

THIRTY-FOURTH REPORT
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC
UNDERTAKINGS

(1987-88)

(EIGHTH LOK SABHA)

INDIAN AIRLINES--PASSENGER SERVICES

(MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION)



सत्यमेव जयते

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CORRIGENDA TO THIRTY-FOURTH REPORT OF
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(EIGHTH LOK SABHA)

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC UNDERTAKINGS

(1967-68)

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1. Shri K. H. Chhaya—*Joint Secretary.*
2. Shri R. D. Sharma—*Chief Financial Committee Officer.*
3. Shri Rup Chand—*Senior Financial Committee Officer.*

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Committee on Public Undertakings having been authorised by the Committee to present the Report on their behalf, present this, Thirty-Fourth Report on Indian Airlines—Passenger Services.

2. The subject was examined by the Committee on Public Undertakings (1986-87). The Committee took evidence of the representatives of Indian Airlines on 19 and 20 January, 1987, International Airports Authority of India on 21 January, 1987 and National Airports Authority on 13 February, 1987. The Committee also took evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Civil Aviation on 16 and 17 February, 1987.

3. The Committee on Public Undertakings (1987-88) considered and adopted the Report at their sitting held on 7 January, 1988.

4. The Committee feel obliged to the Members of the Committee on Public Undertakings (1986-87) for the useful work done by them in taking evidence and sifting information which forms the basis of this Report.

5. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the Ministry of Civil Aviation for placing before them the material and information they wanted in connection with the examination of the subject. They also wish to thank in particular the representatives of the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Indian Airlines, International Airports Authority of India and National Airports Authority who gave evidence and placed their considered views before the Committee.

NEW DELHI;
February 18, 1988

Magha 29, 1909 (Saka)

VAKKOM PURUSHOTHAMAN,
Chairman,
Committee on Public Undertakings.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

The Committee on Public Undertakings examined the working of Indian Airlines, International Airports Authority of India and National Airports Authority with regard to providing passenger services and facilities for the air services in India and services coming to India and passing through India. The background analysis of these organisations is discussed in the paragraphs et seq:—

1.2 Indian Airlines came into existence under Air Corporation Act, 1953. Indian Airlines is the second largest domestic air carrier in the world outside the U.S.A. and it carried 6.847 million, 7.669 million and 8.509 million passengers respectively during the years 1982-83, 1983-84 and 1984-85. Indian Airlines is also reported to have emerged as the Seventh largest domestic air carrier in the world in terms of passengers carried in 1985 among all I.A.T.A. member airlines. The Indian Airlines occupying a prestigious position in passenger traffic should be customer conscious in order to earn and maintain its image.

1.3 International Airports Authority of India constituted in February 1972 was vested w.e.f. 1-4-1972 with the management of four International Airports at Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. The Authority is responsible to provide such services and facilities as are necessary or desirable for the efficient operation of air transport services at the Airports.

1.4 Similarly, National Airports Authority (NAA) which came into existence from 1st June, 1986 has inherited 86 domestic airports/civil enclaves where scheduled airlines operations are taking place with varying status of infrastructure network to serve the requirements of the air traffic as well as the passenger traffic. NAA is also vested with other functions like the air traffic control, construction of airfields, runways and providing facilities at the domestic sector as well as providing control of air space of India, including the Indian International Airfields.

1.5 Planning, Development and maintenance of the Airport terminal buildings and provision of airport facilities is the function of IAAI/NAA, which are enumerated as under:—

- (i) Installation and maintenance of conveyor belts at most airports;
- (ii) Provision of adequate space in the departure lounge, security hold area and arrival area.
- (iii) PA System/Closed Circuit TV
- (iv) Restaurant.
- (v) Toilets.
- (vi) Drinking Water.
- (vii) Postal Services, etc.

1.6 The maintenance and up-keep of the terminal buildings which are a common source of complaints from the passengers are also administered by the IAAI/NAA (Airport Controlling authorities).

CHAPTER II

PUNCTUALITY OF SERVICE

A. Delays/Cancellations of flights

2.1 The Committee are informed that weather conditions like thick fog in winter and cloud covers in monsoons are the most common factors leading to delays/cancellation of flights and consequential inconvenience to the travelling passengers.

2.2 The following statement shows the analysis of delays and cancellations of Indian Airlines' flights for the year 1983 to 1986:—

	1983	1984	1985	1986
Planned Take Offs	93502	102227	108617	113722
	Delays rate per 100 Take-off on account of delays and cancellations			
<i>Group 'A'</i>				
Commercial	0.54	0.78	0.42	0.36
Operations	0.07	0.09	0.13	0.11
A/c Maintenance	1.32	1.36	1.49	1.41
Ground Support	0.09	0.08	0.03	0.03
Total Group 'A'	2.02	2.31	2.07	1.91
<i>Group 'B'</i>				
Weather	1.68	1.47	1.39	1.63
Airport Facilities	0.41	0.39	0.32	0.53
Miscellaneous	0.78	0.95	1.15	0.86
Total Group 'B'	2.87	2.81	2.86	3.02
Total Primary delays & cancellations	4.89	5.12	4.93	4.93
<i>Group 'C'</i>				
Consequential	17.17	18.78	19.30	19.80
Total (A+B+C)	22.06	23.90	24.23	24.73

2.3 According to Indian Airlines, during the years 1983 to 1985 only 76.55 per cent of the flights operated on time. The rest of 23.45 per cent of the flights were either delayed or cancelled. It has been further stated that over 90 per cent of the delays and cancellations were due to adverse weather conditions, airport restrictions, miscellaneous and consequential delays, which are reportedly beyond the control of Indian Airlines. As the same aircraft operate a number of services per day, any single delay at the originating stations has chain reaction leading to consequential delays.

2.4 When asked to explain the remaining 10 per cent of the delays and cancellations which were apparently within the control of the Indian Airlines, the Indian Airlines stated in a written reply that—

“Only Group (A) primary delays are due to reasons within the control of Indian Airlines. The Group (B) delays are due to causes which cannot be controlled by Indian Airlines as these are caused due to functioning of other agencies at the airports, and due to weather, security-check, delay in flight clearance. The consequential delays are caused as a result of primary delays (Group ‘A’ and ‘B’) with multiple effect, depending on the stage at which the primary delay has occurred.”

2.5 While explaining the reasons for delay in flights, the Managing Director, Indian Airlines stated during evidence as under:—

“We have got a problem when we come to connecting passengers. If one service is delayed and the other is on schedule and if they are to land at the same time and place, then there is a clash which leads to delay. Secondly, if a passenger is missing and the baggage is lying outside, we have to see as to who the passenger is. In this regard, we now of course are having a new system in which the passenger is requested to come and identify the baggage.”

2.6 The Committee pointed out that in the mind of the common air traveller “technical snags”, “bad weather” etc. are stock items in the vocabulary of the airlines to hide its inefficiency and bad management. These are the real causes of delays and result in inconvenience to passengers. In this connection, the Indian Airlines informed in a written reply that “apart from consequential delays, the incidence of weather delays is the largest followed by

aircraft maintenance delays. As a result, the air traveller most frequently hears the cause of delays as "bad weather" or "technical snags".

2.7 When enquired whether the Ministry of Civil Aviation had made any study of the real causes responsible for delay in the flights and if so, what fool-proof system had been devised to check the recurrence of such delays, the Ministry stated in their written note:—

"During the period 1983—86, on an average 76 per cent of the departures were on time.

Of the 24 per cent of the departure time delays, nearly 19 per cent (i.e. 80 per cent of the total delay) were caused due to late arrival of aircraft and are consequential delays.

From this it is clear that only 5 per cent of the departures are due to primary reasons which include weather, airport restrictions and operational reasons, such as Engineering, Commercial, Operations and Ground Support. Of these 5 per cent only 2 per cent are due to operational reasons.

No fool-proof system can be devised for totally eliminating all delays. Flight movement reports are submitted daily and Management Information monthly to the Ministry. The Secretary, Civil Aviation holds periodical review of the performance of the Corporation."

2.8 When asked to enumerate the concrete measures taken during 1986 to reduce delays and cancellations of flights to avoid inconvenience to the passengers, the Indian Airlines stated *inter-alia* as under:—

"In order to improve the punctuality of Indian Airlines services, the reporting time of passengers at the airport was increased from 60 minutes to 75 minutes. Moreover, the counter closure time was also increased to 30 minutes before the departure time.

As regards the baggage identification, the procedure was streamlined so that the passenger, whose baggage had not been identified, could be located speedily. Baggage claim

stabs are attached to the boarding card. No Baggage stickers have been introduced and seat number of the passenger is written on the baggage tag."

2.9 As regards the delays and cancellations of flights in different regions, the Committee have noticed that the position in the Eastern Region is particularly bad. The percentage of delays/cancellations in this region was as high as 35.36 in 1983, 40.13 in 1984 and 36.08 in 1985. In 1986 it came down and stood at 28.65 per cent.

2.10 During oral evidence, the Committee enquired as to why the situation in the Eastern Region was so bad and what remedial steps had been taken to reduce delays/cancellations in this region. The Commercial Director, I.A. then stated:—

"As regards the Eastern Region, we are definitely studying as to where the problem is and will analyse the total delays and cancellations. I agree with you that it is highest in the Eastern Region and of the order of 35 per cent to 40 per cent. Region-wise data were examined, based on the reasons for delay and it was observed that weather delays contribute significantly towards increase in the number of delays and cancellations in Eastern Region. The number of delays caused due to bad weather was highest in the Eastern Region followed by the Northern Region. Western Region and the Southern Regions are relatively less affected by bad weather and consequently have lower percentage of delayed departures. Except Guwahati, all other Stations in the North-Eastern Region do not have night landing facilities, hence operational span is also limited due to early dusk. These factors also contribute towards increase in delays/cancellations of flights. Indian Airlines has been continually approaching the relevant authorities for upgradation of the airfields by (a) provision of night landing facilities; and (b) advanced landing navigational aids."

In this connection, the M.D., I.A. added:

"As far as Guwahati is concerned, we are putting it in Category No. 1. We already have a good National Airports Authority. As far as night landing facilities in the Airports of Agartala, Dibrugarh, Silchar and Jorhat are concerned, we have given our requirements as per our perspective plan We told them about the frequencies of each aircraft in these stations and upto what year, we require these things. We have given all these things in the perspective plan of 15 years."

2.11 The Indian Airlines has also informed in a written note that in the perspective plan of Indian Airlines, Guwahati has been planned as a sub-base, where facilities for night stop of the aircraft have to be created. This should be possible in the Seventh/Eighth Plan period.

B. Landing facilities at Airports

2.12 The landing facilities at international airports are provided jointly by IAAI and the National Airports Authority. The IAAI provides the desired length of runway with adequate strength, runway lighting and visual aids such as VASIS (Visual Approach Slope Indicator System), approach lighting system and runway central lighting system known as Cat-II lighting. The runway central lighting system has been provided only at Bombay and Delhi.

2.13 The National Airports Authority provides all the landing aids. These landing aids are NDB (Non Directional Beacon), VOR (Very High Frequency Omni Range); ASR (Aerodrome Surveillance Radar); PAR (Precision Approach Radar); ILS (Instrument Landing System). These are the direct responsibilities of the National Airports Authority. They are also managing the control tower which provides all the air traffic control services for the landing.

2.14 The IAAI has provided Cat-II lighting at Bombay and Delhi Airports. However, these systems cannot be effectively utilised unless National Airports Authority provides category II ILS. At present the ILS is of Cat. I* The difference between Category I and Category II is that under Category I aircraft can come down upto 200 ft. and under Category II pilot can come down up to lower Decision height of 100 ft. and in poor visibility conditions upto 400 M.

2.15 When enquired whether disruption of flights due to adverse weather conditions could be reduced by providing advanced instrument landing facilities and by making other technological improvements at airports, the Indian Airlines in their written reply stated:—

“Advanced instrument landing facilities and other technical improvements at the airports can reduce the incidence of delays/cancellations due to bad weather. The subject of upgradation of such facilities is continuously taken up with the concerned authority and it has been suggested to DGCA/NAA that during Seventh Plan period, Cat. III ILS

*At the time of factual verification NAA has stated that “both at Bombay and at Delhi, NAA has provided Cat. II ILS Systems (ILS). Whilst at Bombay the system is used for Cat. I operation only due to terrain conditions, at Delhi (International Airport) ILS has been calibrated to Cat-II standard, and NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) to all the operators to this effect has been issued.”

should be installed at Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Madras and Hyderabad. In addition, it was also recommended that airports having jet operations should be equipped with Cat. II ILS.

That Committee on the Civil Aviation has also suggested similar improvements in landing navigation/communication facilities during Seventh Plan period. It has also recommended a plan of action for the period 1990—2000 which includes equipping all airports for all weather capability operations.

The modernisation project for installation of latest equipment including Cat. III ILS at Bombay and Delhi has already been taken up by the NAA and installations are likely to be operational in 1987-88."

In this connection, NAA has also stated:—

"The disruption of flights due to adverse weather conditions like thick fog cannot be eliminated even with the availability of the best of landing and navigational aids. Even after the higher category landing facilities are provided, the landing and take off will depend on the weather minima prescribed by the operators on the basis of the training of crew and aircraft equipmentation. Indian Airlines has suggested the provision of ILS on reciprocal runways at Bombay and Delhi. The request from IA is receiving the attention of the NAA which has planned to instal improved ILS facilities under modernisation programme. In addition, Airport surface movement indicator radar facilities are also being planned both at Delhi and Bombay under the modernisation programme."

2.16 When asked whether Indian Airlines were satisfied with the present landing facilities at the airports, the Deputy Managing Director of IA stated during oral evidence:—

"Regarding landing, in Europe, an aircraft may be operating even when the visibility is very low. In this country, we specify weather minima under which a pilot is permitted to land. That minima is a determined on the type of terrain which is around the airport. Supposing there is a mountainous terrain, there should be the minima so that the pilot can see the hills. But it depends upon the type of facilities which are there — the navigational facilities which are available. In Delhi airport, the visibility is 800 metres

and only then the pilot is permitted to land. No pilot can go and land at Agra where we do not have the Instrument Landing System and where the minima stipulation is 3,200 metres. He has to follow the weather minima because that is the basic safety requirement to land or to take off from that airport."

2.17 The Committee have noticed that in India, there are only six to eight airports* which have got Instrument Landing System which is the minimum requirement for landing. In this connection, the Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation admitted during evidence that "the navigation and Communication facilities in India were much below international standards."

2.18 On being pointed out that fog was becoming a problem for landing of aircraft at Delhi and Bombay and flights were diverted, the Chairman, NAA stated in evidence:—

"We have to understand what is the capability of this instrument landing system. The instrument landing system has got certain things; first establishment on the ground; and then there is an equipment in the air which also monitors from certain parameters. Next we have the pilot in the aircraft. The instrument landing systems established at Delhi and Bombay are functional throughout 24 hours. This system is something which has to be on, all the time. The instrument landing system equipment at Delhi belongs to what we call category No. 2. There are three categories—1, 2 and 3. Category No. 2 system permits aircraft to operate at a certain minima, e.g. the visibility available on the runway, which is measured by the equipment provided by the meteorological department. Then there is the equipment on ground, whose function is my responsibility, because I am maintaining it. This equipment should be periodically calibrated, so that it functions properly. It is my responsibility. Every six months we have to do the calibration.

Now comes the pilot. The aircraft which is fitted with this system fixes up with the system on the ground, and interprets signals in the air. The pilot's capability has also to be taken into account. Thirdly, the Airlines prescribe a certain minima. The aircraft cannot land under zero visibility.

*At the time of factual verification NAA has stated that "the number of IL System installed at various airfields in India is 23. Out of these, 10 have been installed since 1985 and are in various stages of calibration before declaring them operational."

There is an average standard of pilot. He is trained to do that, and he will be permitted to fly and come down to the ground only if the visibility is beyond a certain level. Otherwise, the procedure says that the aircraft will divert."

2.19 The Committee pointed out that the landing facilities at the international airports were not adequate. The Committee enquired whether the landing facilities have been created at all the international airports in India and if so, to what extent these are in operation. In reply, the Chairman, International Airports Authority of India informed the Committee as under:—

"Our role, jurisdiction and responsibility start from the time an aircraft has landed. When it lands on the run-way, then all other facilities are provided by us. As far as the lighting system on the run-ways is concerned, we have Cat-2 lighting system in Delhi and Bombay which is better than Cat-I system which is in many of the international airports today. This Cat-2 system is available but since ILS has so far not been calibrated with it, it is not made use of for the last one or two years. ILS is being regulated by the National Airports Authority and not International Airports Authority. We have provided most modern aids as far as run-ways and lighting system are concerned."

2.20 When asked what category of landing instruments NAA was providing at the four international airports, the Chairman, NAA informed the Committee that Category II capability landing system had been installed at Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta and Madras.

