellers is catered to by our airlines. Emirates, Qatar, Lufthansa and many other airlines are also there. They are also charging like this, ₹ 50,000, ₹ 60,000. So, no regulation is there. This is one thing and it should be controlled, Sir.

Once a Minister said that this is a cattle class journey. It was in Air India. In Air India, it was not a cattle class. I am not saying about any other private airlines also. But, instead of 120 seats, they are making 180 seats. People will get frozen if they travel for six hours or eight hours like that. In the seats, leg space is not there. They are not giving water. They are giving nothing. And they reduced the charges earlier. As our other senior Member said here, there is cartelization. All the new small airlines were closed. Now, Indigo is playing mainly and others are closing down. So, they are now increasing the charges. There is no ticket for ₹ 3,000 now. All the tickets are all high class tickets.

Then, about the luggage, if you are going for a week then how can you go with a 15-kilo baggage, Sir? There is no control. Minister can bring a matchbox in his hand. Some special cases will be allowed. But common passengers are not allowed to do that.

About Air India, from lucknow, there was a flight to Nepal and many other flights were also there. Everything is closed now. Air India is flying as if their pilots are doing test flying. When the passengers are increasing, they are going and some other private airlines are coming. Like for Lucknow, Tamil Nadu, Mumbai and Kerala it said, they are changing timings every three months and flights are changing. They are closing the flights. From Trivandrum to Delhi, there is only one flight from Air India. From Cochin also, they have recently started that. ...(*Time-Bell rings*)... I will not take much time, Sir. What I want to say is that in your answer you have stated that 'Air fare so established by the airlines is published on their respective website under the provision of Sub Rule (2) of Rule 135, Aircraft Rule 1937'. This is not happening practically. If the officers are saying like that, it is a false statement. There is no band. You should give a band that this is the lowest and this is the highest. No such band is there. When we look on the website, we can see the tickets like one Member spoke here that it is ₹ 5,000 in the evening and ₹ 9,000 in the night. But there are no fixed rates also. Please do something to ensure that the band is there. So, the fare bucket and other aspects, about which you said, it is not happening. Please do something to regulate the exorbitant fee charged by the airlines. Thank you, Sir.

श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर (हिमाचल प्रदेश) : उपसभापति जी, मैंने पहले भी ज़ीरो ऑवर में इस विषय को उठाया था और मंत्री जी का जवाब सुनकर तो मैं बहुत हैरान हुई थी कि गवर्नमेंट इसके फेयर्स के बारे में कुछ कर ही नहीं सकती है। क्या सरकार इतनी हेल्पलेस हो गई है? क्यों नहीं कर सकती? आप देखिए कि जब यह प्राइवेट कंपनियों को दिया गया था, तो इसी दृष्टि से दिया गया था कि टैरिफ में मोनोपली नहीं रहेगी, गरीब, आम लोगों को भी इससे फायदा होगा, लेकिन वैसा बिल्कुल नहीं हुआ। मैं आपको बताना चाहती हूँ कि यहां से धर्मशाला

[श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर]

का एक तरफ का किराया साढ़े बाईस हजार रुपए है। साढ़े बाईस हजार, एयर इंडिया का भी और स्पाइस जेट का भी। आप मुझे बताइए कि उसमें लोग कैसे जा सकते हैं? कौन जा सकता है? आज हर व्यक्ति समय बचाना चाहता है। वह घूमना चाहता है, वह बाहर जाना चाहता है, लेकिन इनके ऊपर कोई कंट्रोल ही नहीं है। ठीक कहा विजय गोयल जी ने कि आप टैक्सीज के लिए भी किराया फिक्स करते हैं, स्कूटर्स के लिए भी करते हैं, बसेज के लिए भी करते हैं, रेलवे के लिए भी करते हैं, लेकिन एयर सर्विसेज के लिए नहीं। यह 1937 का कानून है। इतने कानून बदले गए हैं और मेरे ख्याल से जब यह कानून बना होगा, तब इतनी एयरलाइन्स थीं भी नहीं, तो क्यों नहीं इस कानून को बदला जा रहा है? क्यों नहीं हम सोचते कि हमें लोगों को सुविधा देनी है, मॉडर्न टाइम है, टेक्नालॉजी है, उस समय के और आज के हवाई जहाज में कितना फर्क आ गया है, लेकिन हम वही लकीर के फकीर बने हुए हैं! खासकर हिली एरियाज के लिए हमें सोचना पड़ेगा कि वहां किस तरह से हम लोगों को सुविधा दे सकते हैं, चीपेस्ट सुविधा दे सकते हैं। ठीक कहा कि एटीएफ के पैसे नहीं घटाए गए हैं, ग्लोबल में पेट्रोल के भाव गिर गए हैं, लेकिन उनका कोई असर यहां दिखाई नहीं दिया है।

