

Mid-air collision at the border of India and Bangladesh

*104. SHRI T. RATHINAVEL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that two private airlines came too close for comfort before averting a mid-air collision at the border air space of India and Bangladesh recently;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the collision was averted after the Air Traffic Control in Kolkata instructed one plane to move away from the other aircraft that had come at the same level;

(c) whether it is also a fact that many such incidents had been reported in the past; and

(d) if so, the corrective steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) and (b) On 31.10.2018, two private airline flights were on a reciprocal track, which could have led to the breach of separation while flying in Bangladesh airspace. However timely corrective action taken by Air Traffic Controller in Kolkata avoided emerging situation.

(c) Till date, 9 such incidents have been reported to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in 2017 and 2018, in this region.

(d) Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) was approached by Airports Authority of India (AAI) for conversion of various bi-directional ATS routes passing through Bangladesh airspace connecting Kolkatta, into pairs of uni-directional routes (inbound and outbound). In March, 2018, CAAB accepted to bifurcate Guwahati-Agartala ATS route. Unidirectional route (R472) in that sector has been established and implemented since March, 2018. Similar proposals for conventional and now Performance Based Navigation (PBN) routes between Kolkata and Dhaka with further connectivity to Guwahati have been declined by the CAAB.

AAI holds monthly ROC meetings to ensure situational awareness amongst the aviation stakeholders.

Foreign national in restricted area in Andaman and Nicobar Islands

*105. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a foreign national had attempted to land in the out of bounds Sentinel Island in the Andamans for the purpose of illegal religious conversion of the native Sentinelese tribe which is an endangered community living in Andaman Island;

(b) if so, what laws had been violated by the person and those that aided and abetted him and what is the status of prosecution of these people; and

(c) what steps Government is taking to ensure enforcement of these areas prohibited to foreigners and to ensure strong action against those who violate rules?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI KIREN RIJJU): (a) to (c) One U.S. national, Chau John Allen, visited the North Sentinel Island clandestinely with the help of five local fishermen in a mechanized dinghy. An F.I.R. has been lodged (No. 92/2018 dated 20.11.2018) u/s 282, 336, 304 and 120 B Indian Penal Code (I.P.C) read with Sections 7 and 8 of PAT Regulations, 1956 and Sections 14, 14A and 14C of The Foreigners Act, 1946 against seven persons who aided/abetted the foreign national in reaching the North Sentinel Island. Presently, all the accused persons are in judicial custody.

Regular coastal patrolling by Police Marine Force and also by Coast Guard and Navy is being conducted around the Islands. Fast Interceptor Boats (F.I.B.s) and other mechanized engine dinghies of police conduct patrolling near the creeks and abandoned Islands including the Sentinel Islands under the jurisdiction of South Andaman District and keep vigil on poaching activities to prevent intrusion of anti-social elements into Indian territorial waters. Further, boats without registration numbers are not allowed to operate by the local administration.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Safety measures and programmes for airliners

961. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has chalked out any safety measure and programme to enhance and ensure safety of airliners;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has taken any serious note of old aircraft being operated by certain airlines; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI JAYANT SINHA): (a) and (b) As per the annual surveillance programme, audit