

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CIVIL AVIATION
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:111
ANSWERED ON:19.11.2009
LARGER FLIGHTS FOR HAJ PILGRIMAGE
Sampath Shri Anirudhan

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has received any suggestions for operating larger flights for Haj pilgrimage season;
- (b) if so, the measures taken in this regard; and
- (c) the details of the flights likely to be operated for this purpose?

Answer

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

(a) and (b): Yes, Sir. The Government has received requests for deploying larger aircrafts from Calicut. A Memorandum of Understanding(MOU) was signed with M/s. National Air Services(NAS) of Saudi Arabia to carry around 7,500 pilgrims from Calicut to Jeddah. NAS had provided aircrafts having a capacity of 238 seats and had agreed to mount additional capacity towards the end of Phase I to make good any possible shortfall.

(c) Air India is operating direct flights to Saudi Arabia with B747-400, A330-200, A310 and A320 aircraft. As per the MOU signed with Saudi Arabia Airlines (SAA) and NAS they are required to operate wide bodied aircraft for the Haj 2009 operations.