मंत्री जी, हमारे यहां सबसे बड़ी प्रॉब्लम जो मैं बताना चाह रही हूं, refueling की आती है। अगर हम एयरलाइन्स से पूछते हैं कि इतना ज्यादा किराया क्यों है, तो वे कहते हैं कि हमें fuel प्लेन में लाना पड़ता है क्योंकि वहां पर refueling की व्यवस्था नहीं है। तो मैं यह चाहूंगी कि आप पहाड़ी इलाकों में जैसे धर्मशाला है, भुंतर है, शिमला है या नॉर्थ-ईस्ट के जो एयरपोर्ट्स हैं... वहां पर आप refuelling का इंतजाम कीजिए। वह तो आपके बस में है। किराए तो आप regularise नहीं कर सकते क्योंकि आपने हाथ खड़े कर दिए हैं, लेकिन वहां पर उनकी refuelling करवाने से उनका किराया कम हो जाएगा, लोगों को सहूलियत मिलेगी, इसके बारे में सोचिए, केवल अमीरों के बारे में मत सोचिए। आज हर आदमी टाइम बचाने के लिए बाय एयर जाना चाहता है, एयर सर्विस का प्रयोग करना चाहता है, इसलिए मैं यह कहूंगी कि इसके बारे में जरूर ध्यान दीजिए। यही मेरा आपसे प्रश्न भी है। बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद।

SHRI P. BHATTACHARYA (West Bengal): Sir, as fair trade watchdog CCI probes alleged violation by airlines indulging in fare wars, the Government on Thursday said the pricing decision should be best left with the carriers. Sir, my question is this. I do not understand why the Government of India is going to support private carriers. They fix whatever price they want to fix. Why is the Government not intervening in this matter? On the contrary, Civil Aviation Minister has said that the decision to determine pricing should be left with the carriers. The Minister in the Government of India should not say such things. I understand that the Act of 1937 is very clear on it. But the Act of 1937 must be changed. Within this period, we would have been happy had the Government of India set up a Commission to change fare structure of different private carriers. It is possible for the Government of India to set up a Commission to come out with a clear picture saying that private airlines cannot violate the norms. Practically, what they are saying very clearly is that they don't have any norms. Whenever they feel that passengers will be coming, they say

that the first ones will get the tickets for a small amount of money and those who come late will have to pay more money. Why is this disparity? We shall have to look into this matter.

Sir, I am sure the entire House is united on this issue. We shall have to do something very quickly. Otherwise, there will be strong discontentment among the people of the country. Again, I would say that a Commission has to be set up to remove this disparity.

SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA (Maharashtra): Sir, I have been raising this issue for the last six months in the Standing Committee and in the House through Zero Hour and Special Mention. But there is a cliché as far as the response of the Government is concerned. They try to parry this issue in the garb of section 135 of the Act of 1937. Why is this Act not applicable to Air India when you give subsidised fare to the North-East? Then you should listen to Air India also. Wherever you want to mend the laws, you mend them. Wherever you don't want to do it, you don't do it. This is one thing on which I want the Minister to respond.

Secondly, as far as running cost of any airline is concerned, the impact of oil component is 33 per cent. Oil prices have gone down from 115 dollars to 57 dollars. Why has this benefit not been passed on to the consumers? The Government can always intervene there. But they are not intervening.

Thirdly, and this is largely impacting the tourism sector, the foreign tourists, who are coming to India, are ending up paying more for domestic travelling than what they paid on international routes. This is largely impacting the tourism sector. You should respond to it.

The fourth thing, which I want to know from the Minister, is this. Most of these things have been done by no-frills airlines. No-frills airlines, initially, promised that they would be offering tickets at very cheap prices. Now they are the ones who have increased all the prices. Ticket prices are being increased on the basis of rows also. If you sit in the 12th or 13th row or 1st row in Indigo, you will have to pay more money. They are adopting all sorts of routes to make more money. No concession is being passed on to the consumers and passengers. Now, I want to know one more thing from the Minister about one particular airline, Indigo. What concession is being given to Indigo by the Airports Authority and the oil companies? I am told that both the oil companies and the Airports Authority are giving concession to Indigo and other airlines. You just find that out. These are the four things which I want to ask from the hon. Minister. I have concluded in less than two minutes.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you for being very specific and pointed. ...*(Interruptions)*... Now, Dr. M.S. Gill.

DR. M.S. GILL (Punjab): Sir, I think enough has been said of the horror story of fares and the behaviour of airlines in this country for quite a while now. But, what disappoints me is the statement of the hon. Minister. I have read it over twice and it seems the hon. Minister is standing on the side unconcerned and simply stating to us the rules of 1935 and 1937. I think the Tata Airline was started simply to carry mail from Karachi to Bombay. I do not know whether it was in 1932 or 1934. Where were the competitive airlines in India? Has nobody thought of revising these rules? After all, Sir, an aircraft is only an airbus. They even call it that. There is another bus on land. It simply travels. Pilot is only a driver and nothing more. Your objective in this country is to spread air travel to the regions in remote areas like the Eastern region, hilly areas, etc., as my colleagues have talked of. You cannot go to Dharamshala on a 20,000 or 30,000 ticket. Somebody made a great effort and got a flight to Pathankot. That is also for 20,000 or 25,000. They have nullified what you have done as a Government – the last or this one. Nobody is interested. Your Director Generals are casual. Rules of the Director Generals are casual and I am sorry to say that you are standing on the side. I don't want to disrespect you if you are a raja I am not. But, राजा साहब, आप एक तरफ तो न खड़े रहो। आप अमरिन्दर सिंह की तरह थोड़ा सा proactive हो जाओ। You are running a Ministry. You are the head of it. If you have come, make a difference. You will be gone like all of us have gone after a while. Please make a difference so that we remember you. I think that is what you should try and do. The rest has all been said. Rewrite the rules, change the rules, throw away the book, and give some new directions in the light of what India needs, and what India is desperate for. Thank you.

