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Title: Regarding international flights from Tirupati and Vijayawada airports.

SHRI JAYADEV GALLA (GUNTUR) : Government of India had declared, with a lot of fanfare, Tirupati and Vijayawada as international airports more than three years ago after upgrading them to meet the requirements of international standards for flying international flights.

In 2016 itself it was decided to start operations initially to US, Singapore, West Asia from Vijayawada airport and subsequently to other international destinations. But, nothing has so far happened. Same is the case with Tirupati that it has not logged even one international flight so far. When it comes to Visakhapatnam, being Defence Airport, Navy is putting so many restrictions and I am given to understand that Jet is going to withdraw its flight, SpiceJet withdrew its international flight and Sri Lankan Airlines also threatened to withdraw its operations to Visakhapatnam. This clearly indicate that even one international airport in AP is crippled due to unacceptable restrictions imposed by Indian Navy. It wanted to fly its fighters for training, etc., which restricts movement of commercial flights.

Secondly, with an objective to make Vijayawada airport cargo hub of the State, cargo complex has been established. It was supposed to start its operations from early this year, but it has also not started. Once cargo complex is completed, the aqua farmers are more benefited as they can export shrimp. Not just aqua, even agri products, spices, etc., can also be exported which benefits the farmers.

In view of the above, I request the Minister of Civil Aviation to immediately start international flights from Tirupati and Vijayawada and also start operations from Vijayawada Cargo Complex.