

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:314

ANSWERED ON:22.07.2015

Haj Yatra

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Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of pilgrims from India who performed Haj during the last three years, State-wise;
- (b) the details of assistance given to these pilgrims;
- (c) the details of fund used for the Haj yatra 2015 and the source of the Haj yatra fund;
- (d) whether there is any provision for VIP quota in Haj pilgrimage and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, whether the Government proposes to restore it?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) Haj pilgrimage is organized annually during which Muslim pilgrims visit Makkah, Mina, Arafat, Muzadalifa and Madinah. Saudi Arabia allocates quota to each country on the basis of 1 pilgrim for every thousand of the Muslim population of the country. Haj pilgrims either undertake pilgrimage through Haj Committee of India or Private Tour Operators. During the last three years (2012, 2013 and 2014), 3,46,323 Hajjis have gone on Haj pilgrimage from Haj Committee of India (HCOI) and 95,490 through Private Tour Operators (PTOs). The year-wise details of Haj pilgrims who have undertaken Haj are as under:

Year	of Pilgrimage	Number of pilgrims going through HCOI	Number of pilgrims going through PTOs	Total number of pilgrims
2012	1,25,071	44,890	1,69,961	
2013	1,21,338	14,600	1,35,938	
2014	99,914	36,000	1,35,914	
Total	3,46,323	95,490	4,41,813	

The State-wise breakup of Haj pilgrims who performed Haj during 2012, 2013, and 2014 through HCOI is enclosed in Annexure. No State-wise breakup of pilgrims undertaking Haj through PTOs is available.

(b) & (c) Ministry of External Affairs coordinates the Haj arrangements, in consultation with Haj Committee of India and Consulate General of India (CGI), Jeddah. Ministry of External Affairs also sends 546 deputationists every year (Coordinators, Assistant Haj Officers, Haj Assistants, Doctors & Para-medical staff) for rendering assistance to the Haj pilgrims. With the approval of Ministry of External Affairs, Consulate General of India, Jeddah arranges for temporary Tents in Mina, sets up Dispensaries, Branch Haj Offices, arranges ambulances and other local transport for the Haj pilgrims. Medicines and medical equipment are supplied by MEA to Consulate General of India, Jeddah to meet the medical requirements of Haj pilgrims. During Haj-2014, medicines worth Rs. 2.60 crores were supplied. Similar arrangements for deputationists, logistics arrangements by CGI, Jeddah & supply of medicines are being made for Haj-2015.

Ministry of Civil Aviation supervises the Air Charter operation during Haj period and deploys officials for support in Saudi Arabia to assist in embarkation and disembarkation of pilgrims. Ministry of Civil Aviation provides subsidy for air travel to pilgrims performing Haj through Haj Committee of India. The amount on air travel charged per pilgrim during Haj 2014 was Rs. 35,000/- whereas the actual air fare ranges from Rs. 63,750 to Rs. 1,63,350 depending on the embarkation point in India. For Haj-2015, an amount of Rs. 42,000/- will be charged as airfare from each pilgrim performing Haj through HCOI. The Supreme Court has directed in 2012 that the subsidy on air travel should be phased out in ten years. The subsidy has been reduced from Rs.836.56 crores in 2012 to Rs. 680.03 crores in 2013. In 2014, it has further reduced to Rs. 533 crores.

The Haj pilgrims pay for the expenses incurred on air passage, accommodation, local transport within Saudi Arabia and food in Madinah etc. For Haj-2015, Haj Committee will be charging Rs. 2,15,000 per pilgrim for those staying in Green Area and Rs.1,76,000 from those staying in Azizia Area of Makkah. Haj Committee of India meets the costs of the Haj pilgrimage through the payments made by the pilgrims. No external grant is provided by the Ministry of External Affairs to Haj Committee of India. There is also no separate Haj Yatra Fund.

(d) Hon'ble Supreme Court of India had passed an Order on April 16, 2013 in which the number of Haj seats under VIP quota (Discretionary quota) to dignitaries has been restricted to 500 seats as per details given below:-

- i. Hon'ble President of India : 100 seats
- ii. Hon'ble Vice-President of India : 75 seats
- iii. Hon'ble Prime Minister of India : 75 seats
- iv. Hon'ble External Affairs Minister : 50 seats

v. Haj Committee of India : 200 seats.

(e) Does not arise.