2.21 When enquired why Category II lighting system had not been provided at Calcutta and Madras airports, especially at Calcutta where flights were disrupted for hours due to fog in winter, the Director of Operations, IAAI stated:

"We have approached the Airlines and the IATA about giving these facilities in Calcutta and Madras. They said no because the weather conditions are not that bad which will deserve a category-II treatment. They are happy with Category-I treatment."

2.22 The Committee pointed out that Category II lighting system provided by IAAI at Delhi and Bombay airports was not being effectively utilised because the landing system being regulated by the National Airports Authority had not been calibrated with it. The Chairman, National Airports Authority, then stated:—

"At Bombay we cannot utilise Category-II capability because of hill. Bombay hill area was blasted at one stage. A lot of hill has been blasted. Subsequently encroachment has taken place and that project has come to more or less at stand-still. However, we have made provision of Category-II systems. Merely to instal equipment without its functioning has no meaning. This equipment has to be maintained in Category-II level. That is why we say we calibrate it, otherwise the aircraft will get a wrong indication. Aircraft can come to a certain level but not below 200 feet..."

2.23 As regards non-utilisation of Category-II landing system in Delhi and Bombay, the Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation stated during evidence:—

"It is the facility which has to be provided. But, Sir, you please realise that now it is for the first time that we have laid down our perspective plan for each year till the end of the century. You have rightly said that Category-II may be put but if you don't calibrate it from time to time, it cannot be utilised. I am aware that the calibration of Category-II has not taken place in Bombay or even at Delhi."*

2.24 When pointed out that due to non-functioning of landing system in Bombay, Category-II lighting system had not been useful at all, the witness stated:—

"We have drawn up a scheme for the reorganisation. They have drawn a development scheme for Delhi and Bombay at a cost of Rs. 195 crores."

2.25 When enquired about the specific measures taken to provide latest technological instruments at airports (such as advanced landing facilities) to overcome the weather constraints, the witness stated:—

"We have identified 14 airports in the country which are fog-prone. out of which 10 airports will be provided with ILS system by 1987 itself. Out of the remaining four airports, IAF is doing this work as far as the two airports—Srinagar and Chandigarh—are concerned. We thought

* At the time of factual verification NAA has stated "Whilst it is true that Bombay ILS has not been calibrated to Category-II because it cannot be used to Category-II mainly due to the limitations posed by the terrain around Bombay airfield, as far as Delhi is concerned, the ILS System has been fully calibrated and has been declared fit for Category-II operations."

that we should have other systems instead of the ILS system as far as the remaining two airports—Bagdogra and Gorakhpur—are concerned. We will have to make a massive investment as well as make administrative action. Till we are able to do it, I think we have to live with this problem.”

2.26 Subsequently, the Ministry of Civil Aviation also informed the Committee as under:

“There is a scheme to provide Instrument Landing System (ILS) at ten fog-bound airports, viz. Amritsar, Bhopal, Imphal, Jaipur, Varanasi, Kanpur, Jammu, Agartala, Mohanbari and Patna. Of these, five are being imported and five manufactured indigenously. The installation of ILS at all ten airports is expected to be completed by end, 1987.

Following receipt of the Raje Committee Report, there is a scheme to modernise air traffic control system at Delhi and Bombay airports. The cost of the project is expected to be around Rs. 195 crores.”

2.27 In reply to a question asked in Lok Sabha (S.Q. No. 398 dated 24-8-1987) it has been stated by Government that a proposal for modernisation of the air traffic control systems at Bombay and Delhi airports at an estimated cost of Rs. 195 crores is under consideration and a token provision of Rs. 5 crores has been made for this project in the National Airports Authority's budget for the year 1987-88.

2.28 The Committee desired to know whether any perspective plan had been drawn up to improvise landing aids at all the airports in the country. In their written reply, the National Airports Authority informed the Committee as under:

“A perspective plan document has been prepared by the Planning Group on aviation under the Chairmanship of Shri J. R. D. Tata. The plan details the requirements in the field of aviation at the turn of the century and also the provision of necessary infrastructure at the various airports to meet the requirements of the airlines. Under the modernisation programme for various airports, the following new facilities are proposed to be provided with the approval of the Planning Commission.

- (i) Airport Surveillance Radar at Hyderabad and Guwahati;
- (ii) ILS at Bangalore, Bhubaneswar, Coimbatore, Indore, Khajurao and Trichy;

- (iii) VOR/Doppler VOR—new facilities will be provided at Calcutta, Delhi, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Aurangabad, Belgaum, Bhubaneswar, Gaya, Jaipur, Lucknow, Nagpur and Patna.
- (iv) DME facilities will be provided at Bhavnagar, Madurai, Ranchi, Nagpur, Patna and Mandasaur.
- (v) NDB facilities will be provided at various airports under operation of Vayudoot Services.'

2.2) During the course of evidence, the Chairman, International Airports Authority of India made the following suggestion as to what authority should have control over Air Traffic Control:

'...international airports are being managed all over the world. Every-where, the system is that ATC control is with the Government. In Switzerland, it is with the Radio. In France and Britain, it is with the Government. In other countries also, ATC control is retained by the Government not for the purpose of merely supplying information for landing aircraft, civil aircraft but also because certain defence strategic considerations are involved in that. This is retained by the Government. In our wisdom, we have decided that this will be transferred to the National Airports Authority in India. Earlier, it was with Directorate of Civil Aviation. In my view, International Airports Authority is formed for management of runways and terminals. ATC should be with the Government and if it is with the Government, there will be no difficulty of funding the projects to upgrade it. But, at the moment, when a National Airports Authority has to manage that, they have to manage within their financial resources and their own constraints.'

2.30 The examination of Indian Airlines has revealed that during the years 1983 to 1986 only 76 per cent of Indian Airlines' flights operated on time. The rest of the 24 per cent flights were either delayed or cancelled. Further, over 90 per cent of the delays and cancellations were due to adverse weather conditions, airport restrictions and technical snags etc. The percentage of late arrival of aircraft or consequential delays instead of showing a declining trend increased from 17 per cent in 1983 to 20 per cent in 1985. Though the flights are delayed/disrupted or even cancelled in almost all the regions, the position is worst in the Eastern Region. In this Region,

the delays and cancellations of flights are of the order of 35 per cent to 45 per cent as was confirmed by the Commercial Director of Indian Airlines during his evidence before the Committee.

2.31 The Committee have also been informed that a substantial portion of the delays is due to strict adherence to the mandate that all categories of snags must be removed before permitting the flight. The snag detected at a transit airport compel grounding of the aircraft till spares could be routed from the base station, snag repaired and aircraft certified. As the same aircraft operate a number of services per day, the grounding of one aircraft disrupts the flight schedule resulting in consequential delays. To overcome such problems, the Committee suggest that the Indian Airlines should improve and achieve better technical reliability of its fleet by preventive maintenance and also by boosting the engineering facilities. They should also consider the feasibility of acquiring a small aircraft for carrying spares to distant airports on demand instead of the current practice of routing them from the base through routine flights.

2.32 As regards delays and cancellations of flights, the Committee on Public Undertakings (1981-82) had also recommended in their 42nd Report that "there has to be a coordinated effort both by the Airlines and the DGCA/IAAI at a fairly high level to eliminate causes that contribute to cancellations/delays". The Committee are unhappy to note that even after 5 years, no appreciable improvement has been brought about in this regard and the malady of abnormal delays and cancellations of flights still persists.

2.33 The Committee have also observed that flights are often delayed, disrupted or diverted from originating centres like Delhi to other places due to fog or poor visibility and also by cloud covers in monsoons in some key airport on hill routes such as Srinagar, Guwahati etc. This obviously disrupts the Airlines' entire flight schedule all over the country as the aircraft held up are used on various circuits throughout the day. This results in enormous cost to airlines and inconvenience to passengers stranded at terminals.

2.34 The Committee were informed during evidence that advanced instrument landing facilities and other technical instrument landing facilities and other technical improvements at airports can reduce the incidence of delays and cancellations due to bad weather. The landing facilities are being provided jointly by International Airports Authority of India and National Airports Authority at international airports and at other airports by NAA. The Committee are,

however, distressed to observe that out of 86 airports, excluding 4 international airports, only about 8 airports* at present are equipped with Instrument Landing System facility (ILS) which is the minimum requirement for safe landing of aircraft in inclement weather. In fact, the Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation also admitted during his evidence before the Committee that "the navigation and communication facilities in India are much below the international standards". The Committee feel that what the Civil Aviation authorities are planning today should have been done much earlier. The Committee also recommend that immediate steps should be taken to provide advance Instrument Landing facilities at all the airports so as to reduce to the barest minimum, if not altogether eliminate, the incidence of delays and cancellations of flights due to bad weather etc. The Committee do agree that disruption of flights due to inclement weather cannot be eliminated totally but they do feel that by providing modern technological equipments, the chances of delays and cancellations can be minimised.

2.35 The Committee are informed that IAAI has provided category II lighting facilities at Bombay and Delhi Airports but equipment installed is not being utilised because Category II ILS (Instrument Landing System) provided by National Airports Authority which has to be periodically calibrated to synchronize with Category II lighting system has not been calibrated since long. The Committee cannot but deplore this lack of coordinated development as a result of which the essential facilities provided could not be made use of.

2.36 The question of upgradation of ILS facilities is also reported to have been taken up by the Indian Airlines with DGCA/NAA suggesting that Bombay, Delhi**, Calcutta, Madras, Hyderabad and all other airports having jet operations should be equipped with Category II ILS during the Seventh Plan period. In this connection, the Tata Committee in their Report on "Civil Aviation at the turn of Century" has also recommended that all airports should be equipped with all weather capability operations. In spite of all that, unfortunately, even Category I ILS which is very essential for safe landing has not been provided so far at many of the airports. The Committee feel that the Instrument Landing System (ILS) should be speedily provided at all the important airports in the country

* At the time of factual verification NAA has stated that "the number of IL Systems installed at various airfields in India is 23. Out of these, 10 have been installed since 1985 and are in various stages of calibration before declaring them operational."

** At the time of factual verification NAA has stated "so far as Delhi is concerned, the IL System has been fully calibrated and has been declared fit for Category-II operations."

as it is an essential requirement for the safe landing of the aircraft. The Committee also feel that at least the Airports having jet operations should be equipped with ILS Category II by the end of the Seventh Plan.

2.37 The Committee are glad to note that Government have now identified 10 fog-prone airports like Amritsar, Bhopal, Imphal, Jaipur, Varanasi, Kanpur, Jammu, Agartala, Mohanbari and Patna for installation of Instrument Landing System and these airports would soon become safer for landing in bad weather. The Committee hope that the Ministry of Civil Aviation would ensure implementation of this project within the stipulated time-frame. The Committee also recommend that within some time-bound programme Category II Instrument Landing System facility should be provided and properly maintained at all major airports where Boeings and Airbuses operate. At Bombay and Delhi where this facility already exists but is inoperative should be made effective and functional. The Committee need hardly emphasise that safety of aircraft depends a great deal on the modern Instrument Landing System but equally so on the pilot. The Committee, therefore, suggest that for deft handling of this very sophisticated equipment, intensive training should be imparted to the pilot so that aircraft can land safely.

2.38 The Committee note that Air Traffic Control System which occupies a pivotal position in the entire aviation field and is of strategic importance for country's defence is being controlled at present by the National Airports Authority. Whereas our Airlines have inducted the latest aircraft, the Air Traffic Control System does not appear to be upto the mark. The Committee feel that since a considerable expansion of the airlines fleet is expected by the turn of the century there is an urgent need for the modernisation of Air Traffic Control System and the same should be equipped with upto-date communication system to enable the pilots to have better interaction with the system.

2.39 The Committee has also been informed that a scheme for the modernisation of Air Traffic Control System at Bombay and Delhi at an estimated cost of Rs. 195 crores is also reported to be under consideration but only a token provision of Rs. 5 crores was provided for this purpose in the National Airports Authority's budget for the year 1987-88. In this connection, the Chairman of International Airports Authority of India suggested in evidence that as per the

practice obtaining in foreign countries the Air Traffic Control System should be operated by Government itself and not by the National Airports Authority which is itself facing financial and other constraints. In Committee's view the suggestion made by the Chairman of IAAI merits serious consideration by the Government. The Committee feel that if Air Traffic Control System is handled by Government, the question of paucity of funds will not come in the way of rapid execution of modernisation scheme reported to be under consideration.

CHAPTER III

PASSENGER SERVICES

A. Computerised Reservation System

3.1 The computerisation system in Indian Airlines (IA) is stated to have become operational on 26th March, 1985 with six major stations with CRT (Cathode Ray Tube) facilities. The majority of the stations on Indian Airlines network are linked up with a system on slow speed TTY circuits. Instantaneous response to reservation requests for a single or multi-sector itinerary are now available in only 3 to 4 seconds at all major stations which greatly facilitate the passengers. It has been stated that chance passengers are given wait-list numbers which are automatically upgraded against cancellations. Uptime of the computer system is being maintained at 98%.

3.2 On an enquiry how soon IA proposed to cover all the air-stations with the facility of computerised reservation system and the details of the long term plan, if any, to be drawn-up for this purpose, the Indian Airlines has stated in a written note that—

“All the domestic Indian Airlines stations are covered and provided facility of computerised reservation system except the following:

1. Leh
2. Khajuraho
3. Gorakhpur
4. Allahabad
5. Nasik

The above stations are not provided with facility because the circuit is not provided by P & T Department. Amongst the remaining stations which are provided with Computerised Reservation Facility, 16 stations in India (Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Madras, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Srinagar, Lucknow, Varanasi, Jaipur, Ahmedabad, Pune, Goa, Cochin Trivandrum and Guwahati) and 4 stations in foreign countries (Colombo, Bangkok, Dhaka and Kathmandu)

are provided with CRT facility. By the end of March, 1987, it is proposed that 7 more stations/locations will be provided with CRT facilities. Regarding the remaining domestic stations, 10 more stations will be provided with CRT facilities in the year 1987-88 depending on the availability of circuit from P & T Department."

B. Overbookings

3.3 It had been stated by Indian Airlines that with a view to maximise utilisation of aircraft capacity and to ensure on-time departure of flights by reducing the number of waitlisted passengers, a small percentage of planned overbookings is done on all jet flights as is the practice with airlines all over the world. Normally, these over-booked passengers are adjusted against cancellations. However, on some occasions it so happens that there are not enough cancellations whereby a few over-booked passengers do not get seats. Overbooking on most of the services ex-Delhi were reduced to 5 per cent with effect from 23rd April, 1986. On certain flights 10 per cent overbooking upto 24 hours before departure is made in order to ensure optimum utilisation of capacity offered on these routes.

3.4 In the performance review meeting held on 4.11.1985, it was suggested that Indian Airlines should review their booking profile and the system of overbooking and evolve a system by which no passenger holding confirmed ticket is denied a seat. On an enquiry if such a review had been made and if so, what improvements in the existing system had been introduced to avoid any inconvenience to the passengers, Indian Airlines stated in a written reply as under:

"A system of monitoring of bookings has been evolved and put into effect. The percentages of cancellations flight-wise and season-wise are studied and overbookings made on selected flights only on the basis of such study. A low percentage of overbooking is resorted to—for example on IC-182 Delhi-Bombay (Morning flight) overbooking is done to the extent of 10 per cent of the aircraft seat capacity. While on the evening flight IC-405 only 5 per cent overbooking is done. On Delhi-Srinagar flight IC-427 no overbooking at all is considered at present but on the Bombay-Colombo flight where the cancellation rates are higher, 15 per cent overbooking is done.

In a Review Meeting held on 22.11.1985, it was decided that in order to avoid any inconvenience to passengers overbooking percentages would be kept below the percentage

of cancellations on each sector. It was also directed that the percentage of cancellations on each sector should be monitored closely and regularly."

3.5 When asked about the rationale of overbooking, the Commercial Director, Indian Airlines informed the Committee during evidence:

"Overbooking is done with a view to achieving optimum utilisation of seats. Such a system of overbooking was in effect even prior to computerised reservations but with the computerised reservation facilities it has been made more scientific."

3.6 When pointed out that if optimum utilisation of the seats was the ground for overbooking, then why not the overbooking be also done in other services where the demand was high, the Managing Director stated:

"It is not with regard to high demand situation. IC-427 has a very high demand. We do not have over-booking. In flight No. 182 also, this is our experience. We are changing the figure of the percentage, only after looking at the cancellation situation over a period of time. Then people who are to come from abroad do not come. There are batches of 60 to 70 people each. Under the circumstances, those people may come or may not come. We do not go by the total percentage of the people. We go more or less by the circumstances or situation. Actually, this is the safe process."

3.7 When enquired about the position of the waitlisted passengers in those flights where overbooking is done, the witness replied:

"There is no surety of waitlisted passengers. We do not know whether they are going to come or not. They have to be treated as one stream. We are totally monitoring a particular service over a period of time, check its seasonability and then we fix up the percentage of overbooking."

