

the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Mineral and Metals Trading Corporation (MMTC) earned any profits during 1986-87;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the MMTC has gone in for counter trade with other countries recently; and

(d) if so, whether it has resulted in any foreign exchange savings and more profits to the MMTC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The profit before tax is provisionally placed at Rs. 54.8 crores.

(c) and (d). Yes, Sir.

[*Translation*]

Haj Pilgrim

2948. PROF. NIRMALA KUMARI SHAKTAWAT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the average number of applications received every year for Haj pilgrimage during the last two years and the number of persons who were granted permission for Haj;

(b) whether existing quota restriction result in denial of the opportunity to many seeking to make it;

(c) whether Government propose to consider a scheme to allow all those Haj applicants who are above 60 years of age;

(d) whether Government propose to provide concessional travel by ships and aeroplanes for this purpose; and

(e) whether Government have urged upon Saudi Arabian Government to withdraw the tax on Haj pilgrim, if any?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) A statement containing the required information is given below:

(b) to (d). The Government is not able to accommodate all those who apply for going on Haj pilgrimage; this is, however, due to the over-riding consideration of our foreign exchange position. In any case, the number of pilgrims performing Haj every year falls only marginally short of those who apply. 80 percent of Haj pilgrim quota is reserved for applicants who are of 60 years and above. Government is already providing concessional travel by ship to Haj pilgrims. Haj charter airfares are also lower than the IATA airfares for the sectors on which such flights are operated

(e) The Haj pilgrims have to pay the following charges:—

(i)	Madinutul Hujjaj Rent	SR 80.00
(ii)	Moassassa, Maktabul Wukla, Moallim Services Charges	SR 294 00
(iii)	Camp at Mina and Arafat and water and electricity and cleanliness charges	SR 150.00

None of these charges are termed as 'tax' by the Government of Saudi Arabia.

STATEMENT

Year	No of applications received for Haj pilgrimage.				No of persons who were granted permission for Haj			
	By Sea		By Air		By Sea		By Air	
	Under with foreign exchange quota	Under without foreign exchange quota	Under with foreign exchange quota	Under without foreign exchange quota	Under with foreign exchange quota	Under without foreign exchange quota	Under with foreign exchange quota	Under without foreign exchange quota
1985	29107	20373	995	4690	16287	995		
1986	31948	21119	1232	4685	18315	1232		