PROF. JOGEN CHOWDHURY (West Bengal): Sir, our Chief Minister, Shrimati Mamata Banerjee, is of the opinion that Air India should be made the best airline of this country and already, it is the national carrier. We should think in that way. I found that recently it has improved its business and also the time schedule. Some time back, it was not so. So, that is good news. Private airlines like Indigo have gone down. They charge very high if there is a cancellation of the ticket. Also, their tickets are very arbitrarily priced. Most of the private airlines arbitrarily price the air tickets. So, I think, that is a very difficult situation for the people who are travelling. Sometimes, they are not even refunding the money while cancelling the tickets. They also demand extra baggage charges. It is said that because of faulty weighing machines, they charge extra baggage charges. It becomes a problematic and embarrassing situation for the travellers. Moreover, they are not even supplying food and water when it is really necessary. They are not careful about such humanitarian

things. So, I would like to ask the Government: What measures are they taking in this situation? Thank you.

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU (Telangana): Respected Deputy Chairman, the air fare parity is a cause of concern in the country. The air traffic network is called the real worldwide web. The level of aviation is an indicator of the economic performance of a nation. Keeping these factors, examples and the experience of the nation, the Union Government should look into the real complications of the parity of the air fare, as well as, the welfare of the employees of the Civil Aviation Department. The Civil Aviation is contributing to the GDP to the extent of just half a per cent. This sector is giving jobs to 17,00,000 persons, that too highly qualitative and productive.

In 1911, on the banks of the Ganges, just beside Prayaga, from Allahabad to Naini, just 10 KMs distance, was the first air transport. Then, in 1922, while saluting the legendary aviation service of the J.R.D. Tata, the Tata Sons have created this as the air service. Then onwards it became air service business. Only after 16 years of the air usage, an enactment has come into place on which we are yet to throw light to take the latest problems into consideration. Our's is an Open Sky Aviation Policy. At the moment per annum 6,64,000 flights are carrying seven crore people across the country. The air fare parity has become a heart burn. I would request the Minister of Civil Aviation about the employment security of 17,00,000 in house employees, as well as, aspiring employees of the Civil Aviation Department. Thank you very much.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Ramdas Athawale, absent. Shri A.U. Singh Deo.

श्री ए.यू. सिंह दिव (ओडिशा) : सर, यह बड़ा अच्छा मुद्दा उठाया गया है। मेरे साथियों ने जो कहा है, मैं उसे रिपीट नहीं करने वाला हूँ। मैं यह समझता हूँ कि एयर इंडिया को अच्छे रूट्स शायद कम ही मिलते हैं। जहाँ सोशल सर्विस करनी पड़ती है, वहाँ एयर इंडिया को भेज दिया जाता है। जहाँ और कोई नहीं जाता, वहाँ एयर इंडिया जाती है, सोशल सर्विस करने के वास्ते उसे ऐसी जगह जाना पड़ता है। इसलिए मेरे ख्याल से फाइनेंस मंत्री जी को एयर इंडिया को सब्सिडाइज़ करना चाहिए। यह ऐसे रूट में जा रही है, जहाँ वे जानते हैं कि प्रॉफिट नहीं होगा, लॉस होगा, उसको ऐसे रूट में भेजा जा रहा है। सर, आप बिजनेस क्लास की टिकट देख लीजिए, नॉर्मल क्लास की टिकट देख लीजिए। दिल्ली-मुम्बई की कल की टिकट का मूल्य 32 हजार रुपए था, बेंगलुरु का 28 हजार रुपए था। इतने में तो आदमी देश-विदेश घूम कर आ सकता है और इसमें कोई समस्या नहीं होगी।

सर, मैं यहां एक मुद्दा रखना चाहता हूँ। एक जमाने में बालासोर में फलड आया और रास्ते बंद हो गए, ट्रेन बंद हो गई। उस समय एक एयरलाइन ने प्राइस कम करने के बजाय उसे बढ़ा दिया। The minimum price was ₹ 16,000/-, the maximum was ₹ 25,000/- for economy

[श्री ए.यू. सिंह दिव]

ticket, where the roads were blocked to go to Kolkata from Bhubaneswar. I won't name the Airline here, I will tell the hon. Minister afterwards. This is criminal, it should be looked into and such cases should be stopped.

सर, मेरी जानकारी में एक और चीज आई है। I was talking to a lot of travel agents. इसमें ऐसा होता है कि हर एयरलाइन ओवरबुकिंग करती है। अगर उनकी 145 सीट्स हैं, तो वे 150 सीट्स बुक कर लेती हैं। उसके बाद जब लोगों की लाइन लगी रहती है, जब तक वे काउंटर तक पहुँचते हैं, उनको कह दिया जाता है कि आप लेट हो गए, आप घर चले जाएँ। एक्चुअली वे लेट नहीं होते। ओवरबुकिंग के कारण उनके पास सीट नहीं होती, वे असत्य बोलते हैं। इस चीज को भी हम लोग ध्यान में रखें। सर, आप देखिए ...**(समय की घंटी)**... सर, क्या मेरा समय खत्म हो गया? मैं बस एक और प्वाइंट रखना चाहता हूँ।

MR. DEPUTY CHIRMAN: No need of a speech. Only put the question.