3.8 On being asked about the status of the overbooked passengers in case all the passengers having O. K. tickets for a particular flight turned up; the Managing Director informed the Committee "They have the priority over the waitlisted passengers. They will go by the next flight." When further asked as to which of the passengers would be off-loaded in such a situation, the witness stated that

"whoever comes at the end will be off-loaded. It is first-cum-first served situation." The Deputy Managing Director of Indian Airlines also added:

"The idea of overbooking is not to off-load passengers. The basic purpose has to be gone into, whether over-booking should be done or not. The first thing is, by doing over-booking, it is not done on the basis of fixed number or amount. It will be 10 per cent or 5 per cent or 1 per cent or nil. Each and every flight is studied. When you have 30 days in advance, probably, our overbooking may be 100 per cent or 50 per cent. As the time decreases, the amount of overbooking is kept on reducing."

3.9 As regards the criterion adopted for off-loading passengers, the witness stated:

"We have no desire to off-load a passenger. We off-load the last person, who comes last. He may be No. 1 who has booked. Even if he is off-loaded, he is sent on the subsequent flight."

3.10 The Committee pointed out that because of the system of overbooking there were chances of genuine passengers holding O.K. tickets being off-loaded. The Managing Director then stated:

"We will be more conservative with regard to the overbooking. We will rationalise the system into a more effective one."

3.11 Asked whether any compensation could be claimed by the passengers for denial of seats when their tickets had already been okayed and if not, what course was open to them to get their grievances redressed. The I.A. informed the Committee in a written reply:—

"In the case of denial of seats when tickets have already been okayed, the passengers are provided with alternate surface transportation or alternate air connection on Indian Airlines by the first available service. All other facilities such as meals, conveyance charges and hotel accommodation are also provided.

However, Indian Airlines is not liable for any other compensation since the carriage by Air Act, 1930 clearly states vide Clause 4, if at any stage it is found that the aircraft

with the booked O.K. passengers, etc. will be overloaded, the Company will have the right to decide which passenger or article shall be off-loaded and such decision shall be binding. This clause is also printed on all ticket jackets."

C. Shortage of capacity in Indian Airlines

3.12 It has been stated that one of the problems being faced by the passengers is the shortage of capacity in Indian Airlines. Most of the flights have waiting lists and it is difficult to provide seats to all the intending passengers. Indian Airlines is stated to have signed an Agreement with the Airbus Industries for the purchase of A 320 aircraft which will be joining the fleet of Indian Airlines during 1989-90. The Agreement also provides that Airbus Industries will make available to Indian Airlines Airbus A 300 and Boeing 737 aircraft on lease to meet the growing needs of traffic during the interim period.

3.13 The Committee enquired whether the question of shortage of capacity has ever been considered in the context of the inconvenience to the travelling public and whether IA has considered the feasibility of having a perspective plan for augmentation of the capacity to cater to the growing demand. In their written reply, the Indian Airlines explained:

"The question of maintaining balance between the aircraft capacity and the passenger demand has been receiving constant attention of the airlines. The traffic demand is continuously monitored on various sectors and the capacity is suitably deployed by varying frequency levels in order to meet the same. As and when necessary, additional flights are also operated.

Indian Airlines has achieved a traffic demand growth rate of 11.6 per cent in the last ten years and would carry in excess of 10 million passengers in the current year. Tata Committee constituted by the Government of India to look into the development of Civil Aviation at the turn of the century has recommended a traffic growth of 11.5 per cent per year upto the year 2000-2001. Indian Airlines has prepared a 15 years perspective plan and it has been estimated that to meet the growth rate of 11.5 per cent. Indian Airlines would require an investment of

Rs. 9000 crores and would have a fleet strength of 193 aircraft in the year 2000. Out of the current fleet of Indian Airlines, except Airbus A 320 aircraft all other aircraft types would be phased out by the year 2000 and new technology aircraft will be inducted.

However, considering a conservative growth rate of 10.1 per cent, Indian Airlines fleet would consist of 155 aircraft by the year 2000 and would require an investment to the tune of about Rs. 7000 crores.

Planning Commission has been insisting on restricted growth rate for Indian Airlines at a level of 8 per cent per year. This is on account of constraint of foreign exchange resources of the country and low priority assigned to the aviation while making sectoral allocation of funds. It may be mentioned that the present induction of aircraft in the fleet has so far been on this basis. During the Seventh Plan period, Indian Airlines would be inducting 19 A 320 aircraft in the year 1989-90. The increase in traffic demand for the interim period till 1989 is purposed to be met by induction of leased aircraft capacity. Indian Airlines had acquired leased capacity of two Airbus and two Boeing 727 aircraft in the current year, out of which one Airbus aircraft was declared a total loss in the accident at Madras. As a result, one Airbus and two Boeing 737 aircraft acquired on lease basis have been incorporated in the present schedule. Subject of replacement of lost Airbus aircraft and acquisition of additional leased capacity has been taken up with the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

It may be observed that there has always been constant capacity constraint on the Indian Airlines system and keeping in view the inconvenience caused to the passengers on account of the same, Indian Airlines has been trying to meet the requirement of travelling public by increasing the span of operation and utilisation of aircraft."

3.14 On being enquired why the growth rate was being restricted to 8 per cent when it was actually 11 per cent, the Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, during his oral evidence stated:

"In fact, from 1973-74 to 1983-84, the growth rate has been 11.6 per cent; in 1984-85, it was 11.4 per cent and in 1985-86,

It was 9.9 per cent. But it is for the Planning Commission and the Government to consider which sector should have precedence. Our proposed plan was for Rs. 2470 crores in the Seventh Plan, but they restricted it to Rs. 730 crores only and in two years we have spent that amount.

One of the reasons for all these problems is that if a single plane gets stuck up somewhere, it has a whole lot of consequential delays all over and we can imagine the inconvenience to hundreds of people at various places. It is also not possible to keep 3-4 extra planes because of high costs involved. But there should be an elbow room to take care of the passengers if there is a failure."

D. *Baggage Delivery*

3.15 Indian Airlines had stated that baggage delivery time was monitored for each flight and efforts were made to reduce the baggage reclaim time as far as practicable. On major base stations, Indian Airlines is stated to have achieved an average record of 20 minutes for completing baggage delivery of all flights with first container/trolley arriving near the delivery area within 7 minutes of arrival and completion of baggage delivery within 20 minutes. According to Indian Airlines, this could be further improved if more conveyer belt facilities were provided by IAAI/DGCA. Even if A and B labels are put on baggages of Airbus flights to ensure fast delivery, sometimes this cannot be achieved due to inadequate conveyer belt facilities as also due to clash of arrivals at a given point of time.

3.16 Asked what efforts have been made to further reduce the baggage reclaim time and how far IA has been successful in bringing the baggage delivery time within the accepted norms; the Indian Airlines in a written reply stated:

"Indian Airlines now operates to 60 stations in the country. Out of these four airports, namely, Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras are managed by IAAI and the remaining stations by National Airports Authority. Airbus aircraft operates to ten stations in the country while the other fifty stations are served with conventional type of aircraft where the baggage loading/unloading is manual. At most of the Stations served by the conventional aircraft because of low frequency of operations, the entire activity is handled manually from unloading to hauling

the baggage to the airport terminal and delivering the baggage to passengers without the help of tractors conveyor belts, etc.

Indian Airlines have a continuous monitoring system for major airports including Hyderabad and Bangalore where bulk of our passengers arrive and depart. At other stations a close monitoring is achieved by the Station Managers as the workload is limited."

3.17 On being enquired how far Indian Airlines had been successful in achieving their targets, the Managing Director stated:

"We have laid down targets for every airport for the main stations as well as for the other stations. For example, in the case of Airbus, the target that we have laid down is that the first container should touch the belt within seven minutes of the arrival of the aircraft. After that, within 20 minutes the total baggage should be cleared. We are achieving, to a great extent, this situation, except in places where there is a clash of flights. If there are certain flights which they get together, there may be a little bit more time taken but if there is a solitary airbus coming to a station, this is the target we have laid down.

Another snag that comes is that sometimes the hold doors do not open due to some fault. We have adopted a system where the people have to give a reason as to why the baggage did not come in time. We are monitoring it now."

3.18 As regards the systems introduced to improve baggage handling, the witness stated:

"Very recently, we have introduced a new system. Actually this is under monitoring everytime. We are putting up one container separately for 'J' class. So, I think the passengers travelling by 'J' Class will not have a problem. But it is not that we are not concerned about the Economy Class passengers. I assure you that we will make more monitoring on this. At Calcutta, we have improved the situation. In Bombay, we had some problem because there the conveyor is a very very small one. In Delhi, we have got a good system right now. It is only when the services combine, the problem comes. But it happens very seldom. We want to improve this facility day-by-day so far as we are concerned."

3.19 When asked as to whose responsibility it was to handle baggage at the airports, the Chairman, IAAI stated that it was the responsibility of the airlines. IAAI were responsible only for the proper working of conveyer belts. The baggage transfer from the aircraft to the conveyor belt was the responsibility of the Indian Airlines. IAAI provided only the conveyor belts and flight indication boards over them. It was the Airlines' job to place the right baggage on the right conveyor.

3.20 As regards overall coordination with respect to baggage handling, delivery and other facilities, the Chairman, IAAI stated during evidence:

"This system is not good. If you see the international practice, you will find that the ground handling work is done by the airport authority. Here the work is done by the Airlines themselves. They cannot blame us."

The witness added:

"We suggest that ground-handling should be left completely to the airport authorities. At Heathrow Airport, the airport authority is monitoring minute by minute baggage delivery. If it is delayed by one minute, the person concerned is accountable. So, my suggestion is that the functioning of ground handling equipments should be given to one authority. I am prepared to take it. It is there in Heathrow Airport, Frankfurt Airport and Paris Airport. If a baggage does not come, you catch hold of the airport authority. Secondly, coordination at the government level needs to be looked into. Each baggage which is coming at the airport is pre-examined for x-ray. In my professional view, this is not the right system. We are getting a bad name for it. Internationally it is being talked about that baggage is being delayed. The system of x-ray was installed with a purpose to find out weapons. Then there is a question of national security. I suggest that there should be a sample check instead of having each baggage being put through the x-ray... Everybody has to wait for one and a half hours. This is a major constraint today in the Indira Gandhi International Airport. If this hurdle could be removed, it will greatly improve the entire image of the airport as also be of great relief to the passengers."

3.21 During oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Civil Aviation, the Committee enquired whether all ground-handling jobs could be entrusted to IAAI at the international airports so that there might be a single answerable agency, the Secretary of the Ministry stated:

"You should have an effective body. I do not think that this suggestion is workable at all, that IAAI can take over everything right from the aeroplane, ticket and handling of the baggage and so on. It is not possible. Indian Airlines would be equally interested in the passengers who pay them. They are actually their valued customers. Their responsibility is to get the baggage and put it on the conveyor belt."

3.22 The Committee pointed out that generally there was mis-handling and consequent damage to the baggage at the airports. The extent and percentage of damage to baggage in India was much more when compared with airports abroad. The Committee then enquired as to what systems were intended to be evolved to handle more carefully the delicate baggage, the witness stated:

"Here the corrective step would be better training of the loaders and other people who work and handle the baggage. We have taken some steps of creating baggage cells at the international airports. The mishandled baggage or for that purpose separate baggage cells have been created at the four base stations. This has proved quite helpful in the sense there is a set of people whose duty is to trace the luggage and follow it. Earlier there used to be lot of complaints but lately complaints have become somewhat less...Regarding handling of luggage, we have taken note of observations and we will take corrective steps."

E. Conveyor Belts

3.23 The number of Conveyor belts available in the arrival hall of the four international airports is as under:

Bombay Airport	Terminal-I (Domestic) 4 (Nos.)	Terminal-II (International) 8 Nos.
Calcutta Airport	Domestic 3 Nos.	International 2 Nos.
IGI Airport	Terminal-I (Domestic) 4 Nos.	Terminal-II (International) 6 Nos.
Madras Airport	Terminal-I (Domestic) 4 Nos.	International 2 Nos.

3.24 When enquired whether the above mentioned number of conveyor belts was adequate to cope with the handling of luggage, the IAAI, stated in a written note as under:—

“Conveyor belts are adequate in Terminal-II, Bombay; Terminal-I & II at Delhi Airport and Terminal-I & II at Madras Airport. There is some problem at Calcutta (Domestic) and Terminal-I Bombay during peak periods. These problems will be removed after Bombay Airport Terminal-I is extended. Similarly the problem at Calcutta Airport will be removed once the New International Terminal Building is available and the entire present building is utilised for domestic operations.”

3.25 In this connection, the Chairman, IAAI stated in oral evidence:

“We are not very much satisfied with the conveyor belts. We are making further improvements. We are monitoring the breakdown on every conveyor belt and we hope to improve upon them.”

3.26 When asked whether IAAI were thinking of increasing the number of good quality conveyor belts at the International Airports, a representative of IAAI then stated:—

“We do have plans to instal more conveyor belts. In this regard, we have carried out a survey. In Bombay Airport (domestic) we have increased the number from two to four; in the International Airport in Bombay we have increased the conveyor belts from two to eight, at Indira Gandhi Terminal for domestic purposes, the number is increased from two to four and for international purposes it has gone to six from three. At Madras Airport, the number at domestic terminal has gone up from two to four and at international terminal it has increased to two from one. At Calcutta Airport in the domestic terminal the number has gone up to three from two. We already have some plans to extend the terminal at Bombay Airbus Terminal. For Calcutta, a new terminal has been planned already.”

3.27 When asked whether the existing number of conveyor belts would be sufficient to cope with the expected increase in number of flights and passengers by 1990, the Chairman, IAAI, stated:—

“We do keep these projections in mind. Now we have almost doubled the capacity of the conveyor belts in every airport. A new terminal building means new conveyor belts and more facilities. We will be able to handle the traffic for the next coming ten years. The growth rate of traffic in Bombay is 6 per cent. In Delhi it is 11 per cent. There is some decrease in Madras as regards international traffic. There is some increase in the Calcutta Airport. We plan according to the growth and wherever there is greater need for more conveyor belts, we instal them there.”

3.28 In this connection, the Chairman, National Airports Authority stated:

“.....We are trying to make all-out efforts to provide conveyor belts at least at the 120-type passenger handling capacity airfields. They come under category A & B. Our endeavour is to see that we must complete as fast as we can.

A & B categories will have the baggage conveyor belts facility by the end of the Seventh Plan.”

F. Trolley Service

3.29 Porterage system was introduced at the international airports in 1972 at the time of constitution of the International Airports Authority of India. Different agencies like contractors, Co-operative Societies and ex-servicemen organisation were tried to provide porterage service at International Airports but all of them failed to provide satisfactory service to the passengers. Because of numerous constraints, the IAAI has done away with the porterage system and provided self-help free trolleys for use by passengers.

3.30 During evidence of representatives of IAAI, the Committee pointed out that the trolley service at the international airports was not upto the mark and the trolleys were neither utilitarian nor had any aesthetic appeal. The Chairman, IAAI then explained:

“The wheel of the trolley is the most important thing. With good wheels, a trolley can be pushed smoothly. Unfortunately, that kind of a wheel is not manufactured

here and we have to import them. Some of the new trolleys in the International Terminal are fitted with these imported components and they are doing quite well."

3.31 When asked about the passengers' reaction about the availability of trolleys, the witness stated:

"In Delhi 47.8 per cent passengers feel that the availability of trolleys is very good. 46.2 per cent feel that the availability is satisfactory. Only 6 per cent stated that it is poor. 22.3 per cent stated that the working condition of the trolleys is poor. In other words, if we consider the dissatisfaction area, we can infer that the working conditions require to be improved."

3.32 When pointed out that almost one-fourth of the passengers had offered adverse comments about the working condition of the trolleys, the witness admitted:

"This is an area where perceptible information is available on dissatisfaction. Previously there used to be a lot of complaints about the non-availability of trolleys. Fortunately, that has gone down now. After our concerted efforts, the availability now is more. But I do agree that the maintenance and the condition of the trolleys still is to be improved."

3.33 On an enquiry if baggage trolleys in sufficient numbers would be provided at all the airports by the end of the Seventh Plan, the Chairman, NAA, stated:

"By the end of Seventh Five Year Plan, we can provide this facility to A & B categories (airfields where airbus and 737 aircrafts operate). We will have to see as to how best the traffic develops...I will not provide it in insufficient numbers. There are 86 airfields. I will have to take into account that fact also. We will have to give priorities to the heavily visited airfields by passengers where airbus type of aircraft and 737 are operating. After that, certainly we can go into other sectors also."

3.34 In the post evidence replies received from National Airport Authority, the Committee have been informed that it has been decided as a matter of policy to provide the trolley facility at the

domestic airports in a phased manner. Already trolleys have been introduced in Trivandrum. In other stations trolleys have been supplied and are expected to be put into use shortly.

