

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION  
LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. : 3067  
(To be answered on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2021)**

**SAFETY OF PASSENGERS DURING AIR TRAVEL**

**3067.        SHRIMATI POONAMBEN MAADAM**

**Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION**

**be pleased to state:-**

- (a) whether the Government plans to make air-travel safer in view of probable pandemics in future;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to install High Efficient Particulate Air Filters (HEPA) to reduce chances of infection from circulating air;
- (d) whether the Government has any plan to upgrade aircrafts to mitigate contagious disease spread in aircraft cabins including ultraviolet lights, self-cleaning lavatories and redesigned ventilation systems etc.; and
- (e) if so, the details of fund outlay for this purpose, if any, during the current financial year?

**ANSWER**

**Minister of State in the Ministry of CIVIL AVIATION**

**(GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD))**

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(a) & (b): Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) in consultation with Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) and Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has issued various guidelines/protocols to be complied during the Covid-19 pandemic, to ensure safe and secure air transportation of passengers. The guidelines/protocols issued from time to time by the Government are aimed at identifying countries of 'At Risk', introducing the entry procedures for international arrivals (both at origin and destination), thermal screening, testing, quarantine etc. This multi-pronged strategy followed by Government of India has largely been effective in containing the transmission of virus. Under the over-all guidance of MoHFW and MHA, Ministry of Civil Aviation has created a robust mechanism in collaboration with all the stake-holders of the aviation eco-system to ramp up the required infrastructure/logistics like screening and testing facilities at airports, enhanced waiting area, amenities for the passengers at the hold area, etc.

**(c) to (e):** Ministry of Civil Aviation has constituted an Inter-Ministerial Air Transport Facilitation Committee (ATFC) with the involvement of experts from MoHFW, Indian Council of Medical Reserach (ICMR), Airline industry, etc. During pandemic this committee has recommended various measures based on which required guidelines were issued to contain the spread of pandemic. As per the information available, the modern aircraft with HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air) filters capture airborne microbes in the filtered air. Modern airlines have high air supply rates and where fresh air is supplemented with recirculated air. Protection within the cabin environment in the aircraft is also enhanced with the following additional measures:

- (i) Protection of the passengers by wearing masks.**
- (ii) Physical barrier of the seat backs.**
- (iii) No face to face seating positions.**
- (iv) Direction of air flow from ceiling to floor minimising flow from front to back.**
- (v) Availability of high quality filters for recirculation of air.**
- (vi) Managing passengers' sequential boarding, including the cleaning and use of lavatories.**
- (vii) Protocols for inflight services/meals/magazines/newspapers etc.**
- (viii) Frequent cleaning, disinfection of aircraft as per prescribed norms.**
- (ix) Supervision by trained cabin crew.**

**Accordingly, guidelines are issued to airlines, airports and crew, from time to time, to follow required protocols.**

**It is pertinent to mention that the aircraft are designed and manufactured based on laid down design standards which includes systems to maintain a healthy cabin environment. These systems filter the air and minimize the spread of airborne contaminants. The design of the aircraft operating in India are either certified by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) of USA or by European Aviation Safety Agency(EASA). Therefore any change in the design including the installation of additional systems in the aircraft can only be mandated by FAA/ EASA or made with their approval. Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), as the State of Registry/ Operator of the aircraft does not have the authority to change the type design of such aircraft including installation of additional systems which are not part of the type design. There is no financial outlay for this purpose.**

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