

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION No.2533**  
ANSWERED ON 07.08.2024

**FACILITATION CENTRES FOR HAJ PILGRIMS**

2533. THIRU D M KATHIR ANAND:

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken any steps for facilitation centres to provide services to Haj pilgrims from Vellore Parliamentary constituency and if so, the details thereof; and  
(b) whether the Government has initiated any special passport and consular services for large number of people travelling to foreign countries especially the Arab, UAE and Middle East countries and if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS  
(SHRI KIREN RIJU)

(a): Due to the increasing digitalisation of the processes associated with Haj, a large number of services to Haj pilgrims throughout India, including those from Vellore Parliamentary constituency, are provided online digitally. These services include online filing of Haj applications, dissemination of real time information through SMS/ Haj Committee of India website, updation of pilgrim's medical records online, to provide better medical services, and the Haj Suvidha app, which not only provides convenient access to the pilgrims to the training content, details pertaining to accommodation, flight, baggage etc. but is also a convenient medium for grievance redressal. The initiatives of the Government of India towards digitalisation of processes have led to greater ease and convenience for the Haj pilgrims.

Moreover, every year, district level training camps are organised by the Haj Committee of India to provide training to all prospective Haj Pilgrims. For Haj-2024, training was organised for 248 Haj pilgrims at Vellore on 23.04.2024. Further facilitation services such as a dedicated helpline are also operationalised by Haj Committee of India which is accessible to all the Indian Haj pilgrims including Haj pilgrims from Vellore Parliamentary constituency.

(b): The welfare and protection of Indians abroad is the highest priority of the Government. The Government has made concerted efforts towards putting in place a robust institutional framework that ensures the welfare and safety of our nationals abroad. Indian Missions/ Posts abroad respond to any issues raised by Indians on priority. Grievances are responded through various channels like calls, walk-ins, e-mails, social media, 24x7 helplines, MADAD portal, etc. Any complaints received from the Indians abroad are taken up with the concerned authorities and the host government as the case may be, for requisite action. Our Missions and Posts remain vigilant and closely monitor the well being of Indians. In case there is any untoward incident, it is immediately taken up with the concerned authorities of the host country to ensure that the incident is properly investigated and appropriately redressed. Further, during emergency or crisis situations, our Missions/Posts abroad pro-

actively help distressed /stranded Indian nationals by providing consular assistance, food, shelter, medicine and return passage to India.

To facilitate the Haj Pilgrims, the Government of India issues a circular every year to all the Passport Issuing Authorities (PIAs) in India and sensitises the officers and staff to accord top priority to the passport applications received from the prospective Haj Pilgrims, which includes extending requisite assistance to prospective Haj applicants through various means, as per requirement, including nominating a nodal officer, opening of facilitation counters, reserving appointment slots for such Haj applicants and attending to requests/grievance petitions received from such citizens in a prompt manner.

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