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**Title: Regarding flights to Shirdi**

**DR. SUJAY VIKHE PATIL (AHMEDNAGAR):** The footprints of Saibaba have made Shirdi, a small town in Ahmednagar District, a holy place where millions of devotees regularly flock from all over India and abroad round the year to have sacred Darshan of Sathya Sri Saibaba. Earlier, Air India used to operate a flight –Mumbai-Shirdi-Mumbai. Air India has now discontinued this flight. Now all the flights from/to Mumbai – Shirdi are routed through Hyderabad or New Delhi taking a long period of 5.10 hours. The distance between Mumbai and Shirdi is about 250 Kms and the travel time by road is also about 5 hours. There is no time saving for a passenger travelling by air-Mumbai-Shirdi-Mumbai. In the absence of any direct flight, domestic as well as international devotees have to spend a lot of time and face a lot of difficulties in visiting Shirdi by road as well as by air. In view of the above, I request the Government to either start a new daily direct flight Mumbai–Shirdi–Mumbai or the flights operating between Shirdi – Delhi should be routed through Mumbai-Shirdi–Mumbai–Delhi for the benefit of lakhs of domestic as well as international devotees visiting Shirdi.