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Title: Problems faced by the air passengers in Coimbatore due to the departure timings of Air India flights.

*SHRI C. SIVASAMI (TIRUPPUR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to bring to your notice the importance of Coimbatore, which is the Manchester of South India, and also the importance of augmenting flight services connecting the National Capital with this industrial town in an effective manner.

Air India flight which leaves for Delhi from Coimbatore at 1510 hours in the afternoon takes a detour via Mumbai taking about 5 ¼ hours to reach the National Capital. A private airline namely Spicejet operates a flight from Coimbatore to Delhi via Hyderabad taking about 4 hours. At the same time, Indigo, another

* English translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil

private airline, operates a direct flight service that takes just 2 hours and 45 minutes for the travel between Coimbatore and Delhi. Since Air India takes double the time, most of the passengers do not prefer to travel by the public sector carrier. I would like to point out that this has resulted in Air India running into losses because of the artificially created non-viability. I would also like to point out that Air India was the first airline to introduce a direct flight from Coimbatore to Delhi, but Indigo has taken its place now. This raises the doubt in our mind as to whether it was done deliberately to strengthen the argument that only private players can operate profitably. Hence I would request the Government to run an Air India flight directly from Delhi to Coimbatore and back. It is also necessary to introduce re-routed Air India flight service between Coimbatore and Chennai and also between Tiruchirapalli and Chennai. This must be done by Air India to come out of the red and also to compete well with the private airlines which are operating in these routes. This would provide better connectivity and effective operational viability to Air India. I urge upon the Civil Aviation Ministry to look into it and introduce a new flight at the earliest. With these words, I conclude. Thank you.