

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1794
ANSWERED ON:04.08.2010
COMPENSATION TO KANISHKA VICTIMS
Singh Alias Pappu Singh Shri Uday

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the final inquiry report into the 1985 Air India Kanishka bombing has recommended ex-gratia gratuity payment to the families of the 329 victims;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the inquiry report has also blamed the Canadian Government for its failure to prevent that country's worst terrorist attack;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether Government has taken up the matter with the Canadian Government for adequate compensation to the families of the victims of Indian origin;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) the reaction of the Canadian Government thereon?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA)

(a) & (b) Yes. In Chapter I of the report the Commission states that -
There would be great merit in a demonstration of solicitude by the current Government, even at this late date, for the families of the victims of the bombing. There is nothing in the Terms of Reference to prevent the Commission from asking that the Government consider a one-time ex gratia payment to family members of the victims of Flight 182. To that end, an arm's-length independent body should be constituted to recommend an appropriate amount, as well as a formula for its distribution, and should remain in existence to oversee the payment process. Providing an ex gratia payment will go a long way to alleviating what is now over twenty years of alienation for those Canadian families.

(c) & (d) Among its key findings, the Canadian Commission of Enquiry into the investigation of the bombing of Air India-182 found, inter alia, that:

- (1) Canadian Government agencies were in possession of significant pieces of information that taken together would have led a competent analyst to conclude that Flight 182 was at high risk of being bombed by known Sikh terrorists in June 1985;
- (2) Canadian Government agencies failed to appreciate the nature and seriousness of the threat of Sikh extremism;
- (3) Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) surveillance was ineffective;
- (4) Despite the knowledge of the threat of sabotage, Transport Canada and Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Protective Policing displayed a lack of flexibility by continuing to rely on anti-hijacking security measures, which did not address the threat of bombing;
- (5) There was a lack of cooperation and communication within the RCMP and between RCMP, Transport Canada and airlines in relation to airport security.

(e) to (g) No. The Canadian Prime Minister has stated that the Commission has made many important recommendations and that his Government is in the course of reviewing them. The Head of the Commission of Enquiry, Hon. John C. Major, has recommended that the Government of Canada should establish an oversight mechanism to report on how the recommendations are addressed - those that have been implemented, those that have been rejected and those that require further study. Government of India has noted the efforts of Government of Canada to pursue the matter to its logical conclusion.