G. Security at Airports

3.35 It has been stated by the Indian Airlines that the security of the airport is under the State Administration. However, Indian Airlines has its own offices, Engineering Workshops etc. located at various airports at major stations. Indian Airlines has its own security set up at Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Madras, Hyderabad and Bangalore and various security measures are being followed to ensure safety of its premises, aircraft and passengers.

3.36 Enforcement of security measures at the International Airports has been entrusted to the State Police of the respective States/ Union Territories where these airports are located. It covers both the security of the perimeter as also the enforcement of Anti-hijacking measures at these airports. Whereas the expenditure on account of perimeter security is met by IAAI, that on anti-hijacking is met by the Central Government in the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

3.37 The security arrangements at the international airports are reviewed by the Airport Security Committee headed by General Managers of the Airport. Representative of the Airlines' Operators, Security Authorities and Government Agencies operating at the Airport are represented on the Committee. At the centre, the Civil Aviation Security is reviewed by the Civil Aviation Security Committee presided over by the Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation and comprises representatives from Director General Civil Aviation, IAAI, Ministry of Home Affairs, Intelligence Bureau, Ministry of Defence, etc.

3.38 When asked about the extent of responsibility of Indian Airlines in maintaining security at the airports, the Deputy Managing Director, IA, stated during evidence:—

"The main point is, the security in different States is the responsibility of the State Governments. At the main International airports, the security is in the hands of the security organisation. Actually, the total control is with, or the man responsible for it, a Director in the Civil

Aviation Ministry...Our security adds to one of the Security Wings or the Police. We have actually discussed at the Ministry level about the security aspect and everything else. When there are any lapses on the part of the Indian Airlines—we do get all the advice from the experts—we try to rectify them.”

3.39 The Committee desired to know the particular Ministry in the Central Government which was controlling the security of the airports and whether Central Government had any proposal under consideration to create its own security force for handling the security matters at the airports. The Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation stated during evidence:

“It is under Civil Aviation. In pursuance of the recommendations to deal with hijacking Pandey Committee was set up by the Government. In pursuance of that Civil Aviation Security came up as an organisation. So, the nodal responsibility of security at the Airport against anti-hijacking, against sabotage, against incidents which occurred at Karachi—all these are the responsibility of the Civil Aviation Security, though the staff for it is provided at Delhi by the Delhi Police, at Bombay by Bombay police, because we do not want to create another Force. That question also we had examined and a Committee went into it and it was thought that it would be much more cost effective to have people on specific duty paid for by us rather than ourselves creating an organisation.”

3.40 When pointed out that at every airport the Airport Manager felt helpless with the police who were looking after the security problems, the witness stated:

“Security at the airport is the responsibility of local police. We pay for those people.”

3.41 As regards amenability of the security police to the discipline and control of the Director of Civil Aviation Security who is under the control of Ministry of Civil Aviation, the Secretary of the Ministry stated:

“About this the guidelines are issued by the Director of Civil Aviation Security, but to be frank, the day-to-day administrative control is not on them.”

3.42 When asked about the role of Airport Authorities in the security arrangements at the airports, the witness stated:

"They have nothing. We have a Director of Civil Aviation to play a nodal role."

3.43 The Committee are informed that the computerised reservation system in Indian Airlines with CRT facilities (Cathode Ray Tube) was launched in March, 1985 covering initially six major stations. It has now been extended to 16 stations in India and 4 stations abroad. Majority of the stations covered are linked up at present with a system on slow speed TTY circuits. The Indian Airlines is also reported to have planned to provide 17 more stations/locations with CRT facilities by the end of 1987-88 depending upon the availability of circuits from P&T Department. The Committee would desire that with a view to providing efficient service to air travellers and to reduce waiting time at the booking counters, the Indian Airlines should draw up a time bound programme to extend computer reservation facilities at all its non-computerised stations within the shortest possible time and if feasible by the end of 7th Five Year Plan in cooperation and coordination with the P&T Department in so far as the availability of circuits is concerned. The Committee also desire that till such time the CRT facilities are provided, the Government may consider connecting non-computerised stations directly with the computers through the teleprinters.

3.44 Another area of dissatisfaction of passengers is the non-availability of seats on certain routes due to the shortage of capacity on the aircraft. According to the Indian Airlines, overbookings between 5 to 10 per cent are made on certain domestic routes with a view to ensuring optimum capacity utilisation. The over-booked passengers are adjusted against cancellations made by the passengers holding confirmed tickets.

3.45 The Committee are informed that in the performance review meeting held in November, 1985, Indian Airlines were directed to review the booking profile and the system of over-bookings so as to evolve a procedure whereby no passenger holding confirmed booking should be denied a seat. Accordingly, the Indian Airlines is reported to have evolved a system of monitoring of bookings on the basis of which percentage of cancellations (flight-wise and season-wise) on each sector is systematically studied and over-bookings permitted only on selected flights.

3.46 The Committee were also informed that presently seats are made available to passengers holding confirmed tickets and also to over-booked passengers on first-come-first served basis. They were further informed that whoever came at the end would be off-loaded even if he might be holding a confirmed ticket. In Committee's view, this system is defective in as much as the over-booked passengers who report earlier for the flights get preference over the passengers with confirmed and re-confirmed tickets. Besides, there is every possibility of irregularities being committed under the existing system. To obviate the chances of any irregularity and to streamline the procedure, the Committee recommend that the whole system of bookings should be rationalised thoroughly and suitable guidelines/ instructions issued leaving no scope for over-booked passengers to have preference over passengers having confirmed tickets. The system devised should be fool-proof leaving no room for discretion whatsoever. The Committee also recommend that the present system of ticketing should also be revised and the status of passengers holding confirmed tickets and over-booked passengers should be clearly indicated on the ticket so that, if necessary, only over-booked passengers would be off-loaded.

3.47 Another problem faced by air passengers is the shortage of aircraft capacity. Whereas most of the flights have waiting lists, it is not possible for the Airlines with its existing fleet to provide seats to all the intending passengers. In this connection, the Indian Airlines also admitted in evidence that "there has always been constant capacity constraint and keeping in view the inconvenience caused to the passengers on that account, Indian Airlines has been trying to meet the requirement of travelling public by increasing the span of operation and utilisation of existing aircraft."

3.48 From the information furnished, the Committee have found that Indian Airlines had achieved a traffic demand growth rate of 11.6 per cent during the last decade i.e. from 1973-74 to 1983-84. There was, however, a dip in the growth rate in the succeeding years to 11.4 per cent in 1984-85 and 9.9 per cent in 1985-86. The Tata Committee constituted to look into the development of Civil Aviation at the turn of the century, has also recommended a traffic growth rate of 11.5 per cent per year upto the year 2000-2001. Tata Committee has also stipulated that to meet the increased demand in traffic growth rate, Indian Airlines would need an investment of Rs. 9000 crores as envisaged in their 15 years' perspective plan and they would also have a fleet of 193 aircrafts in the year 2000. But according

to Indian Airlines, considering the conservative growth rate of 10.1 per cent, its fleet would consist of 155 aircraft by the year 2000 and for this purpose they would require an investment to the tune of Rs. 7000 crores. However, the Planning Commission is reported to have restricted the growth rate to 8 per cent per year on account of constraint of foreign exchange resources. Surprisingly, during the Seventh Plan, as against the projected demand of Rs. 2470 crores, the Planning Commission has allocated only Rs. 730 crores to the aviation sector and the whole amount of Rs. 730 crores was spent in just two years as was confirmed in evidence by Civil Aviation Secretary. Despite these heavy odds, the Indian Airlines is reported to be inducting 19 A320 aircraft by the end of Seventh Plan. Keeping in view the increasing traffic growth rate and ever increasing demand of seats by air passengers, the Committee feel that the allocation made available by the Planning Commission appears to be very much on the low side. Therefore, the Committee suggest that the Ministry should take up the matter again with the Planning Commission and arrange to get more funds allocated, commensurate with the need of this core sector.

3.49 Baggage handling at the airports is another grey area which calls for improvement. According to IAAI, they are responsible only for the proper working of conveyor belts and baggage transfer from the aircraft to conveyor belt is the responsibility of Indian Airlines. According to Indian Airlines, where the conveyor belt facilities are not available, the entire activity is handled manually from unloading to hauling baggage to airport terminal and delivering the same to passengers.

3.50 The Committee are informed that on major base stations, the Indian Airlines is reported to have achieved an average record of 20 minutes for completing baggage delivery for all flights, and this position can be further improved by providing more conveyor belts by IAAI/DGCA. In order to ensure quick delivery of baggage and to avoid clustering of passengers around the conveyor belts, the Committee desire that baggage should be dispersed on more than one conveyor belt and for this purpose the IAAI/NAA should consider the feasibility of providing more belts at airports. As the bunching of the flights also ultimately results in the delay in the delivery of baggage, the Committee desire that the Airlines authorities should take effective measures in spacing out flights landing so as to help the airport authorities to handle baggage of passengers more efficiently. The Committee also desire that with a view to speed up clearance of passengers at Indira Gandhi International Airport, the airport

authorities should consider ways and means to have sample screening of the baggage instead of 'X-raying' every suitcase before it is placed on the conveyor belt. Considerable time can be reduced if screening of baggage is done expeditiously. Since the loaders take a long time in uplifting baggage from the aircraft to the conveyor belt and the drivers also work at snail's pace, it all results in considerable delay. The Committee, therefore need hardly emphasise that necessary steps should be taken to ensure that the baggage is placed on the conveyor belts in the minimum possible time so that the passengers are spared of any inconvenience.

35.1 It has been suggested to the Committee that in order to obviate delay and to make one agency accountable for delivery of luggage in time, the job of handling the luggage at the airports should be entrusted to the concerned Airport Authority as is the practice followed in some of the European countries. The Committee feel that there is some weight in the suggestion and desire that the Ministry of Civil Aviation should examine the suggestion in all its ramifications with a view to seeking as to what extent it can be implemented.

3.52 The common complaint made by the air travellers is that the baggage is mishandled and damaged by the loaders at the airports. In this connection, the Secretary of the Ministry of Civil Aviation also agreed during evidence that "here the corrective steps would be better training of loaders and other people who work and handle the baggage". The Committee, therefore, recommend that to get over the problem of mis-handling the baggage and to obviate the chances of any complaint, the Government/Indian Airlines should make necessary arrangements to train the loaders to handle the baggage more carefully especially those items which need special care and delicate handling. The Committee also recommend that some senior functionary of the Indian Airlines should oversee the baggage handling operations to ensure safe handling by loaders etc.

3.53 The Committee note that the International Airports Authority had tried various agencies in the past to provide better portorage service to the passengers within the terminal buildings of the international airports. Since all those agencies failed to produce the desired results, the IAAI abolished the portorage system and instead introduced self help free trolley service for the convenience of the passengers. But the Committee have observed that these trolleys are not utilitarian because their working is not satisfactory. In this

connection, the Chairman, IAAI stated during evidence that in a survey carried out at Delhi airport only 46.2 per cent of the passengers expressed the view that the availability of trolleys was satisfactorily and 22.3 per cent of the passengers had commented that the working condition of the trolleys was poor. He admitted "This is an area where perceptible information is available on dissatisfaction....But I do agree that the maintenance and the condition of the trolleys still is to be improved." The Committee, therefore, recommend that IAAI should take stock of the situation at the international airports and make sufficient number of trolleys of good quality and easy to handle available to passengers. They need hardly mention that adequate arrangement should also be made to maintain these trolleys in proper working condition. The Committee also desire that the Government/Airport Authority should also consider the feasibility of providing free portage service inside the terminal buildings to handicapped, old people, children and women.

3.54 As regards other airports, the Chairman, National Airports Authority informed the Committee that by the end of the Seventh Plan all airports served by Airbus and Boeing Services would be provided with this facility. The Committee hope that the National Airports Authority would fulfil its commitment within the time bound programme.

3.55 The Committee find that at present the security of the airport is the responsibility of the concerned State Government. The personnel of the security force are drawn from the State Police of respective State Government/Union Territory to look after the security of the airport. These personnel, though formally working under the Director, Civil Aviation Security, are governed by the rules of the respective State Government from which they are drawn. They do not directly come under the discipline and control of any of the agencies operating at the airports.

3.56 During evidence, the Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation informed the Committee that nodal responsibility of security at the airport against anti-hijacking, sabotage etc. is that of the Civil Aviation Security, though the staff for it, is provided by the concerned State Government police. He added "we do not want to create another Force..... it would be much more cost effective to have people on specific duty paid for by us rather than ourselves creating an organisation." But the Committee are of the view that since the security of Airports is as important as the security of aircraft, the security force at the airports should work under the discipline and control

of some Central agency entrusted with the responsibility of the security of the airports. The security force at the airports should be answerable to this agency rather than to the respective State Government. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Government should consider the feasibility of constituting a separate security force on the lines of CRPF which should be answerable to and directly controlled by the Central Authority like the Director, Civil Aviation Security or the concerned Airport Authority as under the present arrangement DGCA etc. cannot enforce their writ through the local police.

CHAPTER IV

AIRPORT FACILITIES

4.1 According to Indian Airlines, the difficulties generally faced by the passengers at most of the airports are shortage of seating accommodation, shortage of space for checking-in of passengers and baggage delivery, restaurant and other operational requirements. At base stations there are inadequate number of security gates and limited sterile area causing inconvenience to passengers, particularly when some flights are delayed due to fog or bad weather. The provision of airport facilities is receiving attention of International Airports Authority of India and National Airports Authority.

4.2 When enquired about the steps taken to expand the existing airport facilities to provide adequate facilities to the passengers, IAAI in their written reply has stated that the following improvements have been made/proposed to be made at Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras airports:

Physical Improvements in Building etc.

1. A new building has been put up at Bombay and Delhi Airports (New International Building at Delhi & Bombay Airports).
2. A new domestic terminal at Madras airport.
3. Planned expansion of Bombay Domestic Terminal.
4. New International Terminal at Madras planned.
5. New International Terminal at Calcutta airport planned.
6. Future plans for new Domestic Terminal at Delhi Airport.
7. Future plans for new International Terminal Delhi.
8. New Phase-III of International Terminal at Bombay Airport.
9. Augmentation of car parking facilities.

Qualitative Changes

1. Abolition of portorage system.
2. Introduction of self-help baggage trolleys.

3. Shuttle service between two terminals at Bombay and Indira Gandhi International (IGI) airports.
4. Establishment of Polite Stations in the airport premises.
5. Introduction of pre-paid taxi system at Bombay and IGI Airports.
6. Car rental service at Bomay Airport.
7. Establishment of Medical units.
8. Establishment of Duty Free Shops in Arrival Halls.
9. Introduction of free telephone facility at the Transit Lounges at Bombay and IGI Airport.
10. Introduction of Railway Reservation Counters.
11. Introduction of Airport Hostesses and Facilitation wing of IAAI.
12. Introduction of toilets for the handicapped at IGI and Madras Airports.
13. Introduction of Child Care Room at IGI and Calcutta Airports.
14. Introduction of flight information counter at IGI Airport to be followed at other airports.
15. Provision of dormitories at Calcutta Airport @ Rs. 10|- per passenger.
16. Introduction of Airport Art Gallery at Calcutta Airport.
17. Introduction of a small lobby for ladies and infants at Calcutta Airport.

Under consideration

1. Executive Lounges
2. Fly Bus Service
3. Tunnel between Terminal-I and Terminal-II at Bombay.
4. Magnetic Levitation System at Bombay.
5. Improved Chairs.
6. New Hotels.
7. Golf Course.
8. Environmental improvements

4.3 The National Airports Authority has also informed in a written note that with the increased demand for the floor area required to meet the urgent additional needs of the security, anti-hijacking and steps against unlawful interference with aircraft operations, the provision of passenger amenities and, more particularly, the construction of adequate passenger terminals has become cost intensive. The Planning Commission has directed a much reduced financial outlay and toning down in the field of civil aviation, which makes it extremely difficult to carry out development work commensurate with the requirements of the passenger handling. It is proposed to provide at all domestic airports better and more adequate facilities to the passengers by way of improvements in baggage handling systems, provision of baggage trolleys, provision of water coolers, better lighting, better car parking facilities for the passengers and the public, more adequate aprons with proper lighting for passengers handling at night and special reserved lounges for VIP passengers, like Ministers, MPs and high dignitaries of other countries, Public address systems etc.

4.4 In order to remove congestion and other difficulties experienced by passengers at different airports, NAA has stated:

“Due to gross inadequacy of the financial resources, it is extremely difficult to draw up elaborate and long term programmes for providing adequate infrastructure facilities at different airports to remove congestion and other similar difficulties experienced by the passengers at the domestic airports. However, a step in this direction has already been taken by initiating a study of each station to assess the inadequacies and to draw plans to overcome the deficiencies discovered. This study is likely to take 6—8 months and once the study is completed, firm plans will be drawn up and moderated according to the availability of the fund resources. However, a phased development programme would be followed to bring more urgent improvements at all airports instead of concentrating on the total development of each station in a single phase.”

