

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2545  
ANSWERED ON:13.03.2013  
HAJ GOODWILL TEAM  
Reddy Shri Magunta Srinivasulu

**Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government has been sending Haj goodwill team to Saudi Arabia during the Haj;
- (b) if so, the details and the purpose thereof;
- (c) whether the Supreme Court has favoured doing away with this practice; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

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

(a) Yes.

(b) A two member Haj Goodwill delegation led by Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs Shri E. Ahamed visited Saudi Arabia during Haj-2012. The primary purpose of the delegation is to convey goodwill on the auspicious occasion of Haj to Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and to Indian pilgrims. The delegation interacts with the Haj pilgrims from India, and takes up issues of concern to our pilgrims with the Saudi Arabian authorities. The delegation also has regular meetings with the Indian Hajj Mission. A report is submitted to the Government about the conduct of Hajj and recommendations for possible improvements in the ensuing Haj.

(c)& (d) Yes. Hon'ble Supreme Court vide Its Interim order dated May 08, 2012 has stated that the present practice of sending Goodwill Haj delegation must come to stop. If the Government of India wishes to send a message of goodwill to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the occasion of Haj, it may send a leader and a deputy leader.