GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION

Rajya Sabha

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. : 1623

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 13th December 2021

DISCONTINUATION OF INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS FROM GUWAHATI

1623. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:-

(a) the reasons for discontinuation of the international flights to and from Guwahati;

(b) whether Government has made proper assessment about the deficiency in infrastructure, visa facilities and policy guidelines deterring the airlines to fly to and from Guwahati;

(c) if so, the details of the findings thereof and the action taken by Government to remove such deficiencies; and

(d) if not, the reasons, therefor?

ANSWER

Minister of State in the Ministry of CIVIL AVIATION (GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD))

(a) to (d) Guwahati is an international airport and is included in the list of 18 tourist destinations which are available as points of call to 5 SAARC countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Maldives and Sri Lanka) and 10 ASEAN countries (Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Indonesia, Myanmar, Cambodia, Philippines and Laos). The foreign carriers of these countries and Indian carriers can operate unlimited frequencies from these airports subject to availability of

slots at the airport. In the Winter 2019 schedule, foreign carriers were operating to Bhutan, Singapore and Thailand from Guwahati airport. These flights were discontinued due to suspension of scheduled international commercial passenger services in March 2020 in view of Covid-19 pandemic.

As per current practice, the Government does not offer non-metro airports as point of call to foreign carriers due to significant imbalance in number of points of call in favour of foreign carriers and in order to promote the hub and spoke operations by Indian carriers so that hubs are created within India instead of outside India.

The Government provides an enabling environment for growth of civil aviation sector but does not regulate the operational plans of the airlines. Airlines are free to select whatever markets and network they wish to service and operate within the ambit of bilateral agreements. The airlines provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability.

Guwahati has already been declared as an international airport and development of airport infrastructure is a continuous process, which is undertaken by the airport operator based on the traffic demand and the interest shown by the airlines to mount flights.

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