

[20 July, 2004]

RAJYA SABHA

2.28 per cent in the last six trading sessions. Although in the first trading session there was a dip, in the last six trading sessions, it has risen by 2.28 per cent.

So far as the UTI units are concerned, I require a specific notice so that I can get the exact figures if he wants to know about a particular company.

Modernisation of Madurai Airport

*203. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to modernise and expand Madurai Airport and also to start aircraft operations from Salem Airport in Tamil Nadu; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Airports Authority of India (AAI) has phased plans for expansion and modernization of various infrastructure, facilities pertaining to air and city sides at Madurai Airport subject to handing over of the remaining required land measuring approximately six hectares by the State Government of Tamil Nadu to AAI.

Salem Airport is an operational airport suitable for operation of B-737 type of aircraft. No scheduled flights are operating at present to/from Salem Airport. Airlines plan their operations based on commercial viability subject to route dispersal guidelines issued in this regard.

SHRI C. PERUMAL: I would like to know from the hon. Minister: What is the progress of the work regarding expansion and modernisation on the land acquired so far at the Madurai Airport?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Airports Authority has planned expansion and modernisation at the Madurai Airport. But as of now, approximately six hectares of land which is required by the Airports Authority for expansion of this Airport has not yet been received from the

Government of Tamil Nadu. Sir, talks are in progress. We will inform the hon. Member accordingly.

SHRI C. PERUMAL: They have still to acquire six hectares of land from the Government of Tamil Nadu. But what steps the Government has taken to expedite the work in the acquired land.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, any expansion and modernisation programme cannot be taken up in bits and pieces. It has to be taken up in totality. Once this land is available, work will definitely go ahead. But in the meantime, certain works are already in progress. As and when the hon. Member wants to have any particular details, I would furnish those details to the hon. Member.

SHRI C. PERUMAL: Sir, a huge amount has been spent on this work. I need an assurance from the hon. Minister. I would like to know from the hon. Minister when would the Ministry complete the remaining work and when would they start operating flight.- from the Salem Airport?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, so far as the Salem Airport is concerned, there is an operational airport suitable for operation of B-7 and C-7 type of aircraft. Looking at the traffic requirements in this region, the Salem airport has not yet been found to be commercially viable. However, I would like to inform the hon. Member that since Salem is very close to some other major airports like Coimbatore which is less than three hours away, the traffic at Salem is not found suitable for commercial activity.

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM: Sir, Madurai is connected with Chennai only. There are four daily flights from Chennai to Madurai. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is any proposal pending with the Ministry for connecting Madurai with other major cities in the country.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: As of now, Madurai is already well connected. The hon. Member has made a suggestion. We will look into this matter. However, expansion of air services is an ongoing process depending on the traffic demand of a particular city.

SHRI S.P.M. SYED KHAN Sir, the Chennai Airport has been named as Anna and Kamaraj Terminals. Does the Government have any proposal to name the Madurai Airport as Pasumpon Muthuramalina Thevar Airport and the Coimbatore Airport as Dr. Puratchi Thalaivar MGR Airport? If not, would the Government consider it?

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SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: As of now, I don't have any proposal with the Ministry of re-naming any airport. However, as the hon. Member has suggested, let some proposal come. Then, the matter can be taken up.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 204.....

DR.K. MALAISAMY: Sir, there are a lot of supplementaries on Madurai.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Certainly there are a lot of supplementaries. But there are so many other questions to be answered.

Budgetary flexibility in States

*204. SHRIMATI JAMANA DEVI BARUPAL:†

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to State:

(a) Whether Reserve Bank of India has called upon States to make efforts to enhance their own revenues - both tax and non-tax to improve budgetary flexibility:

(b) if so, whether any concrete steps in this regard have been considered by the Government; and

(c) what are the suggestions made by RBI to States and how many States have agreed to augment revenues?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) A Statement is placed on the table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (c) RBI in their publication State Finances-A Study of Budgets of 2003-04 has suggested that the States would need to make efforts to enhance their own revenues - both tax and non-tax in order to enhance budgetary flexibility.

RBI has suggested that States augment their tax revenues through better tax administration, improved tax compliance and rationalization of the tax structure. RBI has also suggested rationalisation of various tax exemptions and concessions extended to various sectors of economy and reforms and reorientation of stamp duties, registration fees etc. to make them tax payer friendly. RBI believes that adoption of appropriate

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati Jamana Devi Barupal.