Snag hit Air India Boeing 787 Dreamliner

986. SHRI MAJEED MEMON: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that a snag hit the Air India Boeing 787 Dreamliner, before it could take off for Delhi from Kolkata, when almost all the passengers on board spent an entire night inside the aircraft;

(b) whether Air India tried to arrange another aircraft for taking the passengers to their destination in view of such contingency; and

(c) if not, why Air India did not make board and lodge arrangements for the harried passengers compelling them to spend the night in the plane itself, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) to (c) Air India Kolkata-Delhi flight AI 701 operating on 20th March, 2016 was withdrawn due to technical snag and flight duty time limitation of the pilot. Several components of the aircraft had to be replaced which were not available at Kolkata and had to be arranged from Delhi-Mumbai bases. Passengers were informed about the technical snag in the aircraft. Some passengers opted for Hotel accommodation while most of the passengers refused to disembark and stayed in aircraft. All sorts of help was provided to the passengers in the aircraft. A relief aircraft was operated to fly the passengers to Delhi on next day morning.

CAP on maximum air fare

987. SHRI AJAY SANCHETI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there have been constant complaints from passengers regarding very high spot fare;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government proposes to cap maximum airfare at a reasonable price; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) and (b) No passenger complaints substantiating the violation of regulatory provision have been received by DGCA. With regard to fare charged by airline companies, the factual information is as follows:

1. With the repeal of Air Corporation Act in March 1994, the provision of air fare approval was dispensed with by the Government. Under the provision of sub Rule(l) of Rule 135 of the Aircraft Rules, 1937, every air transport undertaking engaged in scheduled air services are required to establish tariff having regard to all relevant factors, including the cost of operation, characteristic of services, reasonable profit and the generally prevailing tariff.

2. Air fare pricing forms the strategic framework of airlines to respond the demand/ supply and market dynamics through the inventory management Process. The domestic airline pricing runs in multiple levels [bucket or RBD (Reservation Booking Designator)] which are in line with the practice followed globally.

3. The fares established by airlines under the provision of Sub Rule (1) of Rule 135 of the Aircraft Rules, 1937 are required to be displayed by the airlines on their websites in compliance of Sub Rule 02 of Rule 135, Aircraft Rule 1937. Airlines remain compliant to the regulations as long as the fare charged by them does not exceeds the fare structure displayed on their website. Analysis of airfares on certain routes selected on random basis has shown that the airfares remained well within the fare bucket uploaded by the airlines on the respective websites.

(c) and (d) With regard to proposal to cap maximum air fare, the petition filed with Competition Commission of India (CCI) in a matter on charges of arbitrary high air fare case No. 68/2012 for issue of direction to Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to fix the MRP for airlines, CCI has stated in their order dated 06.03.2013 that commission cannot give direction to this effect. Considering the spirit of Competition law.

Sustainable growth of aviation sector

988. DR. PRABHAKAR KORE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that severe capacity constraint and lack of infrastructure could become a hurdle in the way of sustainable growth of aviation sector in the country;

(b) whether the country's aviation growth has remained concentrated in a few big cities with the top 10 cities contributing 80 per cent of the air traffic while having only 7 per cent of the population; and

(c) if so, what are the steps taken by Government to address the structural challenges to ensure sustainable growth in aviation sector and the details thereof?