

श्री शमशेर सिंह मन्हास: सभापति जी, जम्मू-कश्मीर जैसे संवेदनशील इलाके में बहुत सारी इस प्रकार की घटनाएं होती रहती हैं और वहां से investigation के लिए 6-6 महीने लग जाते हैं। तथा रिपोर्ट वापस आने तक कुछ पता ही नहीं लगता है। तो क्या जम्मू-कश्मीर में इस प्रकार की प्रयोगशाला प्रारम्भ हो सकती है?

श्री जी. किशन रेड्डी: सभापति महोदय, जम्मू-कश्मीर का सेंटर अलग नहीं है। चंडीगढ़ में जोनल सेंटर है। चंडीगढ़ के अंदर जम्मू-कश्मीर, पंजाब, हिमाचल प्रदेश का सेंटर है। उसमें Central Government की जितनी भी investigations होती हैं, वे चंडीगढ़ में होती हैं।

श्री सभापति: यह अच्छा हो गया कि युवा राज्य मंत्री को केबिनेट मंत्री जी ने प्रश्नों का समाधान देने के लिए मौका दिया है। इसलिए उनका अभिनन्दन करना चाहिए।

Revival of Air India

*127. SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any intention to revive Air India after the disinvestment initiative did not receive proper response from the interested parties;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the revival package shall have the package of clearing the debt of over ₹ 55,000 crore in the event of revival; and

(d) what measures the proposal is likely to have to avoid recurrence of similar situation in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) The Government is committed to the disinvestment of Air India. In this regard, the Government prepared a revival plan of Air India.

(b) The Government prepared the revival plan to bring operational and financial efficiency in Air India to effectively prepare it for disinvestment. Air India's Revival Plan is focused on building a competitive and profitable airline group. The Revival Plan comprises several major elements including, *inter-alia*:

(i) A comprehensive financial package, as approved by Government of India which also includes transferring of debt and non-core assets to Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV);

- (ii) Higher levels of operational efficiency by strengthening management and implementing best practice business processes;
- (iii) Robust organizational and governance reforms to be implemented by an eminent Board;
- (iv) Differentiated business strategies for each of Air India's core businesses;
- (v) World-class HR practices to ensure a talented and motivated workforce; and
- (vi) Sale of non-core real estate assets and strategic disinvestment of subsidiaries such as Air India Air Transport Services Ltd.

(c) In a meeting held on 07.09.2018 under the chairpersonship of Finance Minister, it was, *inter-alia*, decided that as decided by AISAM, the debt amounting to ₹ 29464 crore would be transferred from Air India to Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV).

(d) The Revival Plan of Air India focuses on the financial and operational efficiencies so that substantial increase in revenue or cost saving can be achieved. Also, as decided in the meeting taken by Finance Minister on 07.09.2018, operational and financial performance parameters and milestones were fixed by the Government and are regularly reviewed *via* review meetings held under the chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation. The Government, however, remains committed to the disinvestment of Air India.

SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the airfares, after the closure of Jet Airways, have on an average increased to around 50 per cent. Though the enhanced rates are well within reach, yet the common passengers have been hit hard. Has the Government taken any steps to take care of the paying capacity of the air passengers?

SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI: Sir, the uncertainty caused on account of cessation of operations by the Jet Airways, insofar as the domestic air travel is concerned, has almost completely been corrected. Insofar as international airfares are concerned, we have, for a three months' period allocated the slots to the other domestic carriers. And, I can tell the hon. Member that insofar as domestic sector is concerned, airfares on the trunk sectors, like Delhi-Mumbai, which is on an average five thousand and one hundred rupees, have not increased for almost twenty years. That was the fare in 2001; that was the fare in 2011 and even today also. Now, insofar as international sector is concerned, because the Jet Airways lost wide-body aircraft and some of the other airlines do not possess wide-body aircraft, which they are in the process of acquiring,

we have given them these slots for a three-month period. Then, we will see how the resolution process on Jet Airways proceeds. Also, we have certain questions in regard to Air India. But, I am totally confident that the issue of increase in air fares will be resolved, as we are in the process of resolving.

SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Despite the fact that the Air India is incurring losses, why did you not allot the premium sectors for operation to it, against the slots vacated by the Jet Airways?

SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI: Sir, insofar as the Air India is concerned, let me take this opportunity to place before this House that the Government is committed to privatisation of Air India. Let there be no ambiguity on this point. The Air India is incurring losses, but those losses are being incurred, not because it is prized asset, it has some excellent assets, it has a fleet of aircraft, which travels to ninety eight destinations – 57 domestic and 41 international. But it has, over a period of time, undertaken debts. And, the debt servicing is becoming unsustainable. They are incurring losses of rupees fifteen crores a day. Therefore, the Air India will have to be disinvested. On account of certain cost-cutting measures, the Air India has a shortage of 20 aircraft. We are hoping to bring these 20 aircraft, at least 17 of them, back into operation by October. The Air India has also been given many of the slots that have been vacated by the Jet Airways. Slots have also been given to its low-cost carriers, like, Alliance Air. Our plan is to revive Air India, to make it operationally viable, and then to disinvest it.

