shall not only encourage competition by lowering prices but shall also accord choice to consumers.

Moreover, FDI policy as contained in the 'Consolidated FDI Policy Circular of 2016', as amended from time to time, is subject to the conditions of the extant policy on specified sectors and applicable laws/ regulations; security and other conditionalities. Accordingly FDI policy on Civil Aviation sector is also subject to sectoral and security conditions.

(c) and (d) The Government of India has broadened the scope of Route Dispersal Guidelines (RDGs) by including the States of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. Further, Government has approved National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP), 2016, which *inter-alia* envisages Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS). The scheme is implemented by revival of unserved and under-served airports / routes in the country.

The RCS envisages for providing Viability Gap Funding (VGF) for airline operators under RCS, which is proposed to be shared between Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) and the State Government in the Ratio of 80:20.

**Construction of new terminal building at Raipur airport in Chhattisgarh**

†1679. DR. BHUSHAN LAL JANGDE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the construction of new terminal building at the Raipur airport has been started and any representation regarding giving it status of an International airport has been received by Government and, if so, whether it will be declared without any delay; and

(b) whether Government has reduced VAT on ATF (Fuel) from 25 per cent to 5 per cent and whether Centre would approve the proposals, to start new flights services to Raipur from other cities including Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI JAYANT SINHA): (a) New Integrated Terminal Building at Raipur has already been completed and commissioned on 12.11.2012. A request to declare Swami Vivekanand Airport, Raipur as an International Airport along with a resolution passed in the Legislative Assembly of Chhattisgarh was received from State

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Government of Chhattisgarh on 27.07.2013. Declaration of an airport as International Airport depends upon various factors like traffic potential, demand from airlines for operation of international flights, availability of the facilities like adequate runway length, availability of Customs, Immigration, Health and Animal and Plant Quarantine services.

The proposal of State Government of Chhattisgarh for declaration of Swami Vivekanand Airport, Raipur as an International Airport was examined and it was observed that the traffic has not picked up at some of the recently declared international airports such as Imphal, Bhubaneswar, etc. Moreover, expected international traffic potential at Raipur Airport is also low and thus, the proposal was not found viable.

(b) VAT is a State subject and decision in this regard is taken by the State Government. Further, Government has laid down Route Dispersal Guidelines (RDG) with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport service taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country including North-East region. It is however, up to the airlines to provide air services to specific places including Raipur depending upon the traffic demand, commercial viability and availability of aircraft. As such, airlines are free to operate any where in the country subject to compliance of RDG issued by the Government.

**Non-availability of slots to Indian carriers in foreign locations**

1680. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Carriers are able to utilise a mere half of the seats operated by foreign carriers to and from India, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA) has approached to Government regarding non-availability of slots in overseas locations despite having flying rights;

(c) if so, the details thereof and Government's response thereto; and

(d) the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to ensure that domestic carriers get adequate slots?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI JAYANT SINHA): (a) Sir, as per Summer Schedule, 2016, Indian air