

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:356
ANSWERED ON:18.12.2012
AIR FACILITY TO FREEDOM FIGHTERS
Singh Shri Yashvir

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is any proposal to provide free air travel facility to all the surviving freedom fighters in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) the details of the budgetary allocation and utilisation of funds by the Ministry during the last three years; and
- (d) the funds allocated and utilised on providing pension and other amenities to freedom fighters during the said period?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI R.P.N. SINGH)

(a) to (d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (d) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 356 FOR 18.12.2012.

(a) & (b) : Apart from Samman Pension, various facilities have been provided to the freedom fighters which include free railway pass (AC-II tier in Rajdhani, Chair Car in Shatabdi/Jan Shatabdi trains and 1st class/1nd AC sleeper in all other trains) for the freedom fighters and the widows along with a companion, in case of deceased freedom fighters, free medical facilities in all Central Government hospitals and hospitals run by public sector undertakings under the control of the Bureau of Public Enterprises; facilities under Central Government Health Scheme to the freedom fighters and their dependents and telephone connection without installation charges and on payment of half the rental. In addition to these facilities, the freedom fighters who had suffered imprisonment for a minimum period of five years in the Cellular Jail, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and the widows along with a companion, in case of deceased freedom fighters, are eligible for free air travel to visit Andaman & Nicobar Islands from Kolkata and back once a year. At present, there is no proposal to provide free air travel facility to all the freedom fighters. However, the Punjab & Haryana High Court while disposing off the Public Interest Litigation petition in its order dated 25.02.2011 directed the Government to consider providing free air travel facilities to the surviving freedom fighters and their spouses. The matter has been examined and considering the fact that at present about 49,000 freedom fighters or their eligible dependents are drawing Central Samman Pension, providing free air travel facility will create huge additional financial burden on the public exchequer. Therefore, the Government is not in favour of the same.

(c): The details of total budgetary allocation and utilization of funds in all schemes by the Ministry of Home Affairs during the last three years is given below:-

(Rs. in crore)

Funds Budget Allocation Utilization of

2009-10	37066.61	35277.50
2010-11	34949.55	39435.03
2011-12	46715.24	44342.58

(d): The details of funds allocated and expenditure on pension and other amenities to the freedom fighters during the last three years is given here under:-

(Rs. in crore)

Years	Budget Allocation	Utilization	Central Free Railway	Central Free Railway
	Samman Passes	Samman Passes		
	Pension	Pension		

2009-10	664.00	35.00	825.00	34.98
2010-11	722.29	35.00	710.81	30.28
2011-12	717.08	35.00	821.03	21.85