

Title: Requested to open Bagdogra Airport in North Bengal which has been closed since December, 2000 and to resume the service.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (HOOGLY): Sir, the Bagdogra Airport has suddenly been closed since 16th of December. The reason, according to the pilots, is that there is no navigational aids available. But the DGCA says that navigational aids are available there. Fairly four months after the inauguration of the Bagdogra Airport, constructed at a cost of Rs.30 crore, the decision of the Indian Airlines and the Jet Airways to indefinitely suspend the operation has come as a great shock to the people of this country particularly at a time when the tourist season is there. The *Teesta* Tea Tourist Festival is scheduled to start from 24th of December. The foreign tourists have come. No one knows about the suspension of the operation. This Airport is maintained by the Air Force and the Air Force people refuse to explain why this Airport has been closed. It is seriously affecting the economy of North Bengal and the economy of Sikkim. So, I request that the Government should intervene in this matter and settle the issue....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (SILCHAR): The Bagdogra Airport in the Eastern Region is a very important Airport. It must not be closed. It must be opened....(*Interruptions*)

*Not Recorded.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : The North-Eastern States are seriously affected. Where is the Minister concerned? We want to hear from the hon. Minister....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : Sir, I am also associating with Shri Rupchand Pal on this matter. They are destroying the economy and tourism in North Bengal and Sikkim....(*Interruptions*)

अध्यक्ष महोदय : मैं सबको बुलाऊंगा।

...(व्यवधान)

श्री प्रमोद महाजन : अध्यक्ष जी, असम और पूर्वांचल के प्रांत हैं, उसमें वैसे भी रोड और रास्तों की सेवा में अपनी कुछ समस्याएं हैं। इसलिए स्वामाविक रूप से इन लोगों के लिए हवाई सेवा उपलब्ध करना अतिशय महत्वपूर्ण है। **â€œ**(व्यवधान)

श्री अमर राय प्रधान : जो हवाई सेवा है, वह आपने बंद कर दी है। **â€œ**(व्यवधान)

MR. SPEAKER: This is the problem always. What is this? You are not allowing the Minister also to give the reply.

...(Interruptions)

श्री प्रमोद महाजन : केवल आज की बात नहीं है। मैं इस क्षेत्र का अध्ययन करता रहा हूँ और पिछले कुछ वर्षों से जितनी हवाई सेवाएँ पहले थीं, उससे कम होती जा रही हैं और कम समय में जा रही हैं। एयरपोर्ट बंद हो रहे हैं, हवाई सेवाएँ बंद हो रही हैं। आपकी जो भावनार्यें हैं, मैं उससे सहमत हूँ और मैं विशेष रूप से, साधारणतः यहाँ जो कुछ होता है, वह तो मैं संबंधित मंत्री से कहता हूँ लेकिन मैं विशेष रूप से इस विषय को नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्री के पास पहुँचा दूंगा। **â€œ**(व्यवधान) Bagdogra is a very special entry point. It is like a gateway....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : This should not be a standard reply....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: I never said it so. Every time, I take you seriously....(*Interruptions*)