

Effect of Increase in Passenger fare on Air India traffic

*727. SHRI BISHWANATH JHUNJHUN WALA : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the hike in passenger fare will affect Air-India traffic;

(b) what has been the reaction of foreign travel agents who help in procuring traffic for Air India, to the fare rise proposed in the budget for 1971-72; and

(c) whether any adverse effect on traffic has been noticed ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (DR. SAROJINI MAHISHI) : (a) to (c). Presumably, the Honourable Member is referring to the increase of fares in Indian Airlines which takes effect from 1st July 1971. Since there is going to be no increase in through international fares on approximately 70 sectors (which cover almost all the points of tourist interest) paid for in foreign currency, no fall in the traffic carried by Air India is anticipated. Nor has any adverse comment been received from foreign travel agents.

SHRI BISHWANATH JHUNJHUNWALA : May I know whether it is a fact that according to a study reported in the *Hindustan Times* dated 5th June, 1971, the proposed surcharge on tickets bought in India and in Indian rupees may result in a loss of revenue of Rs. 8.5 crores to Air India during the current financial year, and if so, what is Government's reaction to this ?

DR. SAROJINI MAHISHI : May I know whether the hon. Member is referring to the rise in the air fare made by Indian Air lines or

SOME HON. MEMBERS : Air India.

DR. SAROJINI MAHISHI : There is no hike in passenger fares by Air India. There is a hike in passenger fares by Indian Airlines.

MR. SPEAKER : The question is about Air India.

SHRI BISHWANATH JHUNJHUNWALA : This is in respect of the surcharge which

has been made on the tickets for foreign travel, and according to the report of the *Hindustan Times* there is going to be a loss of about Rs. 8.5 crores in revenue. I am referring to that.

DR. SAROJINI MAHISHI : If the hon. Member is referring to the 20 per cent levy proposed, then it is still in the stage of a proposal. Therefore, it is very difficult to make any comment at this stage.

SHRI H.M. PATEL : Although it is true that it is in the stage of proposal, assuming it goes through what will be the effect ?

MR. SPEAKER : Ifs and Buts are not allowed in the supplementaries.

Shortage of crew with Indian Air trained Lines

*728. SHRI MUHAMMED SHERIFF : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is shortage of trained crew with the Indian Airlines for putting into service its entire fleet of the newly acquired Boeing 737; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION : (DR. SAROJINI MAHISHI) : (a) and (b). When the Boeing 737 was introduced there was a shortage of trained pilots. The position has since improved and the full complement is expected to be available shortly.

SHRI MUHAMMED SHERIFF : I want to know the number of trained pilots actually required for the introduction of Boeing 737. How was the department ready to introduce Boeing 737 without having sufficient number of trained pilots ?

DR. SAROJINI MAHISHI : The minimum number of trained pilots required for each aircraft is ten and approximately 70-75 pilots are required for the whole fleet of Boeings. We have with us 62 trained pilots

and others are getting training and I hope their training course will be over shortly....
(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : He asks why these planes were brought when there were no pilots.

DR. SAROJINI MAHISHI : Training was given at Seattle and pilots had been deputed there for training. Simultaneously both things were worked. All the seven aircraft did not arrive at the same time. Both things were going on simultaneously.

SHRI SANJEEVI RAO : What is the position of navigators for this aircraft ?

DR. SAROJINI MAHISHI : The whole crew, majority of them, had been sent for training and the navigators are also trained at Seattle, the rest of them getting training in India.

Replacement of Dakota Service by Avro Aircraft

*729. SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have made any study and found the reasons for not utilising the services of HS-748 (Avro) Aircraft in the Eastern Region;

(b) if so, when Government propose to replace Dakota Services by Avros; and

(c) the time when Calcutta-Cooch Bihar will be served by Avro and frequency of service made daily ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (DR. SAROJINI MAHISHI) : (a) and (b). Indian Airlines propose to introduce HS-748 aircraft in the eastern region when the 10 aircraft on order are received.

(c) It is hoped to introduce on the Calcutta-Cooch Behar route in 1972. The question of making this a daily service will be examined by Indian Airlines if traffic warrants.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : While appreciating the reply given by the hon. Minister, I should say no proper reply has been given. I asked : whether Government have made any study and found the reasons for not utilising the services of HS-748 (Avro) Aircraft in the Eastern Region. The hon. Minister replies that ten more aircraft will be received by the IAC very soon and it will be put into operation. Why was it not used in the eastern sector ? Is it a fact that 21 aircraft Avro 748 are being operated in the western and southern sectors ? Why not even one in the eastern sector ?

DR. SAROJINI MAHISHI : They are going to be used. Dakotas are practically grounded. One or two are operating in the eastern region and gradually those also will be grounded; Viscounts are also going to be grounded. Then HS 748 will be put in the eastern region also....(Interruptions.)

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : That was not my question. In view of the fact that 21 services are being operated by IAC with HS 748 aircraft in the western and the southern sectors, why were none of these Avro aircraft put in service in the eastern region ? Why was it not done ? Are we not to assume that the eastern sector was absolutely neglected by the IAC ? That was my main question and that is my supplementary.

DR. SAROJINI MAHISHI : It is wrong to say that HS-748s are operating only in the southern and the western sectors. The Dakotas also are operating in Gujarat, Keshod, Jamnagar and other places in the western sector. (Interruption) Let the hon. Member remain patient and listen to my replies, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER : Order, order. You are quite senior and mature, after so many Lok Sabhas. Try to be patient for a moment.

DR. SAROJINI MAHISHI : On account of the mountainous terrain and unpredictable weather that prevails in the eastern sector, and on account of a number of accidents that have taken place, it was earlier thought that we should have Dakota services in the eastern region, but the Dakotas are grounded, as I said earlier, and HS-748 will be kept in operation.