SHRI A. U. SINGH DEO: Okay, Sir. Let me put the question.

Sir, international airports like the ones in Chandigarh, Hyderabad and Vizag have got international flights going there. The airport at Bhubaneswar is ready since 2013. मंत्री जी यह बताएं कि: Why have international flights not been allowed to go there? Why has the DGCA not given permission? Why has the BPIA not been given the permission? सर, ओडिशा की तरफ ऐसा step-motherly attitude न अपनाया जाए। Kindly allow this.

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI (Tamil Nadu): Sir, as it was mentioned, when fuel prices rise, ticket prices go up, but when the fuel prices drop, consumers don't get the benefit of it. Secondly, when you go to book tickets, you find that pricing is done by the clock; for one hour, there is one fixed price and, for the next hour, when you go to book your ticket, you find it higher than what it was earlier. That is the way it is. But, in spite of all this, private airlines do not provide facilities which they promise and we are not able to ask them for reimbursement, etc. They must make it sure that the quality of services within the airplanes are up to the mark. Many airlines indulge in over-booking also. Many a time, the passenger goes to the airport and when he asks for his ticket, they say it is all over, the flight is full. In many cases, women or elderly people travelling alone, thinking that they would return the same night, really suffer because they don't know where to stay; they are stranded at the airports. I hope the Minister would take action on these issues. Thank you.

श्री वीर सिंह (उत्तर प्रदेश) : माननीय उपसभापति महोदय, सभी फ्लाइट्स के किराए के सम्बन्ध में आज जो यह मुद्दा उठाया गया है, यह बहुत महत्वपूर्ण है। सभी फ्लाइट्स का किराया

आज बेतहाशा बढ़ रहा है। एक तरफ पेट्रोल की कीमतें कम हो गई हैं, लेकिन दूसरी तरफ किराए बढ़ते चले जा रहे हैं, यह चिन्ता का विषय है।

आज हम सांसदों को एअर इंडिया की सुविधा मिलती है, लेकिन एअर इंडिया सभी जगह तक नहीं पहुंच पाती है। जिस प्रकार एअर इंडिया की उड़ानों में सांसदों को सुविधा मिलती है, उसी प्रकार अन्य प्राइवेट फ्लाइट्स में भी हम लोगों को सुविधा मिलनी चाहिए, ऐसा मेरा सुझाव है।

इसके साथ मैं एक बात और कहना चाहूंगा। जब फ्लाइट कैंसिल होती है, तो केवल एक घंटा पहले ही इसके बारे में अवगत कराया जाता है। मेरा कहना यह है कि कम से कम दो-तीन घंटे पहले इसके बारे में अवगत कराया जाना चाहिए। अगर समय पर पता चल जाएगा कि हमारी फ्लाइट कैंसिल हो गई है, तो उसकी कोई वैकल्पिक व्यवस्था भी की जा सकती है। इसमें सुधार किया जाए। जब भी कोई फ्लाइट कैंसिल हो, तो समय रहते ही उसकी सूचना दी जाए।

जो प्राइवेट एअरलाइंस हैं, एअरपोर्ट्स पर उनमें बहुत लम्बी-लम्बी लाइनें लगी रहती हैं। वहां सांसदों के लिए अलग से कोई सुविधा नहीं दी जाती है। मेरा सुझाव है कि सांसदों के लिए वहां पर अलग से एक काउंटर होना चाहिए। धन्यवाद।

SHRI A. NAVANEETHAKRISHNAN (Tamil Nadu): Sir, our Constitution guarantees freedom of movement anywhere within the territory of India. But, nowadays, it is not possible to move throughout India by train or by bus. It can be done only through an airline.

Now, air fare is not being regulated by the Government or any independent regulatory authority. If I reach the airport ten minutes late, then I have to shell out ₹ 10,000 or ₹ 20,000. It is not possible for all people to do that. So, I feel, subject to correction, by invoking rule 135, clause (4) of Aircraft Rules, 1935, the Government or the Directorate General can very well regulate the air fares. If the air fare is not fixed, then it is not fair on the part of the Government. Everybody wants to travel by air. Nowadays, even a common man sometimes travels by air. So, it is a demand of the common man today that air fare must be fixed. Otherwise, everybody would be put to trouble.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have exhausted the names given at the appropriate time, that is, before starting the discussion. I have announced a number of times and Bulletin has also informed that you should give names before we start. It becomes very difficult for me. So many Members are pressing me. You are all grown up and educated. Why don't you give the name before we start? ...*(Interruptions)*... Your name is there. Please sit down. The point is, you are putting me in problem. What prevents you from giving your name early? I will give one minute each to three-four Members.

