

Title: Demand to allow other International Airlines to operate from Calicut Airport, Kerala.

SHRI E. AHAMED (MANJERI): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am very much thankful to you for giving me this opportunity. After having days of adjournment and interruptions, only today I got an opportunity to raise an important matter pertaining to my constituency.

Sir, Calicut Airport is now the hub of flight operating to Gulf countries. There are about 28 weekly flights of Indian Airlines and Air India to Gulf countries like United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman etc, from Calicut but the number of flights is quite insufficient. When there are large number of passengers, Indian Airlines and Air India are not in a position to lift these people to their destinations. There is weekly only one flight operating between Calicut and Jeddah and it is quite insufficient. As a result of this, people are now somehow reaching Mumbai and going by other international airlines from there. So, it is high time for the Government of India to open Calicut Airport for the operation of foreign airlines. Why is the Government shying about getting foreign airlines into our country? Either the Government of India has to make sufficient arrangements for Indian Airlines and Air India to lift these passengers and help them or if Indian Airlines and Air India cannot provide sufficient number of aircraft, then the Government must allow other international airlines to operate from Calicut.

Calicut Airport, after having runway of 9,000 feet, is now fit for operation of even bigger aircraft, but the Government is very much shy in allowing foreign airlines to operate from there. Are we not for helping our people reach their destinations speedily? But the Government is not doing anything in this matter. It is really disgraceful for the Government of India. I would also like to mention here that many people from my area are not able to join duty in time due to non-availability of aircraft when they want to fly to Gulf countries.

Sir, the Finance Minister is sitting here. He is tom-tomming that the Government is going in for reforms. What sort of reform is he talking about when the Government is not even allowing international airlines to operate from Calicut Airport? ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Ahamed, your time is over. Please conclude.

SHRI E. AHAMED : Sir, Haj is fast approaching and Calicut has been declared as a Haj Embarkation Centre now. So, unless the Government makes arrangements for operating sufficient number of flights of Indian Airlines and Air India to lift the Hajis, I warn the Government that it is going to be a very big problem for the Government. Therefore, it is high time for the Government to act and allow other international flights to operate from Calicut.