

(e) if so, by when it would be finalised;

(f) whether necessary trials to examine effective technology to neutralise drones have been conducted; and

(g) if so, whether technical specifications have been prepared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI JAYANT SINHA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise, in view of reply to Part (a) above.

(c) to (e) The Aircrafts Rules 1937 have been amended to include civil Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS), which is a sub-set of the Unmanned Aircraft System (commonly known as drones). A draft Civil Aviation Requirement (CAR) on civil use of RPAS was uploaded on the website of Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) for public comments.

(f) A live demonstration on counter-drone technologies on surveillance, detection and neutralization of drones was conducted on 13.02.2018 at Rohini Heliport.

(g) No, Sir.

#### **Construction of highways-cum-airstrips**

2403. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has decided to construct highways-cum-airstrips to provide better connectivity to remote areas in various parts of the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating by when it will be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI JAYANT SINHA): (a) No, Sir. There is no such proposal at present.

(b) Question does not arise in view of (a) above.

#### **Absorption of debt of Air India before disinvestment**

2404. SHRI G. C. CHANDRASHEKHAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government plans to divest its share in Air India and its subsidiaries in the coming months, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the reasons as to why the disinvestment in Air India failed in 2018 and the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government plans to absorb the debt in Air India before selling its stake, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI JAYANT SINHA): (a) and (c) The Government remains committed to the disinvestment of Air India. In this regard, the Air India Specific Alternative Mechanism (AISAM) has decided as follows:—

- (i) In view of volatile crude prices and adverse fluctuations in exchange rates, the present environment is not conducive to stimulate interest amongst investors for strategic disinvestment of Air India in immediate near future. The issue would be revisited once global economic indicators including oil prices and forex conditions stabilize,
- (ii) to undertake near and medium term efforts to capture operational efficiencies and to improve the performance of Air India,
- (iii) to monetise non-core land and building assets,
- (iv) to separately decide the contours of the mode of disposal of the subsidiaries viz. Air India Engineering Services Limited (AIESL), Air India Air Transport Services Limited (AIATSL) and Airline Allied Services Limited (AASL).

(b) Probable reasons as analyzed by the Transaction Advisor, *i.e.* M/s EY for non receipt of bids, *inter alia*, are GoI 24% stake and corresponding rights, high amount of allocated debt, changes in macro environment, individuals not being allowed to bid, profitability track record and bidders not being able to form a consortium within given time period.

#### **Safeguarding rights of Air India employees**

2405. SHRI RAM KUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has found no bidder for its stake sale in Air India;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor along-with the present debt burden of Air India;
- (c) whether Government has formulated any plan to get Air India out of its debt;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether Government has received requests for not selling its stake in Air India; and