4.5 The Committee enquired as to what facilities are provided by the National Airports Authority at the airports. In reply, the Chairman, National Airports Authority stated in evidence:

“The National Airports Authority has been started in June, 1986. We have taken a number of steps and identified

the areas where we need immediate development. In a number of domestic air-fields, terminal buildings are/being modified to cater to these specific requirements. Once a passenger enters into the airport, he goes to the Indian Airlines Checking Centre. He should have sufficient space to move around. We do provide certain facilities like restaurant etc. We have given counters to the post-offices and banks. We have given some counters to the shop-owners. These are the basic things which a passenger would like to have."

The witness added:—

".....The NAA provides the area for movement of passengers; it provides area for various counters for Indian Airlines; it also provides baggage handling facilities such as conveyor belts and so on."

4.6 The Committee pointed out that even the basic facilities like drinking water, adequate seating accommodation, fans, toilets etc. were not available in the security area at certain airports, especially in the Northern and Eastern Sectors of the country. When asked as to what steps are being taken to provide the basic facilities to the passengers, the Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation then stated:

"We are working on every scheme of things. In Delhi when the new departure lounge starts, there we have designed a system whereby he (passenger) takes his boarding pass and identifies his luggage and then he goes to the security hold area. With the result subsequent identification will be done away with. There will be some convenience provided if some flights get cancelled. We are going to provide at all the international airports auto vending machines for coffee, tea, ice-cream. You just push the button and you get it. Today lot of people are complaining that once they go in, they cannot come out...The other items where we are paying attention is to provide air-conditioning or air-cooling facilities, proper drinking water and better seats. We do not want our passengers to hang over for hours together. Now take toilets, what we feel is that the only way to do it is perhaps to have a contract system. We are now introducing it wherever possible. At Indira Gandhi Airport we have done it. There also, partly it is the responsibility of the people who

use them but more than that is the responsibility of people who have to be there. That is a grey area and I am personally not satisfied because whichever airport I go to, I go to the toilet to see how it is being maintained. We have told that for all cleanliness, toilet arrangements and other things, let us have housekeeper type of officers, preferably senior ladies, whose responsibility is only to keep these facilities which are very vital, in as best condition as possibly we can."

4.7 As regards poor maintenance and lack of proper cleanliness at the Indira Gandhi International Airport, the witness *inter alia* stated:—

".....We are not still satisfied in the manner in which the International Airport is kept. I would submit that none of the Air-conditioning or conveyor belt system or the other electronic systems are going awry. There are certain weaknesses. Our services are not satisfactory. I feel there is scope for improvement further. For this, we have a system of surprise check. I myself had carried out last year two to three surprise checks. The Minister also carried out surprise checks. The Chairman also carried out surprise checks. Our effort is to make these Airports a show-piece to the extent possible within the available resources and within the constraint of funds i.e. whatever we have. But, I would say, there is a plenty of scope for improvement."

4.8 When enquired if cleanliness at other airports would also be given to contractors, as had been done at the Indira Gandhi International Airport at Delhi, the witness stated:—

"At all the important airports, we should introduce this system. Otherwise, you have any number of workers, you will not be able to maintain standards unless there is accountability. The second stage is substantial augmentation of facilities at the national airports in keeping with the requirement of the growth of traffic. We will have to determine and categorise the airports and work out the funds. Even that exercise has not been done in the manner it should be done."

The witness added:

"I would say that cleanliness, upkeep and maintenance leave much to be desired. DGCA was there which had some regulatory functions. It was burdened with the maintenance work. Some of the things like upkeep of the toilets, general upkeep, cleanliness, these are things which leave much to be desired. The other facilities obviously we are not able to provide because of constraint of resources. We are gradually building up this organisation of National Airports Authority. Within next three or four months it will be an organisation competent enough to take care of the things. In the case of upkeep of the airport, I agree that there is a looseness at that point which we must attend to."

4.9 When enquired about the gap between the amenities provided at the international airports in India and abroad, the witness stated:

"Bombay and Delhi have got the equipment and wherewithal which we can treat as equivalent to international standards. But even in those places, I would think that there are 3 or 4 weak spots or gaps which need to be given special attention, and filled up. First is the upkeep or maintenance. There is a gap; what it could be and what it should be in respect e.g. of toilet and general upkeep of the building. The second gap even in these two international airports, is in respect of passenger baggage deliveries. May be we have some systems which we can improve, whereby the baggage delivery systems could be quicker. We have got the best conveyors in Delhi, but we have introduced a system under which each baggage coming from outside must be X-rayed before it comes to the conveyor. This is there only in Delhi. We put the best conveyor. But there is a problem when the baggage comes; in the trolleys, each item of baggage has to be physically lifted and put on the Idler. There is one man available. Then that Idler passes through the screen. The basic idea is security. The policy is that arms and ammunitions are not brought in. It has to be done. There is a difference between the speed of the Idler and the conveyor. The latter is very fast. So, much time is wasted. From Idler, we have to put the baggage on the fast-moving conveyor belt. We are making some suggestions, viz. that we should free Air India items from this policy

of X-raying. In respect of others, we may have a random check. We are going to the Committee of Secretaries on this matter. Otherwise, even after providing the best of facilities and equipment, we are still blamed that the actual time taken is more. Here, there is scope for improvement. The third measure is navigation and communication facilities at these two airports. In Madras we are going to build up an over-bridge at the very old international airport terminus building. The work has already started. I think there we will put up best facilities. Earlier we were having domestic terminal at Calcutta. Now we have decided that the existing international airport should be converted into domestic airport and let us put up a very model international terminus at Calcutta also. So, with the coming up of these terminuses, this thing will be achieved."

4.10 The Committee desired to know the time-frame within which NAA would be able to provide at least the minimum facilities at all the domestic airports. In reply, the Chairman, NAA stated:

"We have already planned for making the facilities within the next two or three years except major construction of buildings for additional accommodation which is a more time-consuming and costly affair. We will positively provide for water coolers and toilets. We have already started our programme on this.....Where the existing facilities are inadequate, we are trying our level best to improve them."

4.11 When asked about the facilities made available to the Passengers in the case of delayed or missed connecting flights, the Commercial Director, Indian Airlines stated:

"In the case of missed connecting flights and late flights, rules are laid down that in such cases the passengers are to be given the maximum comforts—hotel accommodation, food, transport and also transportation either by the first available flight or by other modes of transport."

4.12 When enquired why these rules have not been made public for the benefit of the passengers, a representative of Indian Airlines then stated that "These are internal instructions to the staff, how they have to proceed in such situations."

4.13 Asked as to how the passengers would know that they were entitled to such facilities, unless these instructions were made public, the Managing Director replied:—

“These are not IATA rules. We are an IATA member. That is one thing which is very important. Over and above the IATA rules, these are administrative rules which we have for ourselves. The non-IATA rules cannot be displayed. The reasons are very simple. We will be quoted in other countries. This is for our own passengers' comfort that we do....”

4.14 When asked if there was any provision in the IATA rules that if a connecting flight was missed, the passenger must be given accommodation, the Managing Director stated:

“Yes. We will reiterate our rules to our Station Managers. We will do that immediately. Whatever IATA rules are there, we will have them displayed. But we cannot display our internal rules.”

4.15 The Committee enquired if the minimum requirement of providing cold drinking water at all the airports will be met before the onset of coming summer, the Secretary of the Ministry informed the Committee as under:

“I will take it as a challenge and I assure you that I will personally see to it that this is done.”

4.16 Subsequently, the Committee were informed by the National Airports Authority that water coolers were planned to be provided in the departure security hold area, arrival hall and departure concourse by 31-12-1967.

When pointed out about the absence of fans in the waiting lounges and the security hold areas, the Secretary of the Ministry stated:

“Though these are provided, there may not be adequate number of fans. I will assure you that we will take care of this aspect also. But sometimes it may also happen in a wayside airport, supply of electricity may be erratic.”

4.17 Regarding provision of coffee vending machines in security hold areas (domestic side) at International airports, the Ministry stated in a note after the evidence:

"The international Airports Authority of India has decided to instal automatic coffee vending machine for the benefit of passengers inside the Security Hold Areas (Domestic side) at all the four International Airports at Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and Madras. The licensee will instal the coffee Vending Machines in the space allotted by IAAI.

The General Managers of the airports have been advised to allocate necessary space for the purpose.

At Bombay and Madras Airports, permission has been granted by IAAI to an agency to instal Coffee Vending Machine inside the Security Hold Area (Domestic side) for a period of six months on experimental basis."

Other Facilities

(i) Check-in-Counters

4.18 The Committee pointed out that because of insufficient number of check-in-counters there were long queues at the airports. In this connection, the Chairman, IAAI stated during evidence:—

"...I agree with you that the Airlines should operate sufficient counters. If you have 16 counters, they are using four, five, six or ten but not all the 16 counters. Different flights are at different times. If you go to any Airport anywhere, Frankfurt or other places there is free checking anywhere at any counter. In that case there cannot be any risk. We have made this suggestion to the Airlines. They say that they will try it."

(ii) Insufficient seating accommodation

4.19 When pointed out that neither the seating accommodation at the international airports was sufficient nor were the seats comfortable, the witness then explained:—

"It is an area where it requires improvement. The provision of plastic chairs and fibre glass chairs are not quite comfortable. These are provided outside the security area. It is uncomfortable.....Generally, we would

like to have a little hard chair outside, in the visitors area. But in the transit area, there will be more comfortable chairs. We are going to provide that. We are arranging an all India Competition of the designers so that we can select comfortable and economic chairs with Indian decor. After we accept the designs, it will take another six to seven months to finalise these things."

(iii) *Announcements about delayed flights*

4.20 The Committee pointed out that regular announcements were not made about the delays in departure of flights. To this, the Chairman, IAAI stated that on the basis of information given by the Indian Airlines IAAI announced the flight time and simultaneously the information was fed to the monitors. When asked about the coordination between Indian Airlines and IAAI in this regard, the Chairman, IAAI stated:—

"The airlines and our studio are located in the same building. So, there is no question of any time lag. It looks very embarrassing if I say again that there are some problems with the airlines. As far as our system is concerned, unless you feed into that, how can we announce it? I checked myself and found that sometimes the flight is late but no information is given to the passengers. I asked my people as to why they are not giving any information. They said that they were not being told by the airlines."

(iv) *Inter-Terminal Transport*

4.21 The Committee observed that due to lack of proper transport arrangements between the national and international terminals at Delhi and Bombay the passengers were fleeced. Various agencies operating at the airports i.e. IA, IAAI and NAA shifted their responsibility of transporting the passengers. When enquired as to whose responsibility it was to transfer the passengers from one terminal to the other, the Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation stated:

"Sir, this problem will basically arise only at two airports—Delhi and Bombay. As regards the agency to look after this, there is absolute clarity that this is the function of the International Airports Authority of India."

4.22 On being pointed out that the Chairman, IAAI had informed the Committee that it was not their responsibility, the witness stated:

"I think the agency which is supposed to look after the ground services is obviously the International Airports Authority of India. If they have some doubt in their mind, we will ensure that this responsibility is theirs and not of anybody else. Neither it can be the responsibility of Indian Airlines nor of National Airport Authority. I think the Chairman should not have been doubtful about his responsibility in this matter. If he is doubtful, we will put it very clearly. Regarding the adequacy of the arrangement, I think it leaves some gap to be filled."

(v) *EATS' Buses*

4.23 The Committee were informed that EATS' buses were available at Delhi and Bombay airports. The Committee pointed out that neither the passengers knew about this facility nor the places where EATS' buses were parked were prominently displayed. The witness then explained:

"I have myself heard that announcement is being made—in Delhi every half-an-hour and in Bombay every fifteen minutes. But I am still not satisfied with the EATS functioning because I feel that the International Airports Authority itself should provide the most modern buses and at a fixed rate and take care of the passengers from one terminal to another. We are seized of this problem. The facility is there today and announcement is being made about it. May be, it needs to be made more clearly, openly and extensively which we will do. But till that time we are thinking of another thing. For Delhi and Bombay, we are thinking that the International Airports Authority may provide very modern buses from airport to the city and from city to the airport. The taxi prepaid system has also been introduced but I think everybody does not want to go by taxi. There should be the bus facility by very modern, very comfortable buses and at a fixed rate from the city to the terminal point at the airport. This we intend to provide both at Delhi and Bombay and some schemes are being worked out."

4.24 Subsequently, in a note the Ministry of Civil Aviation informed the Committee:

"At Bombay, Calcutta and Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA), Delhi, M/s. Ex-servicemen Airlink Transport Services are providing bus/coach services from airport to the city centre which also connects important hotels. At Bombay and IGIA, Delhi, M/s. EATS are also providing coach service between the two terminals for the benefit of passengers. At IGIA, Delhi, besides the EATS coaches, the Delhi Transport Corporation also runs buses at frequent intervals from airport terminal to New Delhi and Old Delhi Railway Stations and the Inter State Bus Terminal. At Madras Airport, M/s. Palavan Transport, a Government of Tamil Nadu Undertaking, are providing bus services for the air passengers.

At all the international airports, city taxi services are also available for the use of passengers from one terminal to another.

At Bombay Airport, IAAI has also provided car rental facility. Similar facilities are proposed at other international airports.

There is also a proposal under consideration to provide fly bus services at the four international airports. For these, it is proposed to invite tenders. IAAI will grant licence for a period of 3 years to successful tenderers for providing round the clock airconditioned pre-paid luxury coaches from airport to city centre, major Hotels, etc. These coaches will leave at a frequency of 15 minutes. During the lean period, the frequency may be 30 minutes."

4.25 The Committee are informed that main difficulties faced by the passengers at airports are shortage of seating accommodation, shortage of space for checking of passengers, baggage delivery, restaurants and inadequate number of security gates in sterile area. Even the basic amenities like drinking water and toilets are not provided in the security area at certain airports especially in the northern and eastern sector of the country. It is also reported that the passengers are hustled through security gates and herded into the overflowing departure lounge where catering and other amenities are not provided which causes considerable inconvenience when

passengers have to hang over for hours when flights are delayed or cancelled due to fog and inclement weather. In this connection, the Civil Aviation Secretary assured the Committee in evidence that some facilities would be provided if flights are cancelled. At all the international airports auto vending machines for coffee, tea, ice-cream would be provided. He also added that other items receiving attention are airconditioning or air cooling facilities, proper drinking water and better seats.

4.26 As regards the toilet arrangements, the Civil Aviation Secretary stated in evidence that cleanliness of toilets, their upkeep and maintenance at airports especially at the international airports leaves much to be desired. Therefore, to maintain standards, the contract system for the cleanliness of toilets was being introduced; where possible. He also admitted that "we are not still satisfied in the manner in which international airports are kept. There are certain weaknesses and our services are not satisfactory. There is plenty of scope for improvement". He also suggested that "for all cleanliness, toilet arrangements and other things let us have house keepers type of officers preferably senior ladies to keep those facilities which are very vital in as best condition as possibly we can."

4.27 The Committee regret to point out that the present facilities and basic amenities provided at the airports is far from satisfactory and the matter does not appear to have received full attention of the Government/airport authorities in the spirit and manner it deserved. The Committee have, however, noticed that IAAI has now decided to instal auto vending machines in the sterile area at all the international airports. At Bombay and Madras permission is stated to have been given to an agency to instal such machines for six months on an experimental basis. The Committee would like to be informed of the final outcome of this experiment and immediate extension of these facilities to Delhi and Calcutta airports.

4.28 In order to improve the customer services of airports, the Committee feel that there should be separate counters and staff for attending to telephone enquiries and personal enquiries from wait listed passengers and for providing facilities to domestic transit passengers. Adequate comfortable chairs should also be provided in the transit area for the passengers as the plastic and fibre glass

chairs provided at present are not quite comfortable. The Government/airport authorities should also consider the feasibility of having quite a good number of check-in counters to avoid long queues and also to enable the passengers to have free checks at airports as is the practice followed in the foreign countries.

4.29 Another aspect which needs immediate attention is the absence of regular announcement at the public address system at the airports including international airports about the delay in departure of flight. It is needless to point out that passengers are not taken into confidence and informed about the delayed flights. This obviously is due to the lack of coordination between IAAI and Indian Airlines. The Committee desire that the Government should issue clear instructions to IAAI and Indian Airlines to coordinate in this regard in such a way that the passengers are posted with the latest information about the arrival and departure of the flights.

4.30 The Committee have also observed that passengers are put to lot of inconvenience on account of absence of proper transport arrangements between the domestic and international terminals at Delhi and Bombay. When pointed out that none of the agencies i.e. Indian Airlines, National Airports Authority and International Airports Authority of India was prepared to own the responsibility of transporting the passengers from one terminal to the other, the Secretary Ministry of Civil Aviation categorically admitted during evidence that it was the responsibility of International Airports Authority to make necessary arrangements for the transportation of passengers between the two terminals and sufficient instructions in this regard would be issued to straighten the matter. The Committee hope that such instructions would be issued immediately.

