

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:199  
ANSWERED ON:23.11.2005  
FACILITIES TO HAJ PILGRIMS  
Ahir Shri Hansraj Gangaram

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

- (a) the steps being taken by the Government for ensuring facilities to the Haj pilgrims;
- (b) the number of Haj Pilgrims participating in the Haj Pilgrimage in the current year;
- (c) the estimated number of Haj pilgrims going to Saudi Arabia through private tour operators every year;
- (d) whether new aviation service centres have been set up in the country for the Haj pilgrims; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

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

(a) The Government has continued its endeavour to improve and enhance facilities for Indian Haj pilgrims. A high level Government delegation led by the Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri E. Ahamed had detailed discussions with Saudi authorities in May 2005 and August 2005 and accordingly concluded agreements on Haj 2006 arrangements. A statement on measures to provide better facilities to Haj pilgrims for the year 2006 is placed on the Table of the House.

(b) and (c) A total of 147,000 Indian pilgrims are likely to participate in Haj 2006 - 100,000 through the Haj Committee of India and 47,000 through the private tour operators. In 2005, about 45,000 pilgrims had performed Haj through registered private tour operators.

(d) and (e) No. The number of embarkation points for Haj pilgrims remains the same as in Haj 2005 viz. 15, namely Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Kolkata, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Calicut, Srinagar, Lucknow, Jaipur, Nagpur, Patna, Guwahati and Aurangabad

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Statement referred in part (a) of the answer of the Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 199 to be Answered on 23.11.2005

1. Air Operations:- As in the previous years, Air India/Indian Airlines and Saudi Arabian Airlines have been entrusted with the responsibility of transporting Haj Committee pilgrims from 15 embarkation points in India to Saudi Arabia and back.

2. Accommodation in Makkah:- Action has been taken to ensure that accommodation in Makkah would continue to be in buildings with lifts and space-norms as prescribed.

3. Mina stay:- Discussions have been held with the South Asian Moassassa to ensure that a greater number of pilgrims are accommodated nearer the Jamarat in Mina.

4. Communication facilities to pilgrims:- Arrangements have been made to provide communication facilities to pilgrims whereby pilgrims can communicate with their relatives, through internet.

5. Supply of Zam Zam:- 10 ltrs of Zam Zam is being provided to all Haj Committee pilgrims on arrival at airports in India.

6. Identification stickers to pilgrims:- To enable easy identification of pilgrims, stickers with Indian colours are being provided to each pilgrim, which he/she is required to display on their clothing. The stickers, for the first time, also include basic health details of the pilgrim.

7. Welfare of pilgrims:- One hospital and 11 branch dispensaries-cum-Haj offices in Makkah, one main Dispensary and 4 branch dispensaries-cum-Haj offices in Madinah and dispensaries at airports, Mina and Arafat are being set up by Consulate General of India, Jeddah to provide round the clock medical assistance to the pilgrims for which medicines and equipment worth Rs.1.10 crores are also being supplied for India. The number of Doctors and Paramedical staff being deployed for Haj 2006 has been increased from 107 Doctors and 125 Paramedical staff in Haj 2005 to 143 Doctors and 146 Paramedical staff in Haj 2006. Similarly, the number of Assistant Haj Officers and Haj Assistants has been increased from 47 and 137 to 51 and 171 respectively. For the first time, three senior level officers are being deputed as Coordinators to bring in further improvement and efficiency in Haj arrangements.

The number of Khadim-ul-Hujjaj being deputed by various State Haj Committees is also being increased.

8. Registration of private tour operators:- The system of registration of private tour operators which commenced in 2003 has been further strengthened for Haj 2006 with the involvement, for the first time, of various State Haj Committees also.