

**Title: Need to declare Nagpur city as an embarkation point for Haj Yatris.**

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR (NAGPUR): The Vidarbha region has a population of more than 25 lakh Muslims and about 3000 Muslims are going for Haj Yatra from this region every year. They have to take their flights for Mecca and Jeddah (Saudi Arabia) from Mumbai. Because of the heavy rush from Maharashtra and the adjoining States, the Haj yatris from Vidarbha region face a lot of difficulties in getting the flights and have very often to wait for days together to get the flights.

The Central Haj Committee at its meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2001 have also adopted a resolution urging upon the Government to declare Nagpur airport as one of the embarkation point. The Airports Authority of India have also taken steps to make the airport fit for the operation of wide bodied aircraft like B-747 for the Haj flights.

The next Haj yatra is to commence from 14<sup>th</sup> January, 2002 and as such it is necessary that immediate decision to declare Nagpur as one of the embarkation point need to be taken so that the Haj yatris are informed by the Central Haj Committee about their choice for taking the flights for Mecca and Jeddah.

I would, therefore, request the Government to make the necessary announcement in this regard immediately.