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Title: Need to resume flight services on Salem-Chennai-Salem sector.

SHRI S. SEMMALAI (SALEM): I would like to draw the kind attention of the hon. Minister of Civil Aviation, through you, Sir, on an important issue regarding resumption of flight service from Chennai to Salem *vice versa*. After painstaking efforts and prolonged struggle, the Government has operationalised Salem Airport with a private airlines operating its maiden ATR Flight from 15th November, 2009 on Chennai-Salem-Chennai sector. Though flight timings is largely unsuitable to traveling public, there was good response and occupancy was in the range of 65 per cent to 70 per cent. Unfortunately, barely within one year, the airlines have chosen to suspend the flight services citing low seat occupancy factor. Salem is one of the biggest two-tier cities in Tamil Nadu. Withdrawal of flight service is likely to affect the region's prosperity. I feel there is an ineluctable need to resume flight services with slight modification in timings and put Salem once again in aviation map.

Trade bodies, industrial associations and frequent fliers have represented to me in this regard. I would rather request the hon. Minister of Civil Aviation, through you, Sir, to arrange and to facilitate the resumption of the suspended flight services. Besides, flight services, Salem may be operated during evening hours also, with the option of aircraft in the night, and also to resume flight services from Salem in the early morning.

I would also suggest operation of cargo service between Chennai-Salem-Chennai sector. I hope, my suggestion would be given due consideration. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir, for have given this opportunity.