

between various interior airports and international airports at Mumbai and Delhi connecting various airports to International flights of Air India. These flights carry Air India flight number and the passengers can check in for their final destination from their initial boarding point. The passengers are provided with boarding cards for their onward Air India flight. Their baggage is also tagged onto their onward Air India flights. Similar arrangement has been made for incoming flights as well.

These arrangements have benefited both Air India and Indian Airlines. Indian Airlines gets good income from these operations carrying international passengers. Similarly Air India also gets good passenger load from the internal points. International passengers from internal points are also benefited from such a convenient arrangement.

Illegal entry into Indian airspace by US aircrafts

653. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether unidentified aircrafts made intrusion into Indian airspace in the first week of February, 2003; if so, any inquiry has been made into these incidents;

(b) whether these aircrafts belong to US Air Force; and

(c) what steps have been taken to see that no such intrusions take place in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) to (c) Yes, sir. Between January 31 to February 08, 2003, Chennai Air Traffic Control (ATC) has reported 4 incidents of intrusion of unidentified aircraft into Indian airspace near Chennai airport. Though all the efforts made to establish contact with these aircraft failed, Chennai ATC continuously monitored the position of unidentified aircraft and kept informing the position to Flight Information Region, Military Liason Unit and Coast Guard authorities. The identity of these unidentified aircraft has not been established so far. The incidents are under investigation.