

**SHRI K.B.S. Mani** was a member of the **Seventh Lok Sabha** during 1980-84 representing **Perambalur** constituency of **Tamil Nadu**. Earlier, he had been a member of the **Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly** during 1957-62 and 1967-71.

An agriculturist by profession, **Shri Mani** was a well known social and political worker. He was imprisoned several times for participating in the **Kisan Movement**. He was associated with several social and political organisations in various capacities.

A dedicated social worker, he devoted his life to the service of the poor and the down-trodden.

**Shri Mani** passed away at **Madras** on **16 March, 1990** at the age of **68**.

**Kumari Manibehn Vallabhbai Patel** was a member of the **First and Second Lok Sabha** during 1952-62 representing **Kaira and Anand** constituencies of **Gujarat**, respectively. Later, she was elected to **Rajya Sabha** and was a member of that House during 1964-70. She was elected to **Fifth Lok Sabha** from **Sabarkanta** constituency in a bye-election in 1973 and remained its member till 1977. She was also a member of the **Sixth Lok Sabha** during 1977-79 representing **Mehsana** constituency of **Gujarat**.

Daughter of an illustrious father, **Sardar Vallabhbai Patel**, **Kumari Patel** served him as his **Secretary** for as long as **30 years**. She had left her studies at a very early age to participate in the freedom movement. She always stood by her father and was arrested several times for participating actively in the **National Movement**.

A prominent social and political worker, **Kumari Patel** was associated with several social and educational institutions and served as member of several **Trusts**. She was member of the **Governing Body of the Central Social Welfare Board** during 1958-60 and 1964 onwards and later of the **Khadi and Village Industries Board**.

An active parliamentarian, **Kumari Patel** took keen interest in the proceedings of the House and made valuable contributions thereto. She also served on the **Committee on Subordinate Legislation**.

**Kumari Manibehn Vallabhbai Patel** Passed away at **Ahmedabad**, at the age of **87**.

We deeply mourn the loss of these friends and I am sure the House will join me in conveying our condolences to the bereaved families.

The House may now stand in silence for a short while to express its sorrow.

**11.08 hrs.**

*The Members then stood in silence for a short while*

**11.09 hrs.**

#### ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

#### Aircraft with Air India

\*206. **PROF. K.V. THOMAS**: Will the Minister of **CIVIL AVIATION** be pleased to state:

(a) the number and type of aircraft with **Air India** as on date;

(b) the capacity utilisation of these aircrafts;

(c) whether there is any proposal to purchase more aircrafts; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard?

**THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN)**: (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

## STATEMENT

(a) Air India has following aircraft in its fleet:—

Boeing 747-200 aircraft	10
Boeing 747-300 (Combi) aircraft	2
Airbus A-310-300 aircraft	6
Airbus A-300-B-4 aircraft	3
IL 62M	} taken on lease
IL 76F	
B-747F	

(b) Utilisation of these aircraft in terms of Revenue hours per day and per annum is given below:—

<i>Aircraft type</i>	<i>Revenue Hrs. per day</i>	<i>Revenue Hrs. per annum</i>
1	2	3
B-747-200	9.16	3343
B-747-300 (Combi)	10.50	3833
A-310-300	8.58	3132
A-300-B4	7.89	2880

(c) and (d). During the 8th Plan Government has approved the acquisition of two A-310-300 aircraft in 1990-91 at an estimated cost of Rs. 217.81 crores. A proposal for the acquisition of four B-747-400 (Combi) aircraft during the period 1992-94 at an estimated cost of Rs. 1399.60 crores has also been received from Air India.

PROF. K.V. THOMAS: Sir, from the answer given by the hon. Minister it can be seen that Air India has got two types of aircrafts, one is boeing and the other is airbus. There is also the Russian aircraft which is on hire. Sir, looking at these two types of aircrafts, it can be seen that boeing is giving a high Revenue Hours per day as well as per annum. Sir, boeing is giving 9.16

Revenue Hours and 10.50 Revenue Hours per day while airbus is giving 8.58 Revenue Hours and 7.89 Revenue Hours per day. Similar is the case of the Revenue Hours per annum. So, it can be seen that boeing has got a better performance compared to airbus. Sir, Air India has again given a proposal and the Government has approved the proposal for purchasing two airbus A 310-300 for 1990-91. So, on the basis of these facts, whether the Government will re-examine this proposal for purchasing the airbus, which has already been approved by the Government.