SHRI ANIL DESAI: Sir, may I know from the hon. Minister, through you, whether the Air India, in last six months, has improved on its financial front, as far as revenue earning is concerned, against the cost and expenses that are incurred on the business operations?

SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI: Sir, the costing and overall calculations of an airline's profitability depends on a large number of factors. Yes, there has been a steady improvement in Air India's finances. For the previous financial year, which has been concluded, the figure will show a loss; but in the current financial year, we are hoping to make a operating profit. In April, yes, we have improved. But my problem is that when you look at these, there are certain external factors.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, don't look at the Member, look at me.

SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI: Well, through you, hon. Chairman, Sir, let me say that there are certain factors which take place, for instance, the closure of Pakistani

airspace. This has added another factor, but our expectation is that in the coming months, after we close the previous year's figures, which will be available now, in the current year, we will make a profit, turn the Air India around, and, then, privatise the airline.

SHRI V.VIJAYASAI REDDY: Sir, I would like to know this from the hon. Minister. Is it true that the Air India doesn't have sufficient working capital resources to pay its employees' salaries beyond the month of October, in view of the fact that the total debt of Air India has exceeded ₹ 58,000 crores?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please put your specific question.

SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: That is not the solution. Apart from the disinvestment plan, what plans do you have to meet the contingency?

SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI: Sir, the hon. Member is referring to a Press report which appeared yesterday. I have no knowledge as to where the Press report has emanated from. It is customary in situations like this for employees and others, who are stakeholders in the process, to put pressure on the Government. Let me just tell the hon. Member that we have increased the Air India revenue by ₹ 7 crores per day. We are doing all that we can. Yes, the hon. Member is right that there is an overall debt of approximately ₹ 59,000 crores. When an attempt was made to do privatisation last time, it was proposed to retire ₹ 29,000 crores into a Special Purpose Vehicle. Now, when Air India specific Alternative Mechanism is established, we will take a view on this. I would not, at this point of time, worry too much about whether Air India has money to pay salaries after October. After all, Air India is a viable airline. It has some prized assets. When we go for disinvestment, we will also take care of this. But, as I said, Press report was motivated in order to put pressure on the Government in order not to disinvest the airline.

DR. PRABHAKAR KORE: Sir, I have a straight question. When the Government has decided to disinvest Air India, — there are assets in Mumbai, particularly, the Air India's earlier Headquarters, the Nariman Point — there is an offer from Maharashtra Government to buy that property. I would like to know whether the Government will consider this proposal.

SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI: Sir, the Air India, in and of itself, and many of its operational assets are really very, very prized assets and the headquarters at Nariman Point is a case in point. The Air India, as I mentioned, flies to 57 destinations within India. It has international routes also. It is flying to 41 destinations. It is the only flag carrier. When we decide on the final structure of disinvestment...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: About Maharashtra Government.

SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI: Yes. But, whether it is to the Maharashtra Government or to the highest bidder, these are not the questions which the Minister can answer on the floor of Parliament. This will be a decision taken by the alternate mechanism when we are in the heart of the privatisation process.

संसद सदस्यों के सरकारी आवासों की गुणवत्ता-जांच

*128. श्री राकेश सिन्हा: क्या आवासन और शहरी कार्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार केन्द्रीय लोक निर्माण विभाग द्वारा संसद सदस्यों के सरकारी आवासों में करवाए जा रहे कार्यों की कोई गुणवत्ता-जांच कराती है;

(ख) क्या उक्त विभाग द्वारा खुली निविदा के आधार पर उक्त कार्य आवंटित किए जाते हैं; और

(ग) क्या सरकार कार्यों की गुणवत्ता, जो उक्त विभाग के अधिकारियों और ठेकेदारों की मिलीभगत के कारण प्रभावित होती है, के मामले में गुणवत्ता-नियंत्रण सुनिश्चित करने के लिए कोई कदम उठाने का विचार रखती है?

आवासन और शहरी कार्य मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री हरदीप सिंह पुरी): (क) से (ग) विवरण सभा पटल पर रख दिया गया है।

विवरण

(क) और (ख) जी, हां।

(ग) केन्द्रीय लोक निर्माण विभाग (सीपीडब्ल्यूडी) में गुणवत्ता जांच करने के लिए एक सुस्थापित गुणवत्ता आश्वासन प्रणाली है। विभाग के अधिकारियों तथा ठेकेदारों के बीच कोई मिलीभगत ध्यान में नहीं आई है।

Quality checks for Government accommodations for MPs

†*128. SHRI RAKESH SINHA: Will the Minister of HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government undertakes a quality check of the work being done by the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) in Government accommodations of Members of Parliament;

(b) whether the said work is allotted through open tender of the department; and

(c) whether Government proposes to take any step to ensure quality control which is affected due to the nexus between officers of the department and contractors?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.