

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI): (a) and (b) No Sir. As on date an amount of ₹ 26.73 crore is only outstanding on part of Air India as GST amount to Government.

(c) and (d) For Haj 2012 operations, Air India had entered into contract with Orbest Airlines. Further, Orbest Airlines had appointed M/s. BKP Enterprise as their authorised representative in India. As per the agreement an amount of USD 3,435,419 was due to Orbest Airlines towards fare. A payment of USD 2,275,000 was made to Orbest Airlines in due course after deducting the amount of expenses of USD 937,882 incurred by Air India on behalf of Orbest Airlines and the balance payment of USD 222,537 was due to Orbest Airlines. The said airline went into liquidation. Air India learnt about Orbest's bankruptcy on 11/03/2013.

On 11/03/2013 M/s. BKP Enterprise requested Air India to remit the balance amount to its bank account. BKP Enterprise also filed a Writ Petition in Delhi High Court demanding USD 222,537 along with interest @ 18% from Air India. On 28th November 2018, Hon'ble Court dismissed the petition of M/s. BKP Enterprise.

As per legal advice, Air India is contractually bound to pay the balance amount due either to Orbest Airlines or to the liquidators or to the new Board of Directors of Orbest Airlines.

#### **New civil aviation policy**

1951. SHRI B. LINGAIAH YADAV: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is set to hold bilateral talks with its neighbouring countries under new civil aviation policy to allow unlimited flight services with SAARC countries, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether some countries agreed to hold bilateral talks in this regard, if so, the details thereof and decisions taken so far and progress made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI): (a) and (b) As per National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP) - 2016 proposals have been sent to all SAARC countries (except Pakistan) offering an 'open sky' arrangement *i.e.* designated airline(s) of the concerned country are entitled to operate any number of services from/to six metro cities in India. Reciprocally Indian carriers are entitled to fly unlimited number of flights from any point in India to the

designated points in the country concerned as per the bilateral agreement with the concerned country. Such an arrangement has already been finalised with Sri Lanka. With Bhutan, such arrangement was already in existence before NCAP-2016. Bilateral talks with the remaining SAARC countries can be held only if a positive response is received from their side to our 'open sky' offer.

#### **Facilities for passengers in airports**

†1952. SHRIMATI KANTA KARDAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the facilities for the passengers at various airports of the country are yet to be upgraded by the Airports Authority of India (AAI);
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps proposed to be taken by Government in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI): (a) to (c) Upgradation of passenger facilities at airports is a continuous process and is undertaken by Airports Authority of India (AAI) from time to time depending on the availability of land, commercial viability, traffic demand / willingness of airlines to operate to/from such airports etc. In order to enhance the passenger facilities, AAI has undertaken construction of new terminal building at its various airports which include Agartala, Chennai, Dehradun, Guwahati, Jabalpur, Kanpur, Lucknow, Leh, Mangaluru, Patna, Portblair, Pune, Surat and Trichy.

#### **Setting up of airport in Bilaspur**

1953. SHRI VIVEK K. TANKHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Bilaspur is the second largest city in the State of Chhattisgarh and the seat of the High Court of Chhattisgarh, whether there is any proposal to operationalise the current airstrip and allow commercial passenger travel by setting up of a domestic airport;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and when is the said proposal likely to be implemented; and

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.