

Re: Review of airfare for critical patients availing passenger aircraft for evacuation-laid

SHRI KULDEEP RAI SHARMA (ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS): Andaman and Nicobar Islands are situated nearly 1200 KM away from nearest Airport in Mainland India-Chennai and Kolkata. For critical medical cases, evacuation in passenger aircraft is the only option and the family members of the patient have to pay Rs. 1,32,000 one way, excluding cost of tickets for patient attendants. However, rate of tickets for stretcher patients has been almost doubled without any valid reason to nearly Rs. 2,41,000. The steep hike is a cause of concern for islanders most of whom can't afford to buy tickets for stretcher patients at such a high rate. Charging such an exorbitant amount from stretcher patients during the time of medical emergencies is unethical and can also lead to death of the patient, if there is failure in paying such huge amount. Government had fixed the rate for stretcher patients from Andaman and Nicobar Islands, under which a stretcher patient had to pay only Rs. 29,000 which was issued through ANIIDCO and was revised in 2007. I request the Government to intervene in this matter and give special concession to all stretcher patients of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and issue necessary directions to all private Airlines Companies to allow evacuation of stretcher patients as presently only Air India is allowing these services.