4.31 The Committee note that even though EATS' buses are available at Delhi and Bombay airports yet the passengers are neither aware of this facility nor their parking places are prominently displayed. In this connection, the Civil Aviation Secretary also stated that "I am still not satisfied with the EATS functioningI feel that the International Airports Authority itself should provide the most modern buses at fixed rates and take care of the passengers from one terminal to another." The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should ensure that IAAI undertakes its responsibility to provide adequate bus service to the passengers between the two terminals at all the international airports. Arrangements should also be made for plying adequate number of buses at regular intervals from the airport to the city and also from the city

to the airports so that passengers are not put to unnecessary hardship. For this purpose, IAAI should provide very modern and comfortable buses at fixed rates.

4.32 The Committee's examination of the subject has also revealed that the airlines rules provide that if a flight is delayed or a connecting flight missed, the passengers are entitled to certain facilities like hotel accommodation, food, transport and also transportation either by the first available flight or by other modes of transport. Surprisingly, the passengers for whose benefits these rules have been framed, are not aware of these rules as these have not been made public nor are being displayed at airports. According to Indian Airlines these are administrative rules and are only meant for the information of their staff. In this connection, the Managing Director of the Indian Airlines stated in his evidence before the Committee that "these are not IATA rules. These are for our own passengers' comforts. The non-IATA rules cannot be displayed. We will be quoted in other airlines." The Committee are not convinced of the justification given by the airlines authority for not publishing the rules. On the other hand, the Committee strongly feel that these rules must be made public so that bona fide passengers can claim the entitled facilities as a matter of right and be not at the mercy of airlines staff who themselves might be unaware of these rules. The Committee recommend that Government/Airlines authorities should take immediate steps to get these rules/instructions published and also arrange to have them displayed prominently in the airport building which could attract the attention of passengers.

4.33 The Committee have also been informed that inadequacy of funds is proving to be an inhibiting factor in drawing a long term plan by NAA for providing infrastructural facilities at different airports to remove congestion. Sometimes back, the NAA is reported to have initiated a study of each station to assess the inadequacies and to draw plans to overcome the deficiencies discovered. In this connection, the Civil Aviation Secretary also confirmed in evidence that "We will have to determine and categories the airports and work out the funds. Even that exercise has not been done in the manner it should be done." While expressing their concern, the Committee feel that the study to identify drawbacks at each of the airports should have been undertaken and completed by NAA long ago. The Committee hope that to meet the increasing challenge of growth in traffic, the proposed study by the NAA would be completed of the earliest and funds required made available for the augmentation of facilities at the national airports.

CHAPTER V

UNIFIED AGENCY AT AIRPORTS

5.1 IAAI has informed the Committee that too many independent agencies like Customs, Police, Health, Immigration, Airlines, DGCA, NAA and IAAI are operating at the international airports. A unified structure of command and control of all the agencies operating at the airports has been suggested to improve coordination, control and responsibility of the International Airports.

5.2 When asked about comments of Indian Airlines to the creation of a single agency or for entrusting the task to one of the agencies who could have the responsibility and the authority to exercise control on the various agencies within the scope of coordinated plan, the Managing Director, Indian Airlines informed the Committee during evidence:—

“We want that there should be absolute coordination. For example—Customs is not under police and police is not under Customs. Airport Manager is supposed to be from International Airports Authority. He has no role in the authority. Though all these agencies work under one Ministry but the total control of the Airport today is in the hands of the different agencies. You are 100 per cent correct. We will be really thankful if there is one authority. There will be controlability and accountability. This is an excellent idea.”

He further stated:—

“There are two or three coordination Committees and they are going around and looking into the various things... and there is a Coordination Committee at every Airport. But as there are a number of Committees, there will be lesser and lesser work and there will be meetings only. There is coordination Committee at the Ministry level and there is another Committee at the higher level. The only thing is that the controlability at the Airport is not in the hands of one person. But

there will be heads at each level and every authority of the head would like to assert. The Customs Authority will say why should I oblige and why should my identification be lost? So also, the Police Authority will say likewise. But I would submit that there should be coordination to such an extent that there may be various authorities under the control of one authority at the Airport. If it is done, there can be no problem at all."

5.3 In this connection, the Chairman, IAAI also stated:

"A suggestion was given by me that since under the international Airports Authority Act, International Airports Authority is responsible to coordinate the activities of various agencies at the airport in the terminal building, at least this role of the Airports Authority must be brought to the notice of all concerned through a directive of the Cabinet so that other agencies know that it is International Airports Authority which is coordinating. This has been accepted by the Civil Aviation Ministry and a letter has been sent by the Ministry to the Cabinet Secretary for issuing a directive in this regard."

5.4 Asked if there is no coordination at present, the witness stated:—

"It is not totally true that there is no coordination. We are coordinating at present also. But that coordination is not as effective as it should be."

5.5 The Committee enquired as to what prevented IAAI from exercising their right of a coordinator when the International Airports Authority Act provided that Coordination at the international airports would be the responsibility of IAAI, the witness stated:—

"I myself felt that why I should ask anybody when the Act was already there. But the position in the Airport is like this. There are four Acts which are applicable in the Airport; the Air corporations have their Act; the customs have their own Act.

If I tell the customs man that he must display his card, it is a security requirement, he may refuse to do it.

There is a Madras High Court Judgement in favour of the customs that we cannot ask them to wear this. There

are complications. That is why I am saying this. I wanted the Government to tell their respective Ministries that they must instruct their own Departments that wherever we are performing a coordinating role they should accept our Coordinating role. It is a question of acceptance. We cannot force them. I have no legal authority. I cannot imprison him or fine him."

5.6 In this connection the IAAI is reported to have submitted a note to the Ministry of Civil Aviation suggesting that:—

"Even if various agencies are not under the control of International Airports Authority of India. Government of India need to clearly specify the role of the International Airports Authority of India *vis-a-vis* other agencies to make it clear to them that these agencies will have to attune their functioning to a common objective of efficient airport management. Although this is very clear in the Act, yet in all matters it needs to be reiterated under an Order to be issued by the Cabinet Secretariat to all Ministries to provide necessary support to the International Airports Authority of India to manage the airports efficiency without really taking over the formal authority to control the agencies involved. No doubt, to a great extent, this requires leadership role to be taken up by the IAAI, but it would be greatly beneficial if enunciation of its coordinating role is spelt out by a specific order to other agencies."

5.7 During oral evidence, the Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation also stated:—

"Though the position is very clear that this is their responsibility but we are saying that it needs to be reiterated under an order."

5.8 When asked how the Cabinet Secretariat Directive would help IAAI to improve their control so far as coordination is concerned, the witness replied:—

"It would not help in a major way. But it helps us to some extent, saying that it is reiterated. That is all we are saying. We are not saying that the role is not there and

that suddenly it will become very very effective. I do not think this is going to help in a major way. But all these steps which we are thinking in terms of better management, in terms of task force and all that, we say, do it for other airports also. All these things are going to happen. It is the Ministry which has to take the major burden and the agencies working under it."

5.9 The Committee pointed out that IAAI has admitted before the Committee that even though it had been assigned a coordinating role at the international airports yet it could not exercise any effective control over other agencies like customs etc. Thereupon, the Civil Aviation Secretary stated:—

"My submission is that in administration there are two ways. One is coordination. You cannot substitute coordination with total integration. I cannot suggest that International Airport Authority may take over the functions of the Indian Airlines, Air Traffic Controller, etc. It is not possible because you cannot substitute coordination with total integration as it is neither practical nor feasible. The only other way to exercise coordination is that coordination has to be effective. Our submission has been that there has been a certain amount of looseness but the point is in the case of all those agencies which are directly under the Ministry we can have effective coordination but in respect of other agencies which are not within the domain of my Ministry I cannot have that effective coordination."

5.10. As regards areas of coordination among various agencies at the airports, the Chairman, NAA stated:—

"We have a Committee at the Airport itself which is headed by the Aerodrome Officer and the Indian Airlines is a part and parcel of that Committee. Discussions do take place regarding schedule of flights, coordination and so on. As far as coordination is concerned, the provision is very much there. But for some reasons, it may have some shortfall. Quite often problems do arise because the type of passenger handling facilities that we have, falls short of the demand that is placed on us."

5:11 As regards having a single window, covering functioning of all the Departments at the airport, where the passengers should get answers to all their queries, the witness stated:—

“The idea is good. May I request that such action will have to be taken under the instructions of Ministry of Civil Aviation because other agencies may not be available to other areas. From the passengers’ point of view, single window is an ideal condition. I can put my officer and he will take down all the complaints pertaining to every Department like Indian Airlines, the security and all that. We will have to pass on to those Departments for answer.”

5:12 Keeping in view the multiple agencies operating at the airports dealing with various matters and each one of them being independent of the other, there was lack of coordination among them. When enquired about the role played by the Ministry of Civil Aviation in bringing coordination among the various agencies, the Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation explained:—

“This issue had come up as early as 1985. I had then headed a Committee on Facilitation of Passengers which was in the Tourism Ministry. Based on the recommendations of that Committee, this matter was considered in detail in the Committee of Secretaries under the Cabinet Secretary. I would only like to say that there are basically three agencies involved because I would not count Indian Airlines, Air India or International Airports Authority or National Airports Authority as separate because they are part of the Ministry. If there is a laxity on the part of any of them or if they are not coordinating, it does not pose a serious problem because they are directly under us. We try to pose a sort of coordination and there are various institutional arrangements like task force approach to the problem. That is, the task force consisting of the representatives of all these agencies takes day-to-day decision and ensures where are the loose links which need to be tightened. The main agencies outside our Department are basically customs (Finance) and immigration (Home Affairs). Now in the Committee of Secretaries, after a great deal of consideration, an overall view was taken that you cannot put one person and make others like customs and all directly under him because each agency is governed by different Acts. In no other

country, this sort of thing exists. But all this is achieved in a very well tight coordination system. For this purpose, we have further activated the Coordination Committee at each airport. I may particularly talk of large-ly four airports which handle a large amount of traffic. In fact, 70 per cent of the traffic is handled by Bombay and Delhi International airports. Now, this Coordination Committee is headed by the General Manager... It is well recognised that the General Manager of the International Airport who is a functionary of the I.A.A.I. is the first among equals and is the leader of the team. What was happening earlier was the meeting of the coordination Committee did not take place very frequently. Now, we have activated them."

Elaborating further, the witness stated:—

"In an overall situation, in diversity or multiplicity of functionaries or agencies functioning at a single point, we have already tightened up the coordination Committee. Second step is, we have now put those people as General Managers who are rated in the International Airport Authority as best possible persons. Thirdly, we have also involved a task force approach to the whole thing. That is, we have set up a task force under the chairmanship of the Chairman, International Airports Authority which consists of the representatives of all the agencies concerned and it continuously looks into the whole thing. Then, at a slightly higher level, we have a Facilitation Committee which is headed by me and representatives of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Revenue Department, Health Ministry and heads of all other agencies are also there. It also meets periodically and takes decisions."

5.13 When asked about the monitoring being done at the level of the Ministry to ensure coordination, the witness stated:—

"I would say that in the Ministry there is the closest possible coordination. Coordination is almost on fortnightly to monthly basis. Of course, I would not say that everything is fine."

5.14 Asked if any arrangement had been made at the airports where at a particular place, a passenger, in case of any problem

could report to an officer who should be able to provide a complete answer to him, the witness stated:—

“There is a duty officer's counter sufficiently prominently displayed at each airport. Then there is an Airport Manager who is managing the entire airport. A representative of the GM at that point of time epitomises the coordinated aspect. Then we have officials in the cabin. Then we are also in this Ministry seeing passengers' problems. Anybody whose problem is not solved, he can write to the Secretary of the Ministry. We have set up a complaint cell in the Ministry also. This is to keep a watch on their problems.”

5.15 The Committee note that a number of regulatory agencies like IAAI, NAA, DGCA, Airlines, Customs, State Police, Health and Immigration are at present operating independently at International Airports at Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. No doubt, all these organisations are engaged in providing services to the passengers within their allotted spheres of control but mutual cooperation and coordination to the desired level is lacking. Although under the International Airports Authority Act, the International Airports Authority (IAAI) has been assigned the role to coordinate the activities of various agencies at the International Airports but in actual practice, it has become helpless and is unable to exercise any control over other agencies to effect coordination. In fact all the concerned agencies at airports are pulling in different directions and the resulting casualty is the passenger for whose benefits these have been created.

5.16 During oral evidence of IAAI, Indian Airlines and National Airports Authority, a unanimous view was expressed that there should be a single authority which should have over all control at all the international airports and should be able to play the role of a leader and act as a focal point for all important decisions. All other agencies should attune their functioning with that authority to achieve the common goal of efficient management of airports without, of course, abdicating their formal demarcated authority. While not agreeing with this view, the Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation stated in evidence that it was neither feasible nor practicable to integrate all the agencies and to put them directly under IAAI's control because each agency is governed by different Acts. He, however, assured complete coordination among IAAI, IA, NAA and DGCA which are under the administrative control of his Ministry but expressed reservations with regard to other agencies like Customs and

Police which are under the control of other Ministries. He also informed the Committee that in order to make effective coordination amongst the various concerned agencies, a Task Force consisting of top officials of all concerned agencies, headed by the Chairman, IAAI, has been set up to identify and tighten the loose links. Besides, a high level Committee has also been constituted on which representatives of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Finance (Deptt. of Revenue), Ministry of Health and Heads of all other agencies are also associated. This Committee is chaired by the Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation and meets periodically and takes decisions on various problems faced by passengers at the airports.

5.17 The Committee feel that the present arrangements have not proved successful for ensuring effective coordination amongst the various agencies operating at Airports and as a result of this, the air travellers continue to face a lot of difficulties at international airports. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Government should consider the feasibility of constituting an effective single authority armed with adequate powers which should be in over all command at an international airport and be able to provide instant redress of passengers' grievances. To achieve this end, the Government may consider, if necessary, the desirability of amending suitably the relevant Acts governing various agencies operating at international airports.

5.18 The Committee have also noticed that at present there is no arrangement at airports particularly at the international airports whereby a passenger could contact an officer who could provide complete answer to his problems. Obviously, he has to run through the length and breadth of the airport to contact the various officers of the concerned departments. No doubt, there is a duty officer's Counter and an Airport Manager who can be contacted in case of need but these officers are practically of no help to the passengers who need an instant redress of their grievances. Therefore, the Committee suggest that for improving the Customer Services, there should be a "Single window" at each airport where responsible officers equipped with all the information pertaining to their departments should be available for attending to the complaints/queries of the passengers. The Committee desire that Ministry of Civil Aviation should examine the feasibility of implementing this proposal in consultation with other concerned authorities and Committee apprised of the action taken in this regard within six months of the presentation of this report.

CHAPTER—VI

HARASSMENT TO PASSENGERS BY LOADERS OUTSIDE AIRPORTS

6.1 IAAI has stated 'Although self-help trolley Service ensures trouble free service to passengers within the terminal building, the problem of unauthorised loaders outside the terminal building and resultant harrassment to the passengers continues. The same is, however, tackled by the State Police.

6.2 On an enquiry if IAAI has been able to identify the particular fields in which harassment to passengers by loaders outside the terminal building has been noticed, the IAAI has stated in a written reply as under:—

"Outside the Passenger Terminal Building there are unauthorised loaders, a large number of whom are urchins. They try to forcibly take away the luggage of the passengers and place the luggage in the car, taxi etc. They force this service upon the passengers even if somebody does not need it. For this service they demand a price. If somebody does not pay, they misbehave and often use foul language.

At Bombay Airport, where problem is more acute, the matter is reported to the Police by IAAI officials. Such unauthorised loaders are occasionally challaned and are fined. The fine is generally Rs. 10—25/-. This is done under local laws. The amount of fine does not serve as a deterrent for the activities they are engaged in as the amount which they are collecting is perhaps much more than what they are paying in terms of fine. Some passengers even encourage them and protect them when action is being taken against them."

6.3 The Committee enquired whether the matter has been taken up with the concerned State Governments, and if so, the action taken by them to eliminate this malaise. In a written reply, the IAAI has stated:—

"The matter is reported to the Police and discussed with the local Government whenever possible. Because poor people and urchins are involved, often a lenient view is taken by the Police. It is felt that unless very strong action is taken against such unauthorised loaders, the malaise is not going to be removed. It is basically for the State Government to take such action."