SHRI ANIL DESAI (Maharashtra): Sir, the airlines are exercising a sort of unchecked autonomy and the brunt of it is borne by the passengers. We can see the disparity in the fares charged by different airlines. In emergency, if any person has to fly, it is just beyond his capacity because he cannot afford the exorbitant charges demanded by the airlines. Secondly, there are low-cost airlines. They are called low-cost airlines for the namesake. IndiGo charges well before, not at the fag end when the flight is about to take off. They charge differently. Tickets are not made available. The passengers have a right to block the seats. That is the right given to the passengers. But that is not so in IndiGo. Secondly, ...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, secondly. Shri Anil Kumar Sahani.

SHRI ANIL DESAI: Sir, regarding Air India, I have one question. That is very necessary. The treatment which is given by Air India...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You put your question. There is no need of explanation.

SHRI ANIL DESAI: That is what I am asking. The way the Cabin Crew is treated in Air India, which ultimately leads to deterioration in the services that are rendered to the passengers ...(Interruptions)... that has to be improved.

डा. अनिल कुमार साहनी (बिहार): उपसभापति महोदय, नरेश अग्रवाल जी ने एक बहुत महत्वपूर्ण विषय जो उठाया है, उस पर सभी सदस्यों का मन्तव्य आया है। मैं माननीय मंत्री महोदय को कुछ सुझाव देना चाहूँगा।

इसमें ई-टिकटिंग में जो किराया ज्यादा कर दिया जाता है, उससे सांसद लोग भी फेर में पड़ जाते हैं। खुद मेरे पास भी एक ऐसा टिकट आ गया था, जिसके कारण सीबीआई की जांच हुई। जब सीबीआई की जांच हुई, तो मैंने सबको अवगत कराया। सीबीआई भी मेरी बात से सहमत हुई। मैं आपको अवगत कराना चाहता हूँ कि आप जो बोर्डिंग पास देते हैं, उस पर पैसा क्यों नहीं लिखते हैं कि यहां से यहां के लिए टिकट का इतना पैसा हुआ। यह सब उसी में होता है। जो ई-टिकटिंग होती है, उसमें यह होता है। हमारे यहां अभी कहकशां परवीन जी हैं। उनका 600 का टिकट था और उनको 31,000 का टिकट बनाकर दे दिया गया। संसद में उन्होंने उसे जमा करवाया, तो उसके बाद यहां से उनको नोटिस गया कि यह 600 का टिकट है, लेकिन इसमें 31,000 कैसे आ गया। तो मैं संसद में यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि जब सांसद लोग भी दिग्भ्रमित हो सकते हैं, तो आम जनता कैसे दिग्भ्रमित नहीं होगी। तो जो बोर्डिंग पास होता है, उस पर उसकी दर लिखवाइए, उसका रेट लिखवाइए। किसी भी बोर्डिंग पास पर रेट नहीं लिखा होता है। लोग दिग्भ्रमित हो जाते हैं। हम लोगों के पास यह आता है, तो दस्तखत करके भेज देते हैं और अब वह सीबीआई में चला जाता है। सीबीआई हम लोगों के यहां रेड करती है और तब उसे वस्तुस्थिति का पता चलता है। इस प्रकार जो air travel agent है, वह किस प्रकार से धांधली कर रहा है, लोगों को गुमराह कर रहा है और जब वह एक सांसद के साथ ऐसा कर सकता है, तो आम आदमी के साथ वह कैसा करेगा? तो मंत्री महोदय, आप इस पर कार्रवाई करें।

श्री तरुण विजय (उत्तराखंड): मंत्री जी कृपया इस एक प्रश्न का उत्तर दें कि एयर एशिया जैसी भी छोटी-छोटी एयरलाइंस आती हैं और भारत में आकर मुनाफा कमाती हैं। तो सारी दुनिया की ताकत और सरकार का पैसा एयर इंडिया के पीछे होने पर भी वह घाटे में क्यों चलती है? आपने पूरे मिडल ईस्ट/गल्फ के सारे के सारे जितने एयर रूट्स हैं, वे एतिहाद और अमीरात को दे दिये, एयर इंडिया के रूट्स वहां पर नहीं चलते हैं और वहां का किराया भी आप ज्यादा लेते हैं। आपसे हमने पिछली बार भी दरखास्त की थी। तो कृपया यह बतायें कि आपने कितने रूट्स अमीरात और एतिहाद को दिए और उनके मुकाबले एयर इंडिया कितना जा रही है और क्यों जा रही है? विदेशी कम्पनीज़ को आप भारत में ज्यादा रूट्स दे रहे हैं और भारतीय एयरलाइन को आप उस क्षेत्र में कम से कम रूट्स देते हैं।

सर, अंडमान-निकोबार के यात्री और वहां रहने वाले सरकारी कर्मचारी मर जाते हैं, क्योंकि अगर अपने इलाज के लिए वे एक बार दिल्ली, कोलकाता या मुंबई आयेंगे, तो एक आदमी पर एक लाख रुपये खर्च करने पड़ते हैं। भारत के लिए क्या यह सम्भव है? वे सरकारी कर्मचारी अपने को अंडमान में punishment मानते हैं। अगर आप अंडमान में सरकारी कर्मचारी भेजना चाहते हैं, तो एयर इंडिया उसके लिए सुविधा क्यों नहीं देती है? ...**(समय की घंटी)**... अगर कोई साधारण कर्मचारी भी बीमार हो जाए, तो वह आ नहीं सकता है। धन्यवाद।

SHRI S. MUTHUKARUPPAN (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I wish to make a small point regarding the Chennai airport in Tamil Nadu. Whenever we open the local newspapers, we have seen reports of airport's roofs being broken down. More than 40 times airport's roofs have broken down. My Tamil Nadu friends are sitting here. What action has been taken by the hon. Minister in this regard? Proper action must be taken by the hon. Minister. That is point No.1. Not only roofs, but wall tiles as well as wall glasses have also broken down. This has been going on almost every day. So, proper action must be taken. And three police personnel were injured when they were on security duty.

