

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:409

ANSWERED ON:14.08.2007

ATTACK ON AMARNATH PILGRIMS

Gaikwad Shri Eknath Mahadeo;Masood Shri Rasheed;Patel Shri Kishanbhai Vestabhai;Rawat Shri Bachi Singh;Singh Shri Sugrib

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether incidents of militant attack on Amarnath pilgrims have increased in the recent past;
- (b) if so, the number of pilgrims killed/injured in each of such incidents;
- (c) whether the Government has made any investigations of such incidents;
- (d) if so, the findings thereof;
- (e) whether it is fact that a major conspiracy of attack on Amarnath Pilgrims have been unearthed by the military recently;
- (f) if so, details thereof;
- (g) the action taken by the Government on the report of Sengupta Commission constituted after death of 300 pilgrims in the year 1996; and
- (h) the steps taken by the Government to check the activities of terrorists?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL)

(a) to (d): No, Sir. As per the report of the State Government of Jammu and Kashmir, so far, in two separate attacks directed against Amarnath pilgrims on July 17 & 21, 2007 at Base Camp Baltal and Pahalgam respectively, two persons were killed and 26 others including 10 pilgrims injured.

(e) & (f): No, Sir.

(g): The Government of India had accepted the report of Sengupta Committee and sent a copy of the same to the State Government of Jammu & Kashmir for taking necessary follow up action. Since Shri Amarnath Yatra is conducted by the State Government, the State Government 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 Committee.

(h) As per the report of the State Government, in view of the increased terrorist threat, various steps have been taken for the security of Amarnath pilgrims, which include the following:-

- (i) Security Forces deployed on constant alert and Road Opening Parties (ROPs) have been further strengthened;
- (ii) Intensive patrolling of routes leading to Holy Cave being carried out with surprise checking of vehicles;
- (iii) Special nakas established en-route and thorough checking/ frisking being carried out;
- (iv) Doorframe metal detectors and X-ray machines/gadgets installed at Holy Cave, Sheshnag, Chandanwari, Ashmuquam and Base Camp.
- (v) Emphasis laid on various security /Intelligence agencies to generate actionable intelligence to thwart the evil designs of terrorists and ensure security and safety of yatris.

In addition to the above mentioned steps, additional Central Paramilitary Forces and Dog Squads have been provided to the State Government for the security arrangements for the Amarnath Yatra 2007.