

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:589  
ANSWERED ON:26.07.2000  
FACILITIES TO KAILASH MANSAROVAR PILGRIMS  
CHANDRAKANT BHAURAO KHAIRE;RAMDAS ATHAWALE

**Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether China charges 500 Dollar from every pilgrim going on pilgrimage to Kailash Manasarovar but in return they are not provided proper facilities;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Union Government thereto;
- (c) whether the Union Government have taken up or propose to take up this issue with the Chinese Government;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether China has not agreed to allow Kailash Manasarovar pilgrims to go via Ladakh route; and
- (f) if so, the reasons therefor?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (AJIT KUMAR PANJA)

(a), (b), (c) & (d): The Chinese Government charges US\$ 500 per Yatri for facilities extended on their side. In response to reports received from Yatris, the Government of India has requested the Chinese Government to improve the facilities on the Chinese side. The Chinese Government has responded that despite the efforts on its part, there were limitations on account of the fact that the charges for the Yatra had not been revised for many years.

(e) & (f): We have proposed to the Chinese Government an alternative route through Demchok in Ladakh (Jammu & Kashmir). The Chinese side has responded that our proposals for alternative routes are under consideration in consultation with the local authorities in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). They have cited difficulties in opening new routes on the grounds that it would involve travel over much longer distances over difficult terrain with poor road conditions and lack of proper infrastructure for accommodation and communications. They have also expressed the view that development of infrastructure in these remote areas would not be an easy task and building facilities for alternative routes could take a long time. It could lead to a substantial escalation in the fee charged from Indian pilgrims (currently frozen at US\$ 500 per pilgrim until the year 2000 AD).