Sir, another point is this. These days, ordinary people are travelling by airbuses. But, at airports, even tea or coffee costs more than ₹ 100.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is a different issue.

SHRI S. MUTHUKARUPPAN: Once the airways were used only by wealthy people. But nowadays very ordinary people are travelling by air. But a huge amount is being charged. On this aspect also, action must be taken by the hon. Minister. Thank you, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, hon. Minister is to reply. Mr. Minister, before you reply, I also want to say something. The first thing is, because of competition, we were under the impression that the prices will come down. But it has happened the other way. Secondly, in Gulf, there are a lot of Indians who are ordinary workers. During festival season, Air India increases the charges. What is the rationale behind

it? Thirdly, when Airlines give tickets, they do not print the fare rates on boarding passes. That leads to corruption. So, answer these points as well.

SHRI ASHOK GAJAPATHI RAJU PUSAPATI: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I want to bring to the notice of this august House that this is, basically, a very complicated situation which does not have simplistic answers. Firstly, Sir, someone talked about me as a Raja, as an individual...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There is another Raja also here. Don't worry.

SHRI ASHOK GAJAPATHI RAJU PUSAPATI: I wish to submit that I was born in a free India in the year 1951, long after India got independence, with full citizen's rights subject to none. So, I think that that hangover ought to be removed. I am proud of my heritage but I don't live in the past. I am very clearly mentioning that.

SHRI D. RAJA: I was also born in free India.

SHRI ASHOK GAJAPATHI RAJU PUSAPATI: We are both fellow citizens of a great country. That is the way I look at it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We want all to live like Rajas.

SHRI ASHOK GAJAPATHI RAJU PUSAPATI: Sir, I had no intention to divert the subject.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes. Don't look here or there. Look at the Chair and speak.

SHRI ASHOK GAJAPATHI RAJU PUSAPATI: Sir, one thing is that the idea is to reach out the air travel to the common man. It is no longer elitist. There are lots of costs that go into it, and all those costs also reflect on the tickets. The hon. Member mentioned that a substantial part of the operational cost is fuel. I know it. About forty or forty-five per cent of the costs of any airlines are fuel costs. And these are very highly taxed items in our country. The taxes are ranging today from one per cent to 30 per cent. So, I had written to all the hon. Chief Ministers that if they could come down with this taxation it might be helpful in the pricing. Some Chief Ministers did respond; some didn't, but it is left to them. We are a federal country and we need to go ahead. Whatever we do, Sir, we should not throw the baby along with the bath water. We would like to keep the baby with us. There are implications. If we start with floors and caps, there are implications. Those who are getting cheaper tickets will be pushed up. Those who buy at a higher cost will be pushed down and world over there are no floors and caps in this. So, do we have to take a different line? Is it in India's interest that it should be different

from the world in Civil Aviation? These are the questions that come to mind. We are happy about Air India's performance in certain places. This morning I had the honour to honour pilots, crew of Air India, who were brave enough to repatriate a large number of our citizens from Yemen.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: And they have done a wonderful job. We should congratulate them.

SHRI ASHOK GAJAPATHI RAJU PUSAPATI: They have done an excellent job, and I had the honour of honouring a few of them. So we do take pride in certain things. Air India, no doubt, its books are very much in the red. All Members know about it. There are lots of reasons for it. Probably, we will never be able to put the clocks back. So, we have to learn from past experiences, work now for the future. Sir, our country is a big country and, as of now, there are route dispersal guidelines given by the regulator and though other airlines, or rather all airlines are to perform a minimum of ten per cent of the category I on category II and III routes, Air India gives us something like 23-24 per cent. Its reach in India is something that I think, any Indian will be proud of. But it is not able to service all stations. Modern science has also evolved and aircraft patterns are also changing. So, on one side we have about 31-32 airports where you can say in the past one-and-a-half to two years there has been no aviation activity. So, it is a non-performing asset. So, how to deal with all these things? We had put in the public domain a draft aviation policy and we are requesting suggestions from all quarters. We are looking forward to suggestions from Members of this august House also. Of course, the Act is old, but it was amended in 1998 or 1999. If we feel it necessary one can come up with a new Act. There is no such bar on it, but if we find the need for it, we will definitely do it. Of course, North-East connectivity is important. Government of India through DoNER has been giving a viability gap funding there. Andaman is also important. The Lieutenant Governor has also given a viability gap funding. So, airlines are performing, but all airlines are not making profits. Their costs are also very, very high in fact, Kingfisher was mentioned here. I think, it ran into a turbulent weather and crashed long time back. Similarly, we had, recently, Spicejet going through turbulence. Thank God! It has not crashed yet. We hope that they will get their books right so that 'that' would not happen.

