

श्री संतोष कुमार गंगवार: उपसभापति महोदय, मैं माननीय सदस्य को बताना चाहता हूँ कि आज की तारीख में जो पुराना कानून है, वही चलेगा। मैं विश्वास करता हूँ कि एक सप्ताह में ही वह हाउस में आज जाएगा। उसके बाद पुराने कानून बदल जाएंगे और नए के अनुसार हम लोग काम करेंगे। अगर आपकी कोई specific शिकायत है और आप उसके बारे में बताएंगे, तो उसका समाधान करवाया जाएगा।

प्रो. मनोज कुमार झा: उपसभापति महोदय, मेरा एक specific सवाल है। सन् 1991 से labour reforms की जब बात होती है, तो मुझे वह oxymoron लगता है कि हम किसकी बात कर रहे हैं। मैं सीधा कहूँगा कि Workmen'ss Compensation Act, Industrial Dispute Act - ये सारे emerge हुए और ये तमाम कानून emerge हुए, Article 19 से - Freedom of Association से। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से कहना चाहता हूँ कि वे एक गारंटी दें क्योंकि हमें पता है कि जब ये थे या आप हैं, labour reforms के नाम पर क्या होता है, वह हम सब जानते हैं। तो Article 19 जो है...

श्री उपसभापति: मनोज जी, सवाल पूछिए।

प्रो. मनोज कुमार झा: वह protected रहेगा, आप इसकी गारंटी सदन में दें।

श्री संतोष कुमार गंगवार: उपसभापति महोदय, मैं माननीय सदस्य को बताना चाहूँगा कि हमारी सरकार की रुचि थी और 2002 में हम लोगों ने निर्णय लिया कि हम उस समय जो 44 श्रम कानून हैं, इन्हें सरलीकृत करके चार codes में लाने का काम करेंगे, लेकिन दुर्भाग्य की बात है कि 2004 से लेकर 2014 तक इन पर कोई कदम, कोई कार्यवाही नहीं की गयी। अब हम लोग आए हैं तो हम लोग तत्काल इसमें सक्रिय हुए हैं। आदरणीय प्रधान मंत्री जी की रुचि है कि इसे एक सही दिशा में लेकर जाने का काम किया जाए। Cabinet दो कानून पास कर चुकी है और दो में देश का कानून अतिशीघ्र ही इस सदन में आने वाला है। मैं चाहता हूँ कि जो आशंकाएं आप व्यक्त कर रहे हैं, उनमें इन आशंकाओं का पूरा समाधान होगा। मेरा विश्वास है, तब आप हमारी सारी बातों से सहमत होंगे। अगर आपको इस संदर्भ में कभी भी कोई सुझाव नज़र आता है, तो आप यहां पर आ हमारे ऑफिस में आकर हमें दे सकते हैं।

Hiring of co-pilots by Air India

*258. SHRI A.K. SELVARAJ: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Air India is in the process of hiring around 270 co-pilots when Government has initiated the disinvestment process for loss making carrier;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Air India has also created a new post of Chief Pilot as well as two Executive Director level position in the IT and Civil Departments; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

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

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) No new post of Chief Pilot has been created in Air India. However, in terms of Directorate General of Civil Aviation requirement, there is a Chief Pilot designated for each type of Aircraft in the fleet as per CAP 3100-Air Operator Certification Manual. Further, the post of Executive Director (IT) already exists and currently there is no post of Executive Director (Properties & Facilities) in Air India.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Your first supplementary question.

SHRI A.K. SELVARAJ: Hon. Deputy Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister in his reply has agreed with my question about hiring of co-pilots in Air India. But, I would like to know from the hon. Minister, as to when, this process of hiring of co-pilots in Air India will be completed and whether any time-frame has been fixed in this regard.

SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI: Sir, I would like to inform the hon. Member that there are 1677 pilots in Air India, out of which 1108 are permanent employees and 569 are on fixed-term contract. Therefore, the process of hiring pilots is an ongoing and a continuous process. Hon. Member's question was related to the advertisement which was put out in 2017. We are in the process of following up on that advertisement. Equally, I also want to inform the hon. Member that more recently, in June, we have put another advertisement for 132 slots. What happens is that there is a natural attrition rate. Some pilots retire at the age of 58 years. After that, some of them choose to serve and we can keep them till the age of 65. Others resign and move on to greener and more lucrative jobs or desk jobs. So, this is an ongoing process. All I can assure the hon. Member is that at any given point of time, we ensure that there are no vacant slots. So, in response to the earlier vacancies which were announced, in one case, there were 77 vacancies in one category, and, we were able to fill 42. People come and go on but we ensure zero-based analysis where at given point of time, we do not have any shortage so that the aircraft are fully manned.

