

It is very essential that Indian Airlines makes a suitable relaxation in the age limit and employ pilots within the age limit between 35 to 38 years. Even here they will be able to give more than 15 years service to the country.

In recent years, the Indian Pilots Guild and Indian Commercial Pilots Association have appealed to Government to review their policy so as to prevent the hardships and frustrations being suffered by the unemployed Commercial pilots.

I call upon the Government to take a more positive practical and broad-based view on employment of pilots and remove the injustice on the unemployed Commercial Pilots for no fault on their part.

(v) Agreement for purchase of seven Boeing 737 aircraft by Indian Airlines

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): Sir, under rule 377, I wish to raise the following.

Every right-thinking person will be shocked to note that the Indian Airlines have signed a agreement with the Boeing Aircraft Company USA for the purchase of seven more Boeing 737 on 11-3-1979. The cost of the Boeing including spares would amount to Rs. 91.42 crores.

Quite some days ago the Public Undertakings Committee after an in-depth study in its 52nd Report made the following recommendations/observations:—

4.28. The break-even load factor in respect of B. 747 aircraft was estimated to be 32.2 at the time decision was taken to purchase these aircraft (July 1967). The actual break-even load factor of these aircraft was, however, as high as 592 in 1977-78.

4.29. In 1971-72 which was the first year of introduction of B. 747 aircraft, it was observed that the indicated operating cost amounted to 140 per cent of the direct operating cost as compared to 75 per cent

assumed in the feasibility study. This increase is stated to be "the result of combined effect of escalation in costs during the intervening years as well as some under-estimation in the indirect operating costs." It has been further mentioned that another factor has shown adverse position is that 747 operations are largely on low yield routes. However, the fact remains that the basis for justifying the purchase of the aircraft has been materially altered.

4.30. The Committee find it hard to believe that this wide variation in the estimated and actual break-even load factor caused by under-estimation of expenditure and over-estimation of revenue in respect of B. 747 aircraft has not come to the notice of government and the matter is only now being looked into. If true, it would amount to a callous disregard of the country's interests in such vital a field as purchase of passenger aircraft from foreign firms which would always be waiting in the wings to take the airlines and the Government for a ride. This gives rise to serious suspicion about the bona fides of the purchase.

4.31. The Committee note with concern that the system-wise yield on the routes of which B. 747 aircraft are operating was Rs. 3,298 per RTKM in 1977-78 as against Rs. 4,469 per RTKM on routes of which B. 707 aircraft are operating. For instance, on the India-Australia route where B. 747 has been employed the break-even load factor was 52.8 in 1978-79. Air India and 59.4 in 1978-79. Air India sustained losses on this route to the tune of Rs. 2.53 crores in 1976-77, Rs. 2.50 crores in 1977-78 and Rs. 0.73 crores in 1977-78.

4.32. The committee note that the desirability of smaller wide bodied aircraft as replacement aircraft for the ageing B. 707 fleet is engaging government's attention. The Committee require that further deals

with the Boeing Company should be stopped immediately till a study is made in depth honestly and dispassionately of the economics of various proposals already pending with government.

4.33. The Committee find that with the same methodology as was followed in the earlier study, the current level of indirect operating costs would be 99 per cent of the direct operating costs (as against 75 per cent then estimated). These are expected to come down gradually with the increase in the fleet size and increased operations. The Committee urge that speedy and effective steps should be taken forthwith to bring down the incidence of indirect costs through stricter supervision and control over expenditure.

The Indian Airlines and Air India are commanded by the same controlling authority, namely the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, and in spite of this revelation on the part of Boeing aircraft's uneconomic operational results, they have chosen by-passing of the clear and specific recommendations of the P.U.C., a financial committee of the House to make such a huge purchase involving about 100 crores of rupees. This is a very serious matter for the House to know. In fact by taking this decision the Ministry has shown utter disregard to the findings of the Committee of this House. I would request you to direct the Government to explain their conduct in this regard.

(vi) Reported Railway accident on 12th May, 1979 between Talara and Javanwala Shehr Railway Stations in Kangra district of H. P.

SHRI DURGA CHAND (Kangra): Mr. Speaker, Sir, a tragic railway accident took place on 12-5-1979 between Talara and Javanwala Shehr railway station in sub-division Narpur district Kangra, Himachal Pradesh on a Pathankot-Joginder Nagar narrow gauge track. As reported, two bogies had been derailed, the cause of the

accident has not yet been disclosed. According to the latest reports, six persons have died and sixty persons have received severe injuries. It is also stated that the injured persons have been admitted at Civil Hospital, Pathankot and Amritsar and some of them are in district Kangra hospitals. It is also revealed that Mr. K. G. Uppal, Divisional Manager, Northern Railway has given Rs 750/- to 31 injured persons and Rs. 1000/- each to the dependents of the 6 deceased persons as relief. It shows that such a tragic accident has never previously happened on this railway line. As a matter of fact, Railway Minister should take serious view of this accident and order to hold an immediate enquiry about this sad mishap and thereupon take appropriate action against those whose negligence has brought such a big disaster.

I also request you to advise the hon. Railway Minister to issue a detailed statement about this accident and the relief which has been provided to the victims of this accident. The amount which has been reported to be given as a relief to the injured persons as well as to the dependents of the deceased is very meagre. The injured persons should be provided free medical and diet facilities and be given Rs. 5000/- minimum as a relief and the dependents of the deceased persons be given according to the new Railway Rules which amounts to many thousands.

I expect that the Railway Minister would come forward to provide maximum assistance to the victims of this tragic mishap.

(vii) Government's decision to set up a unit in Punjab for production of electronic equipment of Jaguar aircraft.

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN (Coimbatore): Sir, the Government of India has recently taken a decision to manufacture Jaguar aircraft in India in collaboration with a British firm. Shri Sher Singh, Minister for Defence Production had stated