

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) Airlines may provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability, subject to compliance with the route dispersal guidelines.

At present there is no scheduled air service to/from Raichur. Raichur aerodrome is suitable for operation of smaller aircraft. The operators of small aircraft are being encouraged to include more stations such as Raichur in their network, subject to commercial viability.

Inquiry to Pilferage of Titanium Alloy

2378. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the inquiry into the case of pilferage of 1000 Kg. of titanium alloy from Mumbai which is suspected to have been exported to Pakistan has since been completed;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the follow-up action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) The investigation of the case has been handed over to the CBI. The CBI authorities have been requested to expedite the investigation and submit their findings as early as possible.

[Translation]

Diamond Mines in Madhya Pradesh

2379. SHRI DADA BABURAO PARANJPE: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Photo geology Branch of the Geological Survey of India and mining Directorate have undertaken study and analysis work by identifying the diamond area in Madhya Pradesh during 1996-97; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) Yes, Sir. Geological Survey of India and Directorate of Mines and Geology, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh have undertaken

Photo Geological studies followed by ground survey for locating Kimberlite pipes which are prospective for diamond in Madhya Pradesh.

(b) The studies are to identify anomalous zones which require further geophysicals and geochemical inputs and drilling to identify Kimberlite pipes. The work is on going.

Air India Flights from Patna

2380. SHRI PRABHASH CHANDRA TIWARI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the countries for which the flights of Air India are available from India particularly from Patna (Bihar);

(b) whether the Government propose to operate the flights of Air India for Europe and other countries from Patna or via Patna;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Air India does not operate any flights to/from Patna.

(b) to (d) There is no proposal to start Air India's International flights to/from Patna. The existing five international airports are considered adequate to meet the present level of international traffic to/from India. National Carriers are also permitted to operate international services on a limited scale from other airports depending on traffic requirements and subject to availability of customs and immigration facilities.

[English]

Salary of Air India Pilots

2381. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the management of Air India increased the salaries of its Pilots without consulting the Ministry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether some allowances demanded by the Pilots are not being paid by any other airlines of the World; and

(d) if so, the reasons for allowing such allowances to them?