Equally, I want to inform the hon. Member that these vacancies are calculated over the next three to five year period and, therefore, some of these vacancies may have been announced in June, 2017, and, they have been overtaken by events, and, a new

vacancy announcement has been made. So, it is very difficult for me to give a precise response as to when all the vacancies announced at a particular time will be fulfilled.

SHRI A.K. SELVARAJ: Sir, my second supplementary is about the runway accidents. There has been an increase in the number of airline accidents and safety violations. I have come to know that as many as 20 pilots have been suspended by the DGCA in the last two weeks, which is a record number. Therefore, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister about the steps taken by Air India to ensure that the pilots strictly follow the air safety norms and do not violate safety guidelines.

SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI: Sir, I think, the hon. Member's reference is to news reports during the last ten days or so, where on account of heavy rains in some of the airfields in the country, the aircraft landing has overshoot the runway, and, as a result, maybe the air strip has also been blocked, as happened in the case of Mumbai runway. That particular runway at Mumbai is capable of handling 45 flights an hour but because the runway was blocked, there was a problem. But, I want to mention that these are not Air India specific. With regard to the incidents which you are referring to, I think, many other airlines share the credit. The DGCA conducts an enquiry on each of these things, and, maybe, if it appears that the number of people, against whom action has been taken, are more, it may have something to do with new Minister in the Ministry of Civil Aviation where my instructions are that there has to be zero tolerance in case there is dereliction or where it comes to our notice that there has been carelessness. I can tell you that in each of the DGCA enquiries, action is taken. Yes, in the last few days, I think, the number of cases where action has been initiated appears to be more, but, I believe that it is not much higher than that of other periods, and, I am hoping that the message would have gone to all the airlines and, so, we will have less of these incidents. Let me also mention that in the aviation terminology, there is a difference between an accident and an incident. But, we are trying to ensure zero-defect and zero-tolerance in respect of all this.

श्री उपसभापति: माननीय सदस्यगण और माननीय मंत्रियों, दोनों से यह आग्रह है कि आपके प्रश्न भी संक्षिप्त हों और उनके उत्तर भी संक्षिप्त हों, ताकि हम लोग अधिक से अधिक प्रश्नों को ले सकें, जैसा कि माननीय चेयरमैन साहब का सुझाव है।

SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: Sir, between 2014 and 2019, the Government of India has invested almost about ₹ 24,306 crores, including budgetary support, in the national airline to make it turnaround. However, there is little success. What are the plans the Government has, other than privatization of airline, to make it profitable?

SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI: Sir, the Government has announced that it is committed to privatization of the airline, that is, Air India, the flag carrier. But in order to privatize it, there is a turnaround plan in order to give it operational efficiency and also to make it profitable in the immediate term. We will be ending the financial year 2018-19 on 31st March with an operating loss of something like ₹7,000 crore. But in the financial year, 2019-20, starting from 1st April, the airline is expected to make a profit. The Government proposed to establish an alternate mechanism and that alternate mechanism will take the decisions for privatization. I may inform hon. Members that some of these factors are beyond the Government's control. Forty per cent of the operating expense of an airline goes in what is called aviation turbine fuel. Then you have geopolitical developments. We were very happy yesterday when the airspace was reopened by a neighbouring country. The Air India had already incurred a loss of something like ₹430 crore in the four months or so of the closed airspace. The revival plan basically concentrates on operational efficiency and cost reduction. I am afraid while reducing cost, sometimes we have to be careful because cost reduction in the short term can have medium- and long-term adverse consequences.

श्री पी.एल. पुनिया: उपसभापति महोदय, अभी बजट में एयर इंडिया को डिस-इन्वेस्टमेंट करने के निर्णय से अवगत कराया गया और इसी बीच में एयर इंडिया ने को-पायलट के 132 पदों पर रिक्तियां घोषित की हैं। इन पदों पर भर्ती के लिए 3 जुलाई, 2019 को इंटरव्यू के लिए भी जा चुके हैं। क्या माननीय मंत्री जी यह सुनिश्चित करेंगे कि एयर इंडिया के डिस-इन्वेस्टमेंट के बाद उन्हें कोई न कोई बहाना लगाकर हटाया नहीं जाएगा?

SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI: Sir, I had already mentioned it in response to an earlier supplementary question that Air India has both permanent employees, permanently employed pilots, and people on fixed-term contracts. We ensure that at any given point in time they only have the number of pilots required. The ones who are being recruited now are against fixed-term contracts and they are not permanent employees. I am sure whoever acquires this airline through the privatization process would want to take air planes, 125 of them, half of which are owned by Air India, along with pilots who are manning them. The pilots on fixed-term contract basis have to match the number of aircraft that we are flying.

Crimes against children

*259. SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that crimes against children are showing an increasing trend in the country;