

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5786

ANSWERED ON:04.05.2005

SEPARATE ORGANISATION TO FACILITATE HAJ TRAVEL

Ahmad Shri Ateeq;Bishnoi Shri Kuldeep

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to establish a separate organisation to provide permanent solution for the transportation and other arrangement of the Haj Pilgrims;

(b) if so, whether the Government has conducted any study on the model of `Tabung Haji` organisation of Malaysia;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government for the better management of Haj pilgrimage to make it more comfortable and affordable?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED)

(a) to (d) Various proposals including Malaysian model of `Tabung Haji` have been suggested. These will have to be examined in detail. The Government and the Haj Committee of India continuously strive for the better management of Haj pilgrimage to make it more comfortable and affordable. For this purpose, after every Haj, a composite high-level delegation comprising officers from the Ministries of External Affairs and Civil Aviation, Air India, Chairman and members of Haj Committee of India visit Saudi Arabia to review the arrangements made for the pilgrims in the previous Haj. The shortcomings identified in the arrangements in the previous Haj, if any, are examined, in consultation with the Saudi authorities/agencies to bring about further improvements in the next Haj.

The Ministry has also started registration of Private Tour Operators (PTOs) from Haj 2003 onwards to regulate their activities with a view to ensuring the welfare of pilgrims going for Haj through them and also as per the terms of agreement signed with Government of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.