

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS**Impact of COVID-19 on civil aviation sector**

321. SHRI PRABHAKAR REDDY VEMIREDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) the impact of COVID-19 on the civil aviation sector particularly, Ail India;
- (b) to what extent Vande Bharat helps Air India to earn some money;
- (c) the details of percentage of domestic air travel shrunk during COVID-19 and to what extent it could go up since lifting of lockdown;
- (d) whether there is any proposal before the Ministry for some package to aviation sector;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) by when, international travel is going to be permitted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI): (a) Based on the information received from the stakeholders, the impact of COVID-19 on the civil aviation sector are as under:—

1. There have been regulatory restrictions on flight operations in domestic and international sectors leading to severe curtailment in operations and sub-optimal aircraft utilisation.
2. The domestic traffic has reduced from 5,85,30,038 during March-July 2019 to 1,20,84,952 during March-July 2020.
3. The international traffic has reduced from 93,45,469 during March-July in 2019 to 11,55,590 during March-July 2020.
4. The revenue of Indian carriers has reduced from INR 25,517 crore during April-June 2019 to INR 3,651 crore during April-June 2020.
5. The revenue of airport operators has reduced from INR 5,745 crore during April-June 2019 to INR 894 crore during April-June 2020.
6. In respect of Air India, the total revenue has reduced from INR 7,066 crore during April-June 2019 to INR 1,531 crore during April-June 2020.

7. The employment at airlines has reduced from 74,887 as on 31 Mar 2020 to 69,589 as on 31 Jul 2020.
8. The employment at airports has reduced from 67,760 as on 31 Mar 2020 to 64,514 as on 31 Jul 2020.
9. The employment at ground handling agencies has reduced from 37,720 as on 31 Mar 2020 to 29,254 as on 31 Jul 2020.
10. The employment at cargo operators has reduced from 9,555 as on 31 Mar 2020 to 8,538 as on 31 Jul 2020.

(b) The revenue earned by Air India and Air India Express from " Vande Bharat Mission" (VBM) flights upto 31 August 2020 are ₹ 2,021 crores and ₹ 415 crores respectively.

(c) The trend in domestic traffic is as follows:—

1. The domestic traffic has reduced from 5,85,30,038 during March-July 2019 to 1,20,84,952 during March-July 2020.
2. Domestic commercial flights were started from 25 May 2020 in a calibrated manner with flights limited to 33% of the approved summer schedule of the year 2020. This was gradually increased to 45% on 26 June 2020 and then to 60% on 02 September 2020.
3. During the period 25 March 2020 to 31 August 2020, over 70,4 lakh passengers have flown in over 77,547 scheduled domestic flights.
4. The number of departing flights per day have increased from 428 on 25 May 2020 to 1,233 on 6 September 2020.
5. The number of departing passengers have increased from 30,550 on 25 May 2020 to 1,41,992 on 6 September 2020.

(d) and (e) All efforts have been made to reduce the impact of the pandemic on the aviation sector. Some of the measures taken to support the aviation sector include *inter-alia*:

1. Due to Covid-19 pandemic, domestic air services have been restarted in a calibrated manner. Initially only one third (33%) of the summer schedule 2020 was allowed to be operated which was subsequently increased to 45% on 26 Jun 2020 and then to 60% on 02 Sep 2020.

2. Operation of Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) - UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik) flights were allowed without the above-mentioned restrictions.
3. Exclusive air-links or Air Bubbles have been established with countries which include Afghanistan, Bahrain, Canada, France, Germany, Qatar, Maldives, UAE, UK and USA. These are temporary arrangements aimed at restarting international passenger services while regular international flights remain suspended due to COVID-19.
4. Promoted private investments in existing and new Airports through the PPP route.
5. Regularly engaged with foreign aircraft lessors and financiers to ensure that there were no premature withdrawals of leased aircraft from Indian carriers.
6. Adequate care taken to ensure that cargo terminals at all major airports were operational, whenever required.
7. Under the Atmanirbhar Bharat Mission, GST on Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) has been reduced to 5% and contracting of work to Indian MROs incentivized with zero-rated GST from 01 Apr 2020.
8. Encouraging Indian carriers to increase their share in international air cargo traffic.
9. Route rationalisation in the Indian airspace in coordination with India Air Force for efficient airspace management, shorter routes and reduced fuel burn.

(f) For international travel, exclusive air links or "Air Bubbles" have been established with Afghanistan, Bahrain, Canada, France, Germany, Qatar, Maldives United Arab Emirates (UAE), United Kingdom (UK) and The United States of America (USA). These are temporary arrangements aimed at restarting passenger services while regular flights remain suspended.

Vande Bharat Mission

322. SHRI PRABHAKAR REDDY VEMIREDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of Vande Bharat Mission undertaken by Air India;