

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3662
ANSWERED ON:16.04.2002
INVESTIGATION OF AMARNATH TRAGEDY
RAMDAS ATHAWALE

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the investigation relating to the Amarnath Yatra Tragedy has been completed;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the action taken by the Government on the findings/recommendations of the enquiry Committee;
- (d) whether the ex-gratia amount has been paid to the family members of the persons killed in the Amarnath Tragedy;
- (e) if so, the details thereof;
- (f) whether the Government are contemplating to make all the necessary arrangements to make this pilgrimage safe and comfortable besides making it attractive for the tourists; and
- (g) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CH. VIDYASAGAR RAO)

(a) to (c): Yes, Sir. After the Amarnath Yatra Tragedy in 1996, the Government of India had appointed Dr. Nitish Sengupta as Inquiry Officer to look into the various aspects of the tragedy and also to suggest measures to ensure proper and adequate arrangements to avoid recurrence of such incidents in future. Dr. Sengupta in his report submitted to the Government on 2.12.1996 had made a number of recommendations for ensuring smooth Yatra in future. A copy of the Report was laid on the Table of both the Houses of Parliament on 18.12.1996.

The Government of India had accepted the report and sent a copy of the same to the Government of J&K for taking necessary follow up action. Since Shri Amarnath Yatra is conducted by the State Government of J&K, the Government of J&K had taken appropriate remedial measures for improvement of infrastructure, providing shelter, restriction on number of Yatris, etc. on the basis of the recommendations/suggestions made by the Inquiry Committee so that there is no recurrence of the tragedy.

(d & e): During the Amarnath Yatra tragedy 1996, a total of 243 pilgrims had lost their lives, of which only 227 bodies were identified and the State Government of J&K had released an amount of Rs. 454 lakh to the concerned State Governments for payment of ex-gratia to the next of kin of the deceased pilgrims @ Rs. 2 lakhs each.

(f & g): The Amarnath Yatra is conducted by the State Government of J&K, who have also constituted a Shrine Board for Amarnath Yatra. The State Government has been asked to take appropriate measures for the Yatra to be conducted safely and smoothly this year.