

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CIVIL AVIATION
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3341

ANSWERED ON:24.03.2005

STRATEGIES OF AIR INDIA TO COMPETE WITH INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES

Patil Shri Balasaheb Vikhe

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Air India has drawn up strategies to compete with international airlines;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Employees` Union have accepted the strategies of the Management; and
- (d) if not, the manner in which Air India proposes to tackle the situation?

Answer

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

- (a) and (b): In order to meet the growing competition in the aviation sector, Air India has taken various measures which include:
- (i) Flat Beds in First and Slumberettes in Executive class have been installed in all B747-400 aircraft;
 - (ii) PTVs are available on some of the dry leased aircraft in all classes;
 - (iii) Refurbishment of the interiors of A310-300 and B747-400 aircraft - replacement of seats, carpets and curtains, upgradation of galleys and toilets, upgradation of in-flight entertainment system etc.;
 - (iv) Upgraded Amenity Kits for First and Executive class passengers;
 - (v) Wider choice of duty free sales on board;
 - (vi) Implementation of E-ticketing system on India/ USA/India and India/UK/India routes;
 - (vii) Inter Airline through Check-In with other airlines over the network facilitates passenger check-in from origin to destination;
 - (viii) Upgradation of Maharajah Lounge at Mumbai; (ix) Quality of meals served on board is closely monitored and improvement effected.

Air India has already inducted 18 aircraft on lease and has finalized arrangement for induction of 12 more aircraft on lease to meet its capacity expansion requirements pending purchase of aircraft.

In addition to above, Air India Board has also approved a fleet acquisition plan which envisages the acquisition of 18 X B737-800 aircraft for its new airline subsidiary, Air India Express and 50 aircraft for Air India. A Project Report for the induction of 18 B737-800W aircraft for Air India Express has been submitted to the Government.

(c) and (d): Every effort is being made by the Management to take the employees into confidence regarding various measure being taken to enable Air India to tide over the situation created in the wake of competition from international airlines.