

airlines from Europe, Canada and United Kingdom to Amritsar is concerned, none of them have approached for the access of Amritsar for their designated carriers. However, foreign airlines can operate tourists charter flights to/from Amritsar as per the existing tourist charter guidelines.

Hike in fares of IA

2632. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:

SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to effect a 10 per cent hike in Indian Airlines fares; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) Indian Airlines has, w.e.f. 26th March, 2003, increased the Rupee fares on domestic sectors by 15 per cent. Some re-structuring of the fares has also been carried out in order to minimize the inter-regional variations.

The increase in domestic Rupee fares was necessitated due to increase in cost of Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) and other input costs.

Emergency plan of airlines services during Iraq war

†2633. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Airlines companies have formulated any emergency plan in view of the possibility of Iraq war; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A contingency plan has been drawn up by Air India and Indian Airlines to evacuate Indian nationals if the situation so warrants. As per the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

contingency plan, Air India would operate 41 flights per week with 4 aircraft with capacity of 11245 seats and Indian Airlines would operate 70 flights per week with 5 aircraft with capacity of 12880 seats.

VRS for AI employees

†2634. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have approved the Voluntary Retirement Scheme for the employees of Air India to reduce the number of employees;

(b) if so, the time period in which the said scheme is likely to be implemented;

(c) the number of applications expected from the employees for the said scheme; and

(d) the financial burden likely to be borne by the Air India due to this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Government has approved the VRS for Air India employees subject to the condition that the same shall not deviate in any manner from the DPE's existing guidelines on Gujarat pattern of VRS. All permanent and confirmed employees of the Company who are on Indian scales of pay and have completed 10 years of service in the Company or who have completed 40 years of age on the date of closure of the Scheme will be eligible except (i) employees in licensed categories such as Pilots, Flight Engineers, Aircraft Engineers; (ii) employees in technical & operational categories such as Technical officers, Simulator Maintenance Engineers, Service Engineers (Aircraft Non-Licensed), Aircraft Equipment Operators, etc.; (iii) employees on contract; (iv) employees who

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.