

Title: Request to include Calicut and Hyderabad airport as embarkation point for the Haj pilgrims.

SHRI K. MURALEEDHARAN (CALICUT): I would like to raise an important matter regarding the hardship faced by the *Haj* pilgrims of the Northern part of Kerala. Most of the *Haj* pilgrims of Kerala, nearly 75 per cent of them, are from Northern part of Kerala. Now, the *Haj* flight is operating only from Cochin International Airport. Due to this, the pilgrims of Northern Kerala have to start one day in advance.

*Not Recorded.

The Cochin Airport was inaugurated only two years back. It has no accommodation facility. I, therefore, request the Government to announce Calicut Airport as embarkation point for the *haj* pilgrims from Kerala and also ensure availability of aircraft so as to avoid uncertainty of the return flight. Next month, work on the runway expansion will be completed. So, the Air India can operate flight from Calicut to Jeddah. It will be very helpful for the *haj* pilgrims from the northern part of Kerala.

SHRI E. AHAMED : Sir, in connection with what Shri Muraleedharan has just now said, I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Speaker as also the House that last time, the Air India could not bring back the *Hajjis* because arrangements were made for them only at Chennai, Mumbai and other places. *Hajjis* from Kerala, Hyderabad and Lucknow had all suffered due to this. So, a demand was made to make arrangements at all the three points. So far as Calicut airport area is concerned, everything is ready. Out of 8000 *Hajjis*, 6000 are from northern part of Kerala around Calicut airport region but they have to go to Cochin and there also no sufficient arrangement has been made. Hyderabad is another problem point. The *Hajjis* are finding it very difficult as they have to fly all the way either to Mumbai or Delhi. Therefore, my request is to include both Calicut and Hyderabad as the two points for the *Haj* pilgrims.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Sir, I also associate myself with what Shri Muraleedharan has just now said.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Sir, I associate myself with what Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay had said. I was absent at that time.