

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. : 2332
(To be answered on the 3rd August 2023)**

HELICOPTERS AT PLACES OF PILGRIMAGE

**2332. DR. UMESH G. JADHAV
SHRI L.S. TEJASVI SURYA
SHRI PRATHAP SIHMA
SHRI ANNASHEB SHANKAR JOLLE**

**Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION
नागर विमानन मंत्री**

be pleased to state:-

- (a) the number of helicopters available in the country in Amarnath, Kedarnath, Jammu and other such places and the number of seats that are available;**
(b) whether there is a feasibility of increasing the number of helicopters for facility of citizens to travel to such pilgrimage spots and if so, the details thereof;
(c) whether the helicopter bookings are affordable and transparent and if so, the details thereof; and
(d) the measures taken by the Government to ensure safety of passengers travelling on these helicopters?

ANSWER

Minister of State in the Ministry of CIVIL AVIATION

नागर विमानन मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री

(GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD))

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- (a): The number of helicopters and availability of seats for Amarnath, Kedarnath, Jammu and other such places as informed by the respective Shrine Board/State Government is as follows**
Amarnath : Eight (08) operating and three (03) standby helicopters with 5 seats each.
Kedarnath: Eight (08) helicopter operators capable of performing 200 trips per day carrying 2200 seats, to and fro.
Hemkund Sahib : 01 helicopter operator capable of performing 60 trips per day carrying 600 seats.
Chardham Yatra: 08 Helicopter Operators providing charter services capable of performing 16 trips per day carrying 440 seats.

(b) The number of operating helicopters on such routes is as per DGCA norms.

(c) For Amarnath the bookings are available through the online mode on the portal of Shri Amarnath Shrine Board.

For Kedarnath, the bookings are done online through the IRCTC website

(d): Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued rules/regulations under Aircraft Rules 1937, Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) and Operation Circulars to ensure safety of helicopter operations in India. The compliance of these rules/regulations are checked by DGCA during certification and before granting permit to operate for commercial operations. Post certification, continued compliance of applicable regulations is ensured through periodic surveillance/ audit as per the surveillance plan of DGCA.

DGCA has issued Operations Circular (OC 02/2023) on conduct of Pilgrimage Helicopter Operations, which stipulates additional safety measures that are required to be complied by the stakeholders, namely, Shrine Boards/State Governments, helicopter operators prior to the start and during the conduct of helicopter operations. Any violation towards laid down safety regulations are dealt as per the Enforcement Policy and Procedure Manual (EPPM) of DGCA.