Sir, a coffee costing ₹ 100; what is it that I can say there? We can drink a coffee or we choose not to drink a coffee.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Therefore, I decided not to drink.

श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर : कॉफी के बारे में यह कोई आंसर नहीं है। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRI ASHOK GAJAPATHI RAJU PUSAPATI: Sir, airports have their costs and they have their prices.

Sir, shoddy construction in our country has not been confined to only Chennai airport. There are a lot of airports with a shoddy construction; we need to correct it. Unfortunately, it was our culture. We went on building shoddy airports which are there for everybody to see all over the country.

SHRI D. RAJA: Sir, in Chennai there is a huge building which is unused ...*(Interruptions)*... In Chennai there is a huge building, but it is unused. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री नरेश अग्रवाल : माननीय उपसभापति जी, ऐसा लग रहा है कि माननीय मंत्री जी मजबूर हैं और मजबूर होकर जबर्दस्ती जवाब दे रहे हैं। हम लोगों ने जो इश्यू उठाए, किसी भी एक इश्यू का जवाब नहीं आया। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से पूछना चाहता हूँ कि एयरक्राफ्ट ...*(व्यवधान)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. Let him finish his reply. Nareshji, let him complete his reply ...*(Interruptions)*... Let him complete. आप लोग बैठिए। Please, sit down ...*(Interruptions)*... नरेश जी, उनको पूरा करने दो। Mr. Minister, can you not think of a regulatory mechanism? That is the issue.

SHRI ASHOK GAJAPATHI RAJU PUSAPATI: Sir, a regulatory mechanism will necessarily mean caps and floors. And, caps and floors will, definitely, have an impact on aviation. Is it desirable that caps and floors be made, Sir?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes; it is desirable.

SHRI ASHOK GAJAPATHI RAJU PUSAPATI: Then, how do I reason with people who are buying low price tickets and tell them that 'I will push your ticket 10 times of the cost?' Sir, is it desirable? And, what is the desirability? ...*(Interruptions)*... As of now,...

श्री नरेश अग्रवाल : उनके जवाब से ऐसा लग रहा है कि वे लाचार हैं। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRI ASHOK GAJAPATHI RAJU PUSAPATI: If he allows me to complete, it would be better.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him complete his reply.

SHRI ASHOK GAJAPATHI RAJU PUSAPATI: Sir, as of now, in a transparent way, all airlines must publish, on their website, what their buckets are and what their minimums and maximums are. And, Sir, it is in the public domain. So, nothing is secret. Now, if an airline decides that its baggage should be not 20 kgs but 15 kgs, it has an implication. Now, time consciousness is growing and air travel is also growing. Not all people who get into an airline are going for one week. Some are going

not even for a day. They come back. So, there are all types of travelers – business, tourists, etc. There are many people who have been able to book in advance and take advantage of low air fare. The problem, as I understand, is emergency, the last movement emergency. Sir, festival season is, definitely, not an emergency. Certain festivals are known that they are going to come on a certain date.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: But, fares are exorbitantly high even by Air India.

SHRI ASHOK GAJAPATHI RAJU PUSAPATI: If people bought tickets early, they give at a very low cost.

श्री सतीश चंद्र मिश्रा (उत्तर प्रदेश) : आप कहते हैं कि आम आदमी के लिए चला रहे हैं ...**(व्यवधान)**... यह आप कौन से आम आदमी के लिए चला रहे हैं? ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री नरेश अग्रवाल : आप तो इन एअरलाइंस को फ्री कर रहे हैं। ...**(व्यवधान)**... माननीय नेता सदन बैठे हैं ...**(व्यवधान)**... वह भी लाचार हैं ...**(व्यवधान)**...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him complete, please ...**(Interruptions)**...

SHRI ASHOK GAJAPATHI RAJU PUSAPATI: I submit, through you, to this august House, and to you also, that I have understood the thinking of the House, I have understood the thinking of the Members. I will try to see if we can find some ways. But it is not a simplistic problem. We need not add to the complications that we have. We will try to work on it. We are here for the people. We will work for them. ...**(Interruptions)**..

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is okay ...**(Interruptions)**... Please sit down.

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): Sir, this is a very serious matter. The open sky policy started in early 90s when hon. Dr. Manmohan Singh was Finance Minister and I was Civil Aviation Minister. It was during my period as Civil Aviation Minister that I recommended to the Cabinet and then this open sky policy came into being, which is why we have so many airlines today. At that point of time, a large number of airlines started operating. When they filed before the DGCA as to which routes they would like to operate, almost a hundred per cent private airlines wanted to fly between Delhi-Bombay, Delhi-Chennai, Bengaluru and Hyderabad. It is at that point of time that I personally called all airlines and the DGCA and made it mandatory that each airline shall have to go to the North-Eastern States and also to the other States which were not connected. Otherwise, if you had left it to the private airlines, it would have been only the Indian Airlines which would have gone to the loss-making destinations and unconnected areas, thereby incurred huge losses. The private airlines would have preferred to go to the profit-making routes only. So, it was the Ministry which took the decision.

[Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad]

Similarly, I would like to cite an example. I think, the hon. Members of Parliament, representing different political parties are not talking for themselves. Well, they are being taken care of by Parliament free tickets. Since we all, and you too, Sir, represent the people of India, there are also poor people. Take the example of Kashmir. If one has to go by road from Delhi, it would take four days. So, the people prefer to go by air. If you have to go to Leh, it would take you six days! But, by air, from Delhi to Sri Nagar, it is one hour. So, should people prefer one-hour travel or six days' travel? Definitely, they would prefer the one-hour travel. In winter, when nobody goes to Sri Nagar, then the fare will be ₹ 3,000; in summer, when everybody would like to go, a large number of domestic passengers, forget the tourists, would also like to fly and they would have to pay ₹ 30,000 against ₹ 3,000! So, where is the rationale? There are poor sick persons wanting to come to All-India Institute of Medical Sciences. A patient is accompanied by another three passengers. So, that means, he shall have to shell out ₹1,20,000 for just one side travel! Where is he going to get the money? And the patient is not going to wait to take him first by road journey to Jammu and then by rail, and by that time the patient would have gone. So, what I would request and what the hon. Members have requested rightly, is that people need not spend huge sums. Let there be a slab. Who has told them to put ₹ 3,000? Let them put ₹ 6,000 in the winter. Then, at least, in summer they cannot go more than ₹ 10,000 or ₹ 12,000 whatever is reasonable. So, there has to be a slab, upper slab and lower slab. Otherwise, if you leave it to their mercy they will pull the aircraft when they don't have the traffic. Since, there is no traffic, okay, charge ₹ 3,000/-. When will they charge ₹ 3,000? When nobody wants to travel. I say even if they give free, people are not going to travel. Aviation is to facilitate the travelling for the passengers. So, we cannot leave it to the mercy of the airlines. I think, the Government which is a responsible Government, elected Government, shall have to take care of the poor people.

श्री नरेश अग्रवाल: माननीय उपसभापति महोदय, मैंने बड़े क्लीयर दो प्रश्न पूछे थे। एक तो जैसा अभी नेता विरोधी दल ने उठाया कि एअर का जो किराया है, उसको रेगुलेट करने का आप क्या तरीका कर रहे हैं? जो एअरक्राफ्ट एक्ट, 1937 है, जो आजादी के पहले का बना है, चूंकि आप आजादी के बाद जन्मे हैं, हम भी आजादी के बाद 1951 में पैदा हुए हैं, उस पुराने वाले एक्ट को क्या आप खत्म करेंगे?

श्री उपसभापति: उन्होंने बोला। ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री नरेश अग्रवाल: दूसरा, श्रीमन्, हमने टिकट के कैन्सलेशन का मुद्दा उठाया था। ...**(व्यवधान)**... जैसा दो एअरलाइन्स ने टिकट कैन्सलेशन का कहा है, हण्ड्रेड परसेंट पैसा वे ले लेंगे। उन्होंने टाइम का कहा है कि इतने घंटे पहले इतना काटेंगे। अगर किसी यात्री ने अपनी यात्रा रद्द कर दी, तो उसका पैसा चला जाएगा।

श्री उपसभापति: उन्होंने बोला है कि कुछ करेंगे। Nareshji, he has already said that he will try to do something.

SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL: Sir, what do you mean by try? अगर मिनिस्टर ट्राई करेंगे, तो कैसे चलेगा? अगर प्रधान मंत्री अपने को बेचारा कहेंगे, तो फिर देश में सरकार काहे की रही। ...**(व्यवधान)**...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Think of some suggestion ...**(Interruptions)**... I think the suggestion of Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad ...**(Interruptions)**... having some regulatory authority by which you fix a lower fare and maximum fare. ...**(Interruptions)**... Try to do something. ...**(Interruptions)**... He will do.

SHRI ASHOK GAJAPATHI RAJU PUSAPATI: Sir, the Leader of Opposition ...**(Interruptions)**... Sir, the route dispersal guidelines that were formulated ...**(Interruptions)**...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, okay. You examine and ...**(Interruptions)**... Okay, fine. That is okay. ...**(Interruptions)**... That is over. No more. ...**(Interruptions)**... That is no more. Nareshji, over.

श्री नरेश अग्रवाल: यह सरकार गरीबों की चिंता नहीं कर रही है। एअरलाइन्स को लूटने का मौका दे रही है। हमारा दल बहिष्कार करता है। ...**(व्यवधान)**...

(कुछ माननीय सदस्य सदन से उठकर चले गए)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay; over. ...**(Interruptions)**... That subject is over. ...**(Interruptions)**... That subject is over. ...**(Interruptions)**... The mover has walked out, then his subject should not be further discussed. ...**(Interruptions)**... That subject is over, the mover has walked out. ...**(Interruptions)**... Now, I have to take up the Appropriation (No.2) Bill, 2015 and the Finance Bill, 2015. ...**(Interruptions)**... What is your problem? ...**(Interruptions)**... Now, please. ...**(Interruptions)**...

GOVERNMENT BILLS

The Appropriation (No. 2) Bill, 2015 and

The Finance Bill, 2015

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JAYANT SINHA): Sir, I move:

That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 2015-16, as passed by Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration.