

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No.3060
TO BE ANSWERED ON 14.03.2018**

HAJ DEVOTEES

**3060. SHRI HARISH MEENA:
SHRI SISIR KUMAR ADHIKARI:**

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has signed a bilateral agreement with Saudi Arabia to revive the option of ferrying Haj devotees to Jeddah via sea route;
- (b) if so, the details of the agreement indicating the time by when the sea route will be started for Haj devotees;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to continue subsidy support for waterways services;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) In the bilateral discussions between the Indian delegation led by Union Minister of Minority Affairs with the Minister of Haj & Umrah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia held on 7th January, 2018 for the arrangements of Haj 2018, the proposal of sending Indian pilgrims via ship was conveyed to the Saudi side. The Saudi authorities while agreeing with the idea “in-principle” conveyed that at present, Jeddah Sea Port has limited capacity and indicated that further consultations would be necessary to look into logistical issues, including stay of the Indian Haj pilgrims for one or two nights at Jeddah. Considering these, no time frame has been fixed for starting the Haj pilgrimage through sea route.

(c) to (e) Does not arise in view of (a) & (b) above.
