

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CIVIL AVIATION
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1398
ANSWERED ON:18.11.2010
HARASSMENT OF HAJ PILGRIMS
Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether last year Haj pilgrims faced harassment as the flights originating from Saudi Arabia got delayed for over twelve hours;
- (b) if so, whether the Government for the first time has decided to introduce a penalty clause in the agreement to be signed with Saudi Arabia carriers in case of delay or cancellation of flights;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the MoU to this effect has been signed with Saudi Arabia carriers; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and other arrangements made for Haj pilgrims for safe and comfortable journey?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL)

- (a): Yes, Madam. Last year few Haj Charter flights were delayed.
- (b) and (c): Though even in previous years the airlines were required to follow DGCA, GACA and IATA's regulations with regard to passenger handling in cases of delays/cancellations of flights, the MOUs signed with airlines this year specifically provide for facilities like refreshment, hot food, and hotel accommodation to be provided to passengers in case of delay/cancellation of flight.
- (d) and (e): The Government has signed `Memorandum of Understanding`, detailing the number of pilgrims to be carried, the fare to be paid, the facilities to be provided to the pilgrims etc., with Saudi Arabian Airlines, NAS and Al-Wafeer Air for carrying balotee Haj pilgrims from 21 embarkation points in India after following the tender process.