

Title : Regarding need to resume operation of air services from Vagaikulam, Tamil Nadu.

(iv) Need to resume operation of air services from Vagaikulam,

Tamil Nadu

SHRI DHANUSKODIR. ATHITHAN : Sir, Thuthukudi District is the southern part of Tamil Nadu, having a population of nearly 15 lakhs. Thuthukudi District produced so many veteran freedom fighters like Veerapandiakattabhomman, Vellaih Devan, Veeran Sundaralingam, V.O. Chidambaram Pillai, Thukkumedai Rajagopal, Kasirajan, K.T. Kosaljan, Thyagi Benjamin, etc. Thuthukudi is the biggest municipality in Tamil Nadu and the port in this city is one of the major ports in India. This District is industrially advanced and major industries like SPIC, DCW, Sterllite, TAX, Heavy Water Project, etc. are giving a lot of employment opportunities to the people.

In 1992, the Civil Aviation Ministry constructed an Airport at Vagaikulam near Thuthukudi and started the services which connected Chennai and other cities. Unfortunately, in a short period, the air service has been stopped and till now, no air service is being provided from this airport. Air service to Thuthukudi is very much essential which in fact would accelerate the economic development of the zone. Now, the people's representatives, industrialists, businessmen, technocrats, air travelling passengers, have to go to Madurai or Trivandrum to get their flight which gives them untold hardships and involve waste of time and energy to travel 200 KM to reach the airport.

So, I urge upon the Civil Aviation Minister to take necessary steps to revive the air service to Vagaikulam at the earliest possible time and develop the airport to enable operation of big aircrafts.