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN: The decision to acquire an aircraft is taken on the basis of the requirements of the airline. When

I say requirement, it means long range requirement, medium range requirement and all that. We have destinations where the aircraft has to fly for 8 hours, 10 hours not-stop. Then we have other destinations where the flying time is only four to five hours. The hon. Member has quoted the figures from the answer. Since he comes from Kerala, the other point which I am sure he is going to make is that we are making more money from that sector which is a medium range sector where long range aircrafts are not deployed. There the medium range aircrafts are deployed. So we take into consideration factors like various destinations, flying time which is taken to cover those destinations. Then the Airlines' scheme is to have a mixed of aircraft which can take care of long destinations, medium destinations and short destinations.

**PROF. K.V. THOMAS:** I am not an expert of selecting the aircraft. But I express my apprehension on the basis of the air crash in Bangalore. My second question is that the Trivandrum Gulf sector is one of the sectors which give huge profits to Air India. This sector has got three major problems. One is airfare which is very high. The PUC as well as IATA has considered this problem and they have suggested that the fare has to be rationalised. The second is, still a very large number of passengers are on the waiting list in the Trivandrum Gulf sector. I suggest whether one more aircraft can be put in this sector. The third is, from Trivandrum we are sending lot of vegetables and perishable items like eggs to the Gulf sector. Recently there was a hike in the freight charges. With the result, we cannot compete with other countries in exporting vegetables to the Gulf sector. Will the hon. Minister be kind enough to bring back the freight charges to the earlier level so that our exporters of vegetables and eggs to the gulf sector can compete with other countries? Will these problems be looked into favourably by the hon. Minister?

**SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN:** It is correct that we have received representations from hon. Members of Parliament, from

the Government of Kerala and from people from Kerala, mostly who are working in Gulf, complaining about the fare being on the higher side. The current fare is Rs. 4454. And this fare is stable for the last 1 1/2 years. The formula on the basis of which fare is used to be hiked has been frozen for the last 1 1/2 years. Still since the hon. Member has made this point again, I agree to constitute a departmental committee to go into this question of rationalising the fare on the Trivandrum Gulf sector.

As regards one more service from Trivandrum to Gulf, we are trying to expand the capacity, and depending on the availability of capacity, this question of providing one more flight from Trivandrum to Gulf can be considered and we will give due consideration to the demand which the hon. Member has made.

With regard to perishable items, the problem is that the mandatory rate was established in 1978. Since 1978, there has been no increase in the mandatory rate. Now, the Air India had asked for an increase from 75 per cent to 100 per cent but we have not agreed to that proposal. We have given an increase of only 30 per cent. Apart from the exporters of perishable items like vegetables and eggs, as the hon. Member has mentioned, there are other exporters too who have been constantly asking for hiking the fare because otherwise they are facing problem due to certain IATA regulations in exporting their commodities. Taking into consideration all these factors, we have not agreed to the proposal which was given by Air India for an increase from 75 per cent to 100 per cent. We have given them an increase of nearly 30 per cent.

**SHRI JASWANT SINGH:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, my question relates to, firstly, standardisation of equipment and, secondly, financial method for acquisition of equipment. It is self-evident, from the point of view of maintenance, operations and training, that if equipment is standardised, then there is no difficulty so far as ground maintenance operation of the equipment, etc. is concerned,

Therefore, firstly, I would like to know what is the Government doing to standardise the equipment in Air India and, secondly, I hold that for far too long the Indian Airlines has worked on conventional financial method of acquisition of the aircraft. Now that you have broken ground and you have the Toupelov on lease arrangement with the Soviet Union would the Government not consider the widening of this leasing arrangement for Air India and other airlines under the control of the Government, so that the foreign exchange constraint from which the Government suffers for acquiring new aircraft, can be removed?

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN: Sir, the suggestion given by the hon. Member about the standardisation of equipment is welcome. But as I have stated earlier, we take into consideration the fact that Air India have to cover various destinations—long destinations, short destinations. Every aircraft is not suitable to cover all these destinations. So, for covering medium destinations, a different type of aircraft is needed and for covering long destinations, a different type of aircraft is needed. I am sure, hon. Shri Jaswant Singh Ji will appreciate that we should not put all our eggs into one basket.

As regards the lease, we are already working on the basis of that arrangement. We need expansion of capacity. If these are suitable proposals, they will definitely be taken into consideration.

