

(b) and (c) Government of India, Ministry of Civil Aviation has launched Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) – UDAN (*Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik*) in October, 2016 with the objective to facilitate/stimulate regional air connectivity to currently under-served and un-served airports in the country, including those in Tamil Nadu. The expansion of airports under the scheme is 'demand driven', depending upon firm commitment from airline operators as well as from the State Government for providing various concessions. Under RCS, airports at Neyveli, Vellore, Ramnad, Thanjavur and Hosur in Tamil Nadu have been identified for development.

(d) The existing airstrip at Hosur is owned and operated by M/s Taneja Aerospace and Aviation Limited (TAAL) as a private airstrip and is located at a distance of 45 kilometres from Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru (BIAL). As per the provisions of Concession Agreement between Ministry of Civil Aviation and BIAL, no new or existing airports (except for Mysore and Hassan airports and that too for domestic purpose only) are permitted to be developed as, or improved or upgraded into, a Domestic Airport/International Airport within an aerial distance of 150 kilometres of the Bengaluru Airport before the twenty-fifth anniversary of its Opening Date which is 24th May, 2008.

Aircrafts lying idle at airports

2736. SHRI A. VIJAYAKUMAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of aircrafts that are lying idle in various airports in the country;
- (b) if so, the reasons for unused aircrafts;
- (c) the steps taken to use such idle aircrafts and any charges fixed to park the aircraft to those companies; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI): (a) and (b) There are a total of 82 disused aircraft/helicopters lying idle at various airports. The aircraft are parked at the airports due to various reasons such as closing of operation by airline, major maintenance requirement, change in the ownership of the aircraft, Judicial Trial, DGCA restriction on flying of B-737-8 Max aircraft etc.

(c) and (d) Requisite fee/charges are levied by the concerned airport operator. However, airlines/aircraft owners are not paying fee/charges to the airport operator as several cases are under litigation. Generally, aircraft are permitted to take off only after settlement of pending dues. AAI has auctioned certain idle aircraft at Bhopal, Chennai and Vadodara airports to recover the bills.

Decline in earning of AI

2737. SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has cut the financial lifeline to the loss making national carrier, Air India, which is being sold or disinvested through a listing;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that this operationally profitable airline now running the show with the meager earning of its several arms; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that Air India is managing to meet its operational expenses because of its inhouse organisations not found in many airlines including foreign airlines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI): (a) and (b) The Government of India has been supporting Air India in form of Government Guarantees which are received from time to time. In the current year, Government guarantee support of ` 11750 crore have been renewed and new Government Guarantee of ` 1500 crore has been given to Air India. Apart from this, Government Guarantee of USD 819 million has also been renewed for Bridge Loans for seven aircraft.

(c) and (d) Air India Limited and its Subsidiary companies operate and function at an arm's length from each other. The operations and day to day functioning of all these companies are independent of each other. Air India meets its financial commitments/requirements from its internal accruals, bank borrowing and financial support from the Government of India.