6.4 At a meeting of the High Level Committee on facilitation held as far back as on 4-5-1982 the problems of harassment of passengers at airports from touts, taxi drivers and other unauthorised persons was discussed. The representative of IAAI had mentioned in that meeting that this problem had been there since very long and that although everything was done to minimise this problem, yet satisfactory results could not be ensured. It was also decided that a letter from Civil Aviation Secretary to the Commissioners of Police to set up a small Standing Committee under a senior police officer to study and find out solutions would be useful. Such Standing Committees at Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras could include representatives of local police, IAAI and the Chairman of the local Airline Operators' Committee. The Standing Committees might meet periodically to study these problems and find solutions at the areas in the immediate vicinity of arrival and departure gates.

6.5 The Committee enquired whether such Standing Committees have been constituted and if so, what was the number of meetings so far held since their constitution, and what were the solutions suggested to overcome the problem of harassment to air commuters outside the terminal buildings. In a written reply, IAAI has stated:

"The High Level Committee on facilitation is chaired by Secretary, Civil Aviation, and Director Regulation and Information of Civil Aviation Department is the convenor. IAAI is only a member. According to our information the proposed standing Committees have not been constituted so far as decided by the High Level Committee in its meeting held on 4-5-1982. In this connection it may be mentioned that earlier there were following committees looking into different activities at the airport:

1. Airport utilisation committee
2. Airport facilitation committee

3. Operational area inspection committee
4. Terminal Inspection committee
5. Airport security committee

It has been decided that the first four committees should be merged and a new committee should be formed known as Airport Coordination Committee, covering all the aspects of airport management and operation. The airport security committee exists. This Airport Coordination Committee which has been set up in September, 1986 will be looking into all the aspects of Airport management and operation including the problem of harassment from touts, taxi drivers and other unauthorised persons. General Manager, IAAI is the Chairman of the Committee."

6.6 When asked about the steps taken by IAAI to eliminate the problem of harassment to passengers from touts at the airports, the Chairman, IAAI *inter-alia* stated during evidence:—

"I am myself personally quite concerned about it. Last week, I had a meeting at Bombay Airport. The Government has constituted a high level Task Force which was chaired by Chairman, IAAI and it was attended also by the top officials of all agencies to bring some kind of coordination and also to take decision at a higher level. At the Airport level, the General Manager has got coordinating committee of all the Authorities. He meets every month. But this Task Force meets once in four months or something like that, and take decisions. We have started a campaign against the touts in Bombay. In fact I told my officers, if the Police does not throw them out, those people will be thrown by our people, because it is a major nuisance for a foreigner coming to India. He finds that he has to face the touts and they try to extract money. They cheat them. They try to swindle them. Again, I face a problem with the Police. They say, in terms of law, touting is not a cognizable offence. So we cannot arrest them."

The witness also added:—

"We decided, let us identify those touts who are professional and who are present daily. Some of them are

Taxi drivers. Some others casually come there. There are certain prominent professional touts who are undesirable, let us identify a small core of such people and then in consultation with the Police, take them away from the Airport and then control them right from the time they enter the Airport. Every time, we should look for this core group because this group is the most difficult to handle. Some of them are criminals. In fact they have threatened my officers. Some of them have indulged in undesirable and illegal activities. So, we are trying to identify this core group, and we shall take deterrent action against such people which shall have salutary effect on others also."

6.7 Asked whether any study had been made to identify the areas of operation of the touts, the witness stated:—

"When we did the survey for the first time, we found the dissatisfaction of the passengers is by and large because of the area outside. When he comes outside the Airport, he finds the whole world is rather hostile to him."

6.8 During evidence of IAAI, the Committee were informed that the Airport Authority has been able to provide satisfactory facilities to the air passengers within the terminal buildings of international airports but the major dissatisfaction area is outside the terminals where the passengers, both national and international continue to be harassed by un-authorised loaders, touts, taxi drivers and urchins. Some of them are stated to be criminals who indulge in un-desirable and illegal activities and even threaten the officers of the airport authority. These un-desirable elements forcibly carry the luggage of even unwilling passengers to their vehicles and try to extract exorbitant amount from them. The airport authority is also reported to have failed in containing the nefarious activities of undesirable elements because the local laws under which they are tried are not very stringent and the punishment awarded is not very deterrent.

6.9 The Committee were also informed that at the meeting of High Level Committee on Facilitation held in May, 1982, it was decided that the Civil Aviation Secretary should send letters to the Commissioners of Police to set up small Standing Committees under a senior Police Officer to study the problem and find a solution thereto. It was also suggested that such Standing Committees in Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras should include representatives of local

police, IAAI and the Chairman of the local Airline operators' Committee. It has, however, been admitted by the IAAI in their written note that the proposed Standing Committees have not been constituted so far. The Committee cannot but express their concern over this serious lapse of not forming so far the proposed Standing Committees. The Committee urge the Ministry to take immediate steps for constituting the said Standing Committees so that a lasting solution to the problem could be found out and the air travellers, especially foreigners, may not have a feeling of insecurity and hostility outside the terminal buildings.

6.10 The Committee have also been informed that a new Committee known as Airport Coordination Committee was set up in September, 1986, headed by the General Manager of IAAI, to look after all the aspects of Airport management including the problems of harrassment from touts by merging four Committees viz. Airport Utilisation Committee; Airport Facilitation Committee; Operational Area Inspection Committee, and Terminal Inspection Committee. The Committee hope that the proposed new Coordination Committee, in cooperation with all the concerned agencies, would be able to identify the loop-holes and suggest ways and means to eradicate the problem of touts.

6.11 The Committee have observed that in terms of local laws touting is not a cognizable offence as a result of which police feels helpless to take any deterrent action against the touts. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Government should immediately take up the matter with State Governments with a view to plugging the loop-holes in the local laws and to provide necessary powers to the police to deal with the touts and other undesirable elements effectively.

NEW DELHI;
February 18, 1988
Magha 29, 1909 (Saka)

VAKKOM PURUSHOTHAMAN
Chairman,
Committee on Public Undertakings.

APPENDIX

Statement of Conclusions/Recommendations of the Committee on Public Undertakings contained in the Report

S. No.	Reference to Para No. in the Report	Conclusion/Recommendations.
1	2	3
1.	2.30 & 2.31	<p>The examination of Indian Airlines has revealed that during the years 1983 to 1986 only 76% of Indian Airlines' flights operated on time. The rest of the 24% flights were either delayed or cancelled. Further, over 90% of the delays and cancellations were due to adverse weather conditions, airport restrictions and technical snags etc. The percentage of late arrival of aircrafts or consequential delays instead of showing a declining trend increased from 17% in 1983 to 20% in 1985. Though the flights are delayed/disrupted or even cancelled in almost all the regions the position is worst in the Eastern Region. In this Region, the delays and cancellations of flights are of the order of 35% to 45% as was confirmed by the commercial Director of Indian Airlines during his evidence before the Committee.</p>

The Committee have also been informed that a substantial portion of the delays is due to strict adherence to the mandate that all categories of snags must be removed before permitting the flights. The snag detected at a transit airport compel grounding of the aircraft till spares could be routed from the base station, snag repaired and aircraft certified. As the same aircraft operate a number of services per day, the grounding of one aircraft disrupts the flight schedule resulting in consequential delays. To

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overcome such problems, the Committee suggest that the Indian Airlines should improve and achieve better technical reliability of its fleet by preventive maintenance and also by boosting the engineering facilities. They should also consider the feasibility of acquiring a small aircraft for carrying spares to distant airports on demand instead of the current practice of routing them from the base through routine flights.

2. 2.32 As regards delays and cancellations of flights, the Committee on Public Undertakings (1981-82) had also recommended in their 42nd Report that "there has to be a coordinated effort both by the Airlines and the DGCA/IAAI, at a fairly high level to eliminate causes that contribute to cancellations/delays". The Committee are unhappy to note that even after 5 years, no appreciable improvement has been brought about in this regard and the malady of abnormal delays and cancellations of flights still persists.

3. 2.33 & 2.34 The Committee have also observed that flights are often delayed, disrupted or diverted from originating centres like Delhi to other places due to fog or poor visibility and also by cloud covers in monsoons in some key airport on hill routes such as Srinagar, Guwahati etc. This obviously disrupts the Airlines' entire flights schedule all over the country as the aircraft held up are used on various circuits throughout the day. This results in enormous cost to airlines and inconvenience to passengers stranded at terminals.

The Committee were informed during evidence that advanced instrument landing facilities and other technical instrument landing facilities and other technical improvements at airports can reduce the incidence of delays and cancellations due to bad weather. The landing facilities are being provided jointly by International Airports Authority of India and National Airports Authority at international airports and at

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other airports by NAA. The Committee are, however, distressed to observe that out of 86 airports, excluding 4 international airports, only about 8 airports* at present are equipped with Instrument Landing System facility (ILS) which is the minimum requirement for safe landing of aircraft in inclement weather. In fact the Secretary of Ministry of Civil Aviation also admitted during his evidence before the Committee that "the navigation and communication facilities in India are much below the international standards". The Committee feel that what the Civil Aviation authorities are planning today should have been done much earlier. The Committee also recommend that immediate steps should be taken to provide advance Instrument Landing facilities at all the airports so as to reduce to the barest minimum, if not altogether eliminate, the incidence of delays and cancellations of flights due to bad weather etc. The Committee do agree that disruption of flights due to inclement weather cannot be eliminated totally but they do feel that by providing modern technological equipments, the chances of delays and cancellations can be minimised.

4. 2.35

The Committee are informed that IAAI has provided category II lighting facilities at Bombay and Delhi Airports but equipment installed is not being utilised because Category II ILS (Instrument Landing System) provided by National Airports Authority which has to be periodically calibrated to synchronize with Category II lighting system has not been calibrated since long. The Committee cannot but deplore this lack of coordinated development as a result of which the essential facilities provided could not be made use of.

5. 2.36

The question of upgradation of ILS facilities is also reported to have been taken up by the

* At the time of factual verification NAA has stated that "the number of ILS Systems installed at various airfields in India is 23, Out of these, 10 have been installed since 1985 and are in various stages of calibration before declaring them operational."

Indian Airlines with DGCA|NAA suggesting that Bombay, Delhi*, Calcutta, Madras, Hyderabad and all other airports having jet operations should be equipped with Category II ILS during the Seventh Plan period. In this connection, the Tata Committee in their Report on "Civil Aviation at the turn of Century" has also recommended that all airports should be equipped with all weather capability operations. In spite of all this, unfortunately, even Category I ILS which is very essential for safe landing has not been provided so far at many of the airports. The Committee feel that the Instrument Landing System (ILS) should be speedily provided at all the important airports in the country as it is an essential requirement for the safe landing of the aircraft. The Committee also feel that at least the Airports having jet operations should be equipped with ILS Category II by the end of the Seventh Plan.

6. 2.37

The Committee are glad to note that Government have now identified 10 fog-prone airports like Amritsar, Bhopal, Imphal, Jaipur, Varanasi, Kanpur, Jammu, Agartala, Mohanbari and Patna for installation of Instrument Landing System and these airports would soon become safer for landing in bad weather. The Committee hope that the Ministry of Civil Aviation would ensure implementation of this project within the stipulated time-frame. The Committee also recommend that within some time-bound programme Category II Instrument Landing System facility should be provided and properly maintained at all major airports where Boeings and Airbuses operate. At Bombay and Delhi where this facility already exists but is inoperative should be made effective and functional. The Committee need hardly emphasise that safety of aircraft depends a great deal on the modern Instrument Landing System but equally so on the pilot. The

*At the time of factual verification NAA has stated "so far as Delhi is concerned, the IL System has been fully calibrated and has been declared fit for Cat-II operations."

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		Committee, therefore, suggest that for deft handling of this very sophisticated equipment, intensive training should be imparted to the pilot so that aircraft can land safely.
7.	2.38	The Committee note that Air Traffic Control System which occupies a pivotal position in the entire aviation field and is of strategical importance for country's defence is being controlled at present by the National Airports Authority. Whereas our Airlines have inducted the latest aircrafts, the Air Traffic Control System does not appear to be upto the mark. The Committee feel that, since a considerable expansion of the airlines fleet is expected by the turn of the century there is an urgent need for the modernisation of Air Traffic Control System and the same should be equipped with upto date communication system to enable the pilots to have better interaction with the system.
8.	2.39	The Committee has also been informed that a Scheme for the modernisation of Air Traffic control System at Bombay and Delhi at an estimated cost of Rs. 195 crores is also reported to be under consideration but only a token provision of Rs. 5 crores was provided for this purpose in the National Airport Authority's budget for the year 1987-88. In this connection, the Chairman of International Airports Authority of India suggested in evidence that as per the practice obtaining in foreign countries the Air Traffic Control System should be operated by Government itself and not by the National Airports Authority which is itself facing financial and other constraints. In Committee's view the suggestion made by the Chairman of IAAI merits serious consideration by the Government. The Committee feel that if Air Traffic Control System is handled by Government, the question of paucity of funds will not come in the way of rapid execution of modernisation scheme reported to be under consideration.

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9.	3.43	<p>The Committee are informed that the computerised reservation system in Indian Airlines with CRT facilities (Cathode Ray Tube) was launched in March, 1985 covering initially six major stations. It has now been extended to 16 stations in India and 4 stations abroad. Majority of the stations covered are linked up at present with a system on slow speed TTY circuits. The Indian Airlines is also reported to have planned to provide 17 more stations/locations with CRT facilities by the end of 1987-88 depending upon the availability of circuits from P & T Department. The Committee would desire that with a view to providing efficient service to air travellers and to reduce waiting time at the booking counters, the Indian Airlines should draw up a time bound programme to extend computer reservation facilities at all its non-computerised stations within the shortest possible time and if feasible by the end of 7th Five Year Plan in cooperation and coordination with the P&T Department in so far as the availability of circuits is concerned. The Committee also desire that till such time the CRT facilities are provided, the Government may consider connecting non-computerised stations directly with the computers through the teleprinters.</p>
10.	3.44 3.45 & 3.46	<p>Another area of dissatisfaction of passengers is the non-availability of seats on certain routes due to the shortage of capacity on the aircraft. According to the Indian Airlines, over-bookings between 5 to 10 per cent are made on certain domestic routes with a view to ensuring optimum capacity utilisation. The over-booked passengers are adjusted against cancellations made by the passengers holding confirmed tickets.</p> <p>The Committee are informed that in the performance review meeting held in November, 1985, Indian Airlines were directed to review the booking profile and the system of over-bookings so as to evolve a procedure whereby no</p>

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passenger holding confirmed booking should be denied a seat. Accordingly, the Indian Airlines is reported to have evolved a system of monitoring of bookings on the basis of which percentage of cancellations (flightwise and season-wise) on each sector is systematically studied and overbookings permitted only on selected flights.

The Committee were also informed that presently seats are made available to passengers holding confirmed tickets and also to over-booked passengers on first-come-first served basis. They were further informed that whoever came at the end would be off-loaded even if he might be holding a confirmed ticket. In Committee's view, this system is defective in as much as the over-booked passengers who report earlier for the flights get preference over the passengers with confirmed and reconfirmed tickets. Besides, there is very possibility of irregularities being committed under the existing system. To obviate the chances of any irregularity and the streamline the procedure, the Committee recommend that the whole system of bookings should be rationalised thoroughly and suitable guidelines/instructions issued leaving no scope for over-booked passengers to have preference over passengers having confirmed tickets. The system devised should be fool-proof leaving no room for discretion whatsoever. The Committee also recommend that the present system of ticketing should also be revised and the status of passengers holding confirmed tickets and over-booked passengers should be clearly indicated on the ticket so that if necessary only over-booked passengers would be off-loaded.

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Another problem faced by air passengers is the shortage of aircraft capacity. Whereas most of the flights have waiting lists, it is not possible for the Airlines with its existing fleet to provide seats to all the intending passengers. In

this connection, the Indian Airlines also admitted in evidence that "there has always been constant capacity constraint and keeping in view the inconvenience caused to the passengers on that account, Indian Airlines has been trying to meet the requirement of travelling public by increasing the span of operation and utilisation of existing aircraft."

From the information furnished, the Committee have found that Indian Airlines had achieved a traffic demand growth rate of 11.0 per cent during the last decade i.e. from 1973-74 to 1983-84. There was, however, a dip in the growth rate in the succeeding years to 11.4 per cent in 1984-85 and 9.9 per cent in 1985-86. The Tata Committee constituted to look into the development of Civil Aviation at the turn of the century, has also recommended a traffic growth rate of 11.5 per cent per year upto the year 2000-2001. Tata Committee has also stipulated that to meet the increased demand in traffic growth rate, Indian Airlines would need an investment of Rs. 9000 crores as envisaged in their 15 years' perspective plan and they would also have a fleet of 193 aircrafts in the year 2000. But according to Indian Airlines, considering the conservative growth rate of 10.1 per cent its fleet would consist of 155 aircraft by the year 2000 and for this purpose they would require an investment to the tune of Rs. 7000 crores. However, the Planning Commission is reported to have restricted the growth rate to 8% per year on account of constraint of foreign exchange resources. Surprisingly, during the Seventh Plan, as against the projected demand of Rs. 2470 crores, the Planning Commission has allocated only Rs. 730 crores to the aviation sector and the whole amount of Rs. 730 crores was spent in just two years as was confirmed in evidence by Civil Aviation Secretary. Despite these heavy odds, the Indian Airlines is reported to be inducting 19 A320 aircraft by the end of Seventh

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Plan. Keeping in view the increasing traffic growth rate and ever increasing demand of seats by air passengers, the Committee feel that the allocation made available by the Planning Commission appears to be very much on the low side. Therefore, the Committee suggest that the Ministry should take up the matter again with the Planning Commission and arrange to get more funds allocated, commensurate with the need of this core sector.

