

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4229  
ANSWERED ON:21.12.2005  
NON-ISSUANCE OF VISAS TO PILGRIMS  
Athawale Shri Ramdas

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

- (a) whether the Sikh pilgrims of various States desiring to go on pilgrimage to Nankana Sahib in Pakistan have not been granted visa for the last few years ;
- (b) If so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor along with the dates from which the applications have been lying pending; and
- (c) The measures taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure the pilgrimage of these devotees to Nankana Sahib?

**Answer**

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

(a) No, Sir

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The visit of pilgrims between India and Pakistan is provided for under the bilateral 'Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines-1974'. The Protocol provides for the number of pilgrims, pilgrimage centres and the frequency of such visits between India and Pakistan.

The pilgrims visiting Sikh shrines in Pakistan are selected on the basis of state-wise quota administered by Ministry of Home Affairs in coordination with the respective State Governments and Gurudwara management committees such as SGPC, DSGMC etc. The lists of such pilgrims are forwarded by the Ministry of External Affairs to Pakistan High Commission for grant of visas. The visas are granted by Pakistan High Commission on the basis of these lists.