



Ministry of Minority Affairs

Air Travel of Haj Pilgrims

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The responsibilities for making air travel arrangements for Haj Pilgrims selected by the Haj Committee of India is with the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA). The Annual Bilateral Agreement between India and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) provides that as per the instructions issued by General Authority of Civil Aviation (GACA), the Saudi air transport companies will share equally without any exception the transportation of Hajis with the national carrier of each country. Further as per the conditions laid down by GACA, no contracts are allowed to be made with any third party for transportation