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Title: Need to take steps to provide air tickets at affordable rate to the passengers travelling between Kerala and Gulf sector by Air India flights.

SHRI MOHAMMED E.T. BASHEER (PONNANI): Sir, I wish to draw the attention of the Government to the issue arising out of the exorbitant rates being charged by the Air India between Kerala and Gulf sector. It is quite unfortunate that Air India is now charging unbelievable ticket rates between Kerala and Gulf sector. We all know that 1.5 million Keralites are working in the Gulf countries and out of this, 80 per cent of the employees are working in the lower salaried group. Now this is the opportunity for them to visit their country as Ramzan is there and Onam is also coming. This is the time for them to come to their home land to celebrate these festivals with their families. You will not believe that the Malayalees are forced to cancel their trips because ticket charges are not at all affordable. I would like to say with all the politeness that Air India is doing a cruel play with the poor passengers. I am sorry to say that the Air India is recklessly squeezing the poor passengers of Kerala. We have to interfere. I have got all the respect for the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Government as they are pouring in a lot of money to save Air India. But it is like a bottomless pit and nobody knows where this money is going. They are exploiting the Malayalees in all the ways.

This morning I had checked the rates charged by Air India. On an average, it is Rs.14000 from Kerala to Gulf. The other charges are: Calicut-Riyadh – Rs.21,300; Riyadh-Calicut – Rs.23,562; Calicut-Dubai – Rs.38,953; Abu Dhabi – Calicut – Rs.34,727; and Calicut-Dhamam – Rs.30,727. These are the charges. Nobody can believe them. Why should we allow a national carrier to exploit our Indian people who are working abroad? With all the humbleness, I would request the Government of India to interfere in that. Similar is the position with Haj flight. This time, the charge for the Haj flight is on record as it is the highest in the history of Air India. Sir, this kind of things should not be allowed to continue as it is.

I humbly request the Government of India, through you, to interfere in this matter and bring an end to this cruel fare of Air India.

MR. CHAIRMAN :

Shri S.S. Ramasubbu may be allowed to associate with the matter raised by Shri Mohammed E.T. Basheer.