

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2735
ANSWERED ON:10.05.2006
DISPLEASURE OF HAJ COMMITTEES OVER ARRANGEMENTS
Jai Prakash Shri

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that Haj Committees of various States have expressed their displeasure over the arrangements made during Haj by the Indian Embassy situated in Saudi Arabia;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has inquired into the said allegations;
- (c) if so, the outcome thereof; and
- (d) the steps being taken by the Government to improve the existing arrangements made for Haj pilgrims in Saudi Arabia?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED)

(a), (b), (c) and (d). Yes. Main displeasure was about accommodation. As many of the buildings were demolished by Saudi authorities for reconstruction, some rearrangement in accommodation was necessitated. The State Committees have appreciated it. A high level composite delegation led by Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs, including officials from the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Air India and the Chairman and Members of the Central Haj Committee, visited Saudi Arabia to discuss arrangements for the Haj pilgrims. An Annual Haj Review Meeting was held with the participation of the Ambassador of India to Saudi Arabia and the Consul General of India in Jeddah and discussions were held with the Saudi Arabian authorities and the Saudi Arabian Airlines with a view to further improve arrangements for the Haj pilgrims. After extensive discussions, the Haj Action Plan, new parameters and rates for accommodation for pilgrims during the forthcoming Haj 2006-II, air transportation arrangements, plan for preparatory activities in India and details of pilgrim facilitation program in Saudi Arabia were finalized. These steps would help further improve Haj management.