

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2461

ANSWERED ON:24.11.2010

HAJ PILGRIMAGE

Kumar Shri Kaushalendra;Nahata Smt. P. Jaya Prada;Ramkishun Shri ;Shekhar Shri Neeraj;Yadav Shri Dharmendra

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Haj committee has effected changes in the pilgrimage list at the last moment;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and reasons therefor;
- (c) whether a number of pilgrims could not go for Haj due to change in flight timings;
- (d) if so the details thereof;
- (e) whether some of the State Governments have brought to the notice of the Union Government the inconvenience caused to the pilgrimage on various counts;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) the steps taken by the Government to ensure that no inconvenience is caused to the Haj pilgrimages?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SMT. PRENEET KAUR)

- (a): Yes.
- (b): Changes were effected as a number of selected pilgrims failed to submit their application forms and passports within due date to the Haj Committee of India. The State-wise break up is enclosed at ANNEXURE - A.
- (c): No.
- (d): Does not arise.
- (e) & (f): Yes. A letter was received from the Government of Uttar Pradesh on advancing of flight schedule from the Varanasi embarkation point affecting movement of 6,500 pilgrims. Reasons for change the charter flights was to save the 6500 pilgrims from making a journey twice to Madinah. The avoiding of the second trip also resulted in savings of Rs.3,700 per pilgrim . All pilgrims were informed about the changed schedules directly and through press releases in local newspapers well in advance. Special assistance was arranged by the Haj Committee of India to facilitate the pilgrims at the embarkation point.
- (g): There is a system in place for redressal of the hardship faced by the pilgrims. The improvement in the Haj management is a continuous exercise for which the Government regularly reviews previous arrangements.