

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No.2861
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.03.2018**

REDUCTION OF AIR FARE FOR HAJ PILGRIMS

**2861. SHRIMATI CHHAYA VERMA:
SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD:
CH. SUKHRAM SINGH YADAV:**

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the air fare of Haj pilgrims proceeding on Haj yatra this year has been reduced upto 45 per cent;
- (b) if so, whether more air fare was being charged by increasing air fare from Haj pilgrims in name of Haj subsidy for last several years;
- (c) the names of airlines which have started operations this year for Haj pilgrims and whether more airlines are desirous to take Haj pilgrims and whether due to coming of more airlines Haj yatra for Haj pilgrims is likely to be possible at lower fares; and
- (d) if so, details thereof?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS
(SHRI MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI)**

- (a) and (b) Air travel arrangements for the pilgrims going through Haj Committee of India (HCoI), a statutory organization under Ministry of Minority Affairs are made through the Ministry of Civil Aviation, which is the nodal Ministry in this regard. Air travel cost depends on the lowest price discovered for each embarkation point through competitive bidding in which several airlines of Saudi Arabia and India participate. As per the bilateral agreement with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, bids were invited from the scheduled airlines of India and Saudi Arabia for Haj 2018 air charter operations from 20 Embarkation Points (EPs). Based on the L1 rates, Air India (07 EPs), Saudi Airlines (07 EPs) and Flynas (06 EPs) have been selected to operate for air transportation of pilgrims for Haj 2018. A comparison of the lowest airfare arrived through competitive bidding for Haj 2014 and Haj 2018 (excluding taxes, airport charges and applicable Haj subsidy) reveals that rates quoted by the airlines have substantially come down. The comparative list of lowest airfare quoted by airlines in US dollars for Haj 2014 and 2018 is in the annexure.

(c) & (d) For Haj 2018 air charter operations, Air India, Saudi Airlines and Flynas of Saudi Arabia has been selected for Haj charter operations. As per the bilateral agreement with Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, bids are invited from all the scheduled airlines of India and Saudi Arabia and the bids are awarded to the airlines on the basis of the lowest rates arrived through competitive bidding. It is the endeavor of the Government to bring the airfares down through competitive bidding within the framework of the annual bilateral agreement with Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

ANNEXURE REFERRED IN REPLY TO PART (a) & (b) OF RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2861 FOR 20.03.2018 RAISED BY SHRIMATI CHHAYA VERMA, SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD AND CH. SUKHRAM SINGH YADAV REGARDING REDUCTION OF AIRFARE FOR HAJ PILGRIMS

LOWEST AIRFARE QUOTED BY AIRLINES FOR HAJ 2014 AND HAJ 2018

Sr. No.	Embarkation point (EP)	2014 Lowest air fare (in US\$)	2018 Lowest air fare (in US\$)
1.	Srinagar	2635	1238
2.	Mangalore	1778	1000
3.	Gaya	1798	1200
4.	Goa	1491	990
5.	Nagpur	1322	834
6.	Bhopal	1496	1100
7.	Ranchi	1656	1300
8.	Mumbai	1028	695
9.	Aurangabad	1346	1020
10.	Jaipur	1224	930
11.	Hyderabad	1074	784
12.	Ahmedabad	1028	795
13.	Cochin	1129	924
14.	Lucknow	1157	967
15.	Kolkata	1249	1065
16.	Guwahati	1598	1420
17.	Chennai	1128	951
18.	Delhi	1028	867
19.	Bangalore	1128	970
20.	Varanasi	1247	1095

Note – Lowest airfare does not include applicable taxes, airport charges or air travel subsidy popularly known as Haj subsidy earlier given to airlines.