12. 3.49
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Baggage handling at the airports is another grey area which calls for improvement. According to IAAI, they are responsible only for the proper working of conveyor belts and baggage transfer from the aircraft to conveyor belt is the responsibility of Indian Airlines. According to Indian Airlines, where the conveyor belt facilities are not available, the entire activity is handled manually from unloading to hauling baggage to airport terminal and delivering the same to passengers.

The Committee are informed that on major base stations, the Indian Airlines is reported to have achieved an average record of 20 minutes for completing baggage delivery for all flights, and this position can be further improved by providing more conveyor belts by IAAI/DGCA. In order to ensure quick delivery of baggage and to avoid clustering of passengers around the conveyor belts, the Committee desire that baggage should be dispersed on more than one conveyor belt and for this purpose the IAAI/NAA should consider the feasibility of providing more belts at airports. As the bunching of the flights also ultimately results in the delay in the delivery of baggage, the Committee desire that the Airlines authorities should take effective measures in spacing out flights landing so as to help the airport authorities to handle baggage of passengers more efficiently. The Committee also desire that

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with a view to speed up clearance of passengers at Indira Gandhi International Airport, the airport authorities should consider ways and means to have sample screening of the baggage instead of 'X-raying' every suitcase before it is placed on the conveyor belt. Considerable time can be reduced if screening of baggage is done expeditiously. Since the loaders take a long time in uplifting baggage from the aircraft to the conveyor belt and the drivers also work at snail's pace, it all results in considerable delay. The Committee, therefore need hardly emphasise that necessary steps should be taken to ensure that the baggage is placed on the conveyor belts in the minimum possible time so that the passengers are spared of any inconvenience.

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It has been suggested to the Committee that in order to obviate delay and to make one agency accountable for delivery of luggage in time, the job of handling the luggage at the airports should be entrusted to the concerned Airport Authority as is the practice followed in some of the European countries. The Committee feel that there is some weight in the suggestion and desire that the Ministry of Civil Aviation should examine the suggestion in all its ramifications with a view to seeking as to what extent it can be implemented.

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The common complaint made by the air travellers is that the baggage is mishandled and damaged by the loaders at the airports. In this connection, the Secretary of the Ministry of Civil Aviation also agreed during evidence that "here the corrective steps would be better training of loaders and other people who work and handle the baggage". The Committee, therefore, recommend that to get over the problem of mishandling the baggage and to obviate the chances of any complaint, the Government/Indian Airlines should make necessary arrangements to

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train the loaders to handle the baggage more carefully especially those items which need special care and delicate handling. The Committee also recommend that some senior functionary of the Indian Airlines should oversee the baggage handling operations to ensure safe handling by loaders etc.

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The Committee note that the International Airports Authority had tried various agencies in the past to provide better portorage service to the passengers within the terminal buildings of the international airports. Since all those agencies failed to produce the desired results, the IAAI abolished the portorage system and instead introduced self help free trolley service for the convenience of the passengers. But the Committee have observed that these trolleys are not utilitarian because their working is not satisfactory. In this connection, the Chairman, IAAI stated during evidence that in a survey carried out at Delhi airport only 46.2% of the passengers expressed the view that the availability of trolleys was satisfactorily and 22.3% of the passengers had commented that the working condition of the trolleys was poor. He admitted "This is an area where perceptible information is available on dissatisfaction...But I do agree that the maintenance and the condition of the trolleys still is to be improved." The Committee, therefore, recommend that IAAI should take stock of the situation at the international airports and make sufficient number of trolleys of good quality and easy to handle available to passengers. They need hardly mention that adequate arrangement should also be made to maintain these trolleys in proper working condition. The Committee also desire that the Government/Airport Authority should also consider the feasibility of providing free portorage service inside the terminal buildings to handicapped, old people, children and women.

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16.	3.54	As regards other airports, the Chairman, National Airport Authority informed the Committee that by the end of the Seventh Plan all airports served by Airbus and Boeing Services would be provided with this facility. The Committee hope that the National Airport Authority would fulfil its commitments within the time bound programme.
17.	3.55 & 3.56	<p>The Committee find that at present the security of the airport is the responsibility of the concerned State Government. The personnel of the security force are drawn from the State Police of respective State Government/Union Territory to look after the security of the airport. These personnel, though formally working under the Director, Civil Aviation Security, are governed by the rules of the respective State Government from which they are drawn. They do not directly come under the discipline and control of any of the agencies operating at the airports.</p> <p>During evidence, the Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation informed the Committee that nodal responsibility of security at the airport against anti-hijacking, sabotage etc. is that of the Civil Aviation Security, though the staff for it, is provided by the concerned State Government police. He added "we do not want to create another Force...it would be much more cost effective to have people on specific duty paid for by us rather than ourselves creating an organisation." But the Committee are of the view that since the security of Airports is as important as the security of aircraft, the security force at the airports should work under the discipline and control of some Central agency entrusted with the responsibility of the security of the airports. The security force at the airports should be answerable to this agency rather than to the respective State Government. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Government should consider the feasibility of constituting a separate security</p>

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force on the lines of CRPF which should be answerable to and directly controlled by the Central Authority like the Director, Civil Aviation Security or the concerned Airport Authority as under the present arrangement DGCA etc. cannot enforce their writ through the local police.

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The Committee are informed that main difficulties faced by the passengers at airports are shortage of seating accommodation, shortage of space for checking of passengers, baggage delivery, restaurants and inadequate number of security gates in sterile area. Even the basic amenities like drinking water and toilets are not provided in the security area at certain airports especially in the northern and eastern sectors of the country. It is also reported that the passengers are hustled through security gates and herded into the over-flowing departure lounge where catering and other amenities are not provided which causes considerable inconvenience when passengers have to hang over for hours when flights are delayed or cancelled due to fog and inclement weather. In this connection, the Civil Aviation Secretary assured the Committee in evidence that some facilities would be provided if flights are cancelled. At all the international airports auto vending machines for coffee, tea, ice-cream would be provided. He also added that other items receiving attention are air-conditioning or air cooling facilities, proper drinking water and better seats.

As regards the toilet arrangements, the Civil Aviation Secretary stated in evidence that cleanliness of toilets, their upkeep and maintenance at airports especially at the international airports leaves much to be desired. Therefore, to maintain standards, the contract system for the cleanliness of toilets was being introduced, where possible. He also admitted that "we are not still satisfied in the manner in which international

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airports are kept. There are certain weaknesses and our services are not satisfactory... There is a plenty of scope for improvement." He also suggested that "for all cleanliness, toilet arrangements and other things let us have house-keepers type of officers preferably senior ladies to keep those facilities which are very vital in as best condition as possibly we can."

The Committee regret to point out that the present facilities and basic amenities provided at the airports are far from satisfactory and the matter does not appear to have received full attention of the Government/airport authorities in the spirit and manner it deserved. The Committee have, however, noticed that IAAI has now decided to instal auto vending machines in the sterile area at all the International airports. As Bombay and Madras permission is stated to have been given to an agency to instal such machines for six months on an experimental basis. The Committee would like to be informed of the final outcome of this experiment and immediate extension of these facilities to Delhi and Calcutta airports.

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In order to improve the customers' services at airports, the Committee feel that there should be separate counters and staff for attending telephone enquiries and personal enquiries from wait-listed passengers and for providing facilities to domestic transit passengers. Adequate comfortable chairs should also be provided in the transit area for the passengers as the plastic and fibre glass chairs provided at present are not quite comfortable. The Government/airport authorities should also consider the feasibility of having quite a good number of check-in counters to avoid long queues and also to enable the passengers to have free checks at airport as is the practice followed in the foreign countries.

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20.	4.29	Another aspect which needs immediate attention is the absence of regular announcement at the public address system at the airports including international airports about the delay in departure of flight. It is needless to point out that passengers are not taken into confidence and informed about the delayed flights. This obviously is due to the lack of coordination between IAAI and Indian Airlines. The Committee desire that the Government should issue clear instructions to IAAI and Indian Airlines to coordinate in this regard in such a way that the passengers are posted with the latest information about the arrival and departure of the flights.
21.	4.30	The Committee have also observed that passengers are put to lot of inconvenience on account of absence of proper transport arrangements between the domestic and international terminals at Delhi and Bombay. When pointed out that none of the agencies i.e. Indian Airlines, National Airport Authority and International Airports Authority of India was prepared to own the responsibility of transporting the passengers from one terminal to the other, the Secretary Ministry of Civil Aviation categorically admitted during evidence that it was the responsibility of International Airports Authority to make necessary arrangements for the transportation of passengers between the two terminals and sufficient instructions in this regard would be issued to straighten the matter. The Committee hope that such instructions would be issued immediately.
22.	4.31	The Committee note that even though EATS' buses are available at Delhi and Bombay airports yet the passengers are neither aware of this facility nor their parking places are prominently displayed. In this connection, the Civil Aviation Secretary also stated that "I am still not satisfied with the EATS functioning... I feel that the International Airports Authority itself should pro-

vide the most modern buses at fixed rates and take care of the passengers from one terminal to another." The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should ensure that IAAI undertakes its responsibility to provide adequate bus Service to the passengers between the two terminals at all the International airports. Arrangements should also be made for plying adequate number of buses at regular intervals from the airport to the city and also from the city to the airports so that passengers are not put to unnecessary hardship. For this purpose, IAAI should provide very modern and comfortable buses at fixed rates.

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The Committee's examination of the subject has also revealed that the airlines rules provide that if a flight is delayed or a connecting flight missed, the passengers are entitled to certain facilities like hotel accommodation, food, transport and also transportation either by the first available flight or by other modes of transport. Surprisingly, the passengers for whose benefits these rules have been framed, are not aware of these rules as these have not been made public nor are being displayed at airports. According to Indian Airlines these are administrative rules and are only meant for the information of their staff. In this connection, the Managing Director of the Indian Airlines stated in his evidence before the Committee that 'these are not IATA rules. These are for our own passengers' comforts...The non-IATA rules cannot be displayed...We will be quoted in other airlines.' The Committee are convinced of the justification given by the airlines authority for not publishing the rules. On the other hand, the Committee strongly feel that these rules must be made public so that bona fide passengers can claim the entitled facilities as a matter of right and be not at the mercy of airlines staff who themselves might be unaware of these rules. The Committee recommend that Government/Airlines authorities

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should take immediate steps to get these rules/instructions published and also arrange to have them displayed prominently in the airport building which could attract the attention of passengers.

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The Committee have also been informed that inadequacy of funds is proving to be an inhibiting factor in drawing a long term plan by NAA for providing infrastructural facilities at different airports to remove congestion. Sometimes back, the NAA is reported to have initiated a study of each station to assess the inadequacies and to draw plans to overcome the deficiencies discovered. In this connection, the Civil Aviation Secretary also confirmed in evidence that "We will have to determine and categories the airports and work out the funds. Even that exercise has not been done in the manner it should be done." While expressing their concern, the Committee feel that the study to identify drawbacks at each of the airports should have been undertaken and completed by NAA long ago. The Committee hope that to meet the increasing challenge of growth in traffic, the proposed study by the NAA would be completed at the earliest and funds required made available for the augmentation of facilities at the national airports.

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The Committee note that a number of regulatory agencies like IAAI, NAA, DGCA, Airlines Customs, State Police, Health and Immigration are at present operating independently at International Airports at Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. No doubt, all these organisations are engaged in providing services to the passengers within their allotted spheres of control but mutual cooperation and coordination to the desired level is lacking. Although under the International Airports Authority Act the International Airports Authority (IAAI) has been assigned

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the role to coordinate the activities of various agencies at the International Airports but in actual practice, it has become helpless and is unable to exercise any control over other agencies to effect coordination. In fact all the concerned agencies at airports are pulling in different directions and the resulting casualty is the passenger for whose benefits these have been created.

During oral evidence of IAAI, Indian Airlines and National Airports Authority, a unanimous view was expressed that there should be a single authority which should have over-all control at all the international airports and should be able to play the role of a leader and act as a focal point for all important decisions. All other agencies should attune their functioning with that authority to achieve the common goal of efficient management of airports without, of course, abdicating their formal demarcated authority. While not agreeing with this view, the Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation stated in evidence that it was neither feasible nor practicable to integrate all the agencies and to put them directly under IAAI's control because each agency is governed by different acts. He, however, assured complete coordination among IAAI, IA, NAA and DGCA, which are under the administrative control of his Ministry but expressed reservations with regard to other agencies like Customs and Police which are under the control of other Ministries. He also informed the Committee that in order to make effective coordination amongst the various concerned agencies, a Task Force consisting of top officials of all concerned agencies, headed by the Chairman, IAAI, has been set up to identify and tighten the loose links. Besides, a high level Committee has also been constituted on which representatives of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry

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of Finance (Deptt. of Revenue), Ministry of Health and Heads of all other agencies are also associated. This Committee is chaired by the Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation and meets periodically and takes decisions on various problems faced by passengers on the airports.

The Committee feel that the present arrangements have not proved successful for ensuring effective coordination amongst the various agencies operating at Airports and as a result of this, the air travellers continue to face lot of difficulties at international airports. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Government should consider the feasibility of constituting an effective single authority armed with adequate powers which should be in over-all command at an international airports and be able to provide instant redress of passengers' grievances. To achieve this end, the Government may consider, if necessary, the desirability of amending suitably the relevant acts governing various agencies operating at international airports.

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The Committee have also noticed that at present there is no arrangement at airports particularly at the international airports where a passenger could contact an officer who could provide complete answer to his problems. Obviously, he has to run through the length and breadth of the airport to contact the various officers of the concerned departments. No doubt, there is a duty officer's Counter and an Airport Manager who can be contacted in case of need but these officers are practically of no help to the passengers who need an instant redress of their grievances. Therefore, the Committee suggest that for improving the Customer Services, there should be a "Single window" at each airport where responsible officers equipped with all the information pertaining to their departments should be available for attending to the complaints/queries

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of the passengers. The Committee desire that Ministry of Civil Aviation should examine the feasibility of implementing this proposal in consultation with other concerned authorities and Committee apprised of the action taken in this regard within six months of the presentation of this report.

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During evidence of IAAI, the Committee were informed that the Airport Authority has been able to provide satisfactory facilities to the air passengers within the terminal buildings of international airports but the major dissatisfaction area is outside the terminals where the passengers, both national and international, continue to be harassed by un-authorized loaders, touts, taxi drivers and urchins. Some of them are stated to be criminals who indulge in undesirable and illegal activities and even threaten the officers of the airport authority. These undesirable elements forcibly carry the luggage of even unwilling passengers to their vehicles and try to extract exorbitant amount from them. The airport authority is also reported to have failed in containing the nefarious activities of undesirable elements because the local laws under which they are tried are not very stringent and the punishment awarded is not very deterrent.

The Committee were also informed that at the meeting of High Level Committee on Facilitation held in May, 1982, it was decided that the Civil Aviation Secretary should send letters to the Commissioners of Police to set up small Standing Committee under a senior Police Officer to study the problem and find a solution thereto. It was also suggested that such Standing Committees in Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras should include representatives of local police, IAAI and the Chairman of the local airline operators' Committee. It has, however, been admitted

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by the IAAI in their written note that the proposed Standing Committees have not been constituted so far. The Committee cannot but express their concern over this serious lapse of not forming so far the proposed Standing Committees. The Committee urge the Ministry to take immediate steps for constituting the said Standing Committees so that a lasting solution to the problem could be found out and the air travellers, especially foreigners, may not have a feeling of insecurity and hostility outside the terminal buildings.

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6.10

The Committee have also been informed that a new Committee known as Airport Coordination Committee was set up in September, 1986, headed by the General Manager of IAAI, to look after all the aspects of Airport management including the problems of harrasment from touts by merging four Committees viz. Airport Utilisation Committee; Airport Facilitation Committee; Operational Area Inspection Committee; and Terminal Inspection Committee. The Committee hope that the proposed new Coordination Committee, in cooperation with all the concerned agencies, would be able to identify the loop-holes and suggest ways and means to eradicate the problem of touts.

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The Committee have observed that in terms of local laws touting is not a cognizable offence as a result of which police feels helpless to take any deterrent action against the touts. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Government should immediately take up the matter with State Governments with a view to plugging the loop-holes in the local laws and to provide necessary powers to the police to deal with the touts and other undesirable elements effectively