

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CIVIL AVIATION
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2484
ANSWERED ON:17.08.2006
HELICOPTER SERVICES TO RELIGIOUS PLACES INACCESSIBLE AREAS
Patil Shri Balasaheb Vikhe

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of important religious places for which helicopter services exist in the country;
- (b) whether the Government is considering to introduce more helicopter services to the important religious places and to inaccessible areas and difficult terrains in the North East Region;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the time by which these are likely to be introduced?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL)

(a):- Helicopter services exist, at present, to Vaishno Devi, Kedarnath, Badrinath and Amarnath shrines.

(b),(c) & (d): Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd (PHHL) plans to further connect to important adjoining tourists/religious places in Uttaranchal such as Ghagharia, Hemkund Sahib etc. PHHL also plans to provide a Bell helicopter under wet lease arrangement for starting regular passenger services to Jain Temples situated at Girnar Hills in Junagarh District in Gujarat. The operators are free to provide helicopter services to other religious places, inaccessible areas and difficult terrains including North Eastern Region as per their commercial judgement subject to obtaining requisite clearance from the concerned State Governments and religious Trusts manning the shrines, as may be required. As such, no definite time limit can be stipulated at present for commencement of these operations.