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Sir, with a small fleet of twenty-one aircrafts, compared to the other airlines internationally, Air India has done a splendid job and for the last two or three years, they are making very good profit. We are short of aircrafts and we are short of foreign exchange. We do not have money to buy more aircrafts. In the Eighth Plan, only two aircrafts have been sanctioned—four had been asked by the Air India but only two aircrafts have been sanctioned. My question is that specially in the medium sector like Kerala and Gulf, such as, Trivandrum-Dubai, Trivandrum-Bahrain, etc., why don't you have short-term leasing arrange-

ments which are available in Europe. Also I would like to know what is the Government's experience as far as the cost calculation in acquiring the aircraft and leasing the aircraft is concerned.

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN: Sir, Government have approved the acquisition of two aircrafts which the hon. Member has mentioned, for the year 1990-91. But that does not cover the total period of 8th Plan. Another proposal from Air India is also pending with the Government. Sir, about the leasing options, we have already aircrafts on lease which are already being flown by Air India. The leasing options whenever we receive, are being examined, but generally the aircraft on lease basis in the long run is not cheaper. It is more economical to acquire an aircraft and fly it than to take one on lease and fly it. But still if there is any proposal we find that it is suitable, economical, and profitable, than that will be examined.

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: Sir, regarding part (c) of the main question No. 206 of Prof. K.V. Thomas, I would like to know from the hon. Minister that in regard to purchase of aircraft from Seattle-Tokyo from Paris-New Delhi, a lot of talks had been going on about the kickbacks received by the various political people. And in Japan, in the purchase of lock heed aircrafts one Prime Minister had to go on graft cringes for having received kickback money. And now in India about the purchase of aircraft, Airbus and other things, there has been talk and allegations of graft. I do not know whether it is true or not. Would the hon. Minister consider that the allegation of kickbacks received by the previous Government, I do not want to name any person, will be looked into and a specific answer to that point shall be tabled in this House?

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN: Sir, I have already replied to another question, I think it was last week, and I think that has widely been reported that whatever allegations had been published, Government had taken note of those allegations and the

question of reviewing the whole thing is under consideration.

**Vayudoot Service to Kanchipuram,  
Tamil Nadu**

\*207. SHRI KANCI PANNEER SELVAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the places linked by Vayudoot services in Tamil Nadu;

(b) whether Government propose to link Kanchipuram, the seat of Sankaracharya, with other airports in the State to patronise culture;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN): (a) Coimbatore, Madras, Tiruchirapalli and Neyveli are linked by Vayudoot in Tamil Nadu.

(b) to (d). Considering the proximity of Kanchipuram to Madras, there is no proposal under consideration at present to airlink Kanchipuram.

[*Translation*]

\*SHRI KANCI PANNEER SELVAM: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the purpose of starting vayudoot service was to airlink those trade and tourist important places which are not already air-lines by Indian Airlines. But, in 14 places where Vayudoot was first started, Indian Airlined were already in operation. In the next batch of 23 places where Vayudoot services were established, 18 places had already Indian Airlines link.

Sir, the hon. Minister has now stated that in Tamil Nadu Vayudoot services are in Madras, Tiruchirappalli, Coimbatore and Neyveli. Madras, Tiruchirappalli and Coim-

batoore are already having Indian Airlines services. Therefore, exclusive Vayudoot service is available only in Neyveli. Sir, Kanchipuram is a place of trade, tourist and cultural importance. It is the seat of Kanchi Sankaracharya. I would like to know from the Minister the constraints that are in operation in putting Kanchipuram on the Vayudoot map.

[*English*]

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN: Sir, I have already mentioned about the proximity of Kanchipuram to Madras.... (*Interruptions*) The distance is only 76 kilometres, whereas according to the guidelines to the Vayudoot, the minimum distance between two airports—and this is when any proposal for the construction of a new airport is taken into consideration, then that distance should be not less than 180 kilometres, whereas the present distance between Kanchipuram and Madras is only 76 kilometres. But for the distance, I agree with the hon. Member that Kanchipuram is a place of national importance and, Sir, presently there is constraint on resources and non-availability of aircraft, that is why when I was reading out the reply I repeated "At present"—I have not ruled it out because I agree with the hon. Member that Kanchipuram is an important place and as soon as resources are available and aircraft is available, we will definitely consider the demand which has been made by the hon. Member.

Sir, regarding the other part of the question of the hon. Member, Vayudoot has identified the following places in Tamil Nadu for airlinking during the Eighth Plan period:—

Tirunelveli, Tuticorin, Erode, Ramanathapuram, Chettinad, Vellore and Salem.

Sir, two airports are presently under construction at Salem which will be completed by the end of 1991 and Tuticorin which will be ready by December 1990 and they will be fit for the Dornier operation.