

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5192
ANSWERED ON:30.04.2008
FUNDS FOR MEDICAL FACILITIES FOR HAJ PILGRIMS
Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the year-wise details of funds allocated by the Government for providing medical assistance to Haj Pilgrims during the last three years; and

(b) the steps taken by the Government to ensure better facilities for the Haj pilgrims?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE in the Ministry of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS(SHRI E. AHAMED)

(a) The year-wise details of funds allocated by the Government for providing medical assistance to Haj Pilgrims during the last three years are as follows :-

Item/Year	Haj 2006-I (1426-H)	Haj 2006-II (1427-H)	Haj 2007 (1428-H)
Cost of medicines and supplies from India (Rs.)	112,80,780	115,67,449	123,47,485

Cost of medicines and supplies purchased in Saudi Arabia (in equivalent Rs.)	3,48,837	3,61,446	3,26,087
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Cost of new Ambulances purchased in Saudi Arabia (in equivalent Rs.)	66,62,651	61,30,435	
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Total (Rs.)	182,92,268	119,28,895	188,04,007
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(b) The Government of India makes elaborate arrangements for the welfare of Haj pilgrims and strives to improve the facilities provided to them every year. It makes arrangements to facilitate the transportation of the Haj pilgrims going to Saudi Arabia through the Haj Committee of India and facilitates provision of accommodation and other logistical support for them. For efficient management and supervision of Haj arrangements, a large contingent of seasonal local staff, supervisors, data entry operators, drivers and messengers is appointed by Consulate General of India, Jeddah during Haj period. For Haj 2007, a contingent of 115 doctors (including 63 specialists with post-graduate degrees) and 141 nurses and other para-medical staff, 3 Coordinators, 46 Assistant Haj Officers, 165 Haj Assistants and 186 Khadimul Hujjaj were sent from India on short-term deputation to Saudi Arabia. Extensive medical orientation is provided to the pilgrims in the community centres set up in Makkah and Madinah by the Consulate General of India, Jeddah. Last year 60-bedded admission facility was upgraded to 75-bedded admission facility in Makkah and 15-bedded in Madinah. Besides that 12 branch offices-cum-dispensaries in Makkah and 6 in Madina were set up for Haj pilgrims. Three medical teams at Jeddah Airport were available to provide medical care round the clock to Haj pilgrims. Medicines provided at these dispensaries and hospital are being supplied from India and procured locally. 17 ambulances were pressed into service of Hajis last year. Of these 7 ambulances were sanctioned in 2006 and 8 additional ambulances were provided in 2007 which added substantially to the medical facilities for the pilgrims. A system of First Information Report is followed in the case of all the pilgrims who are 70+ years of age in order to ensure that the concerned pilgrims receive specialised medical care. The Government also makes arrangements in India for polio, meningitis and influenza vaccinations for the pilgrims. The Haj Committee of India provides to the pilgrims information regarding confirmation of their seats, travel documents, transportation, accommodation, release of foreign exchange, embarkation points and departure dates etc. The Government has taken a number of decisions to streamline the functioning of Private Tour Operators so that they provide proper services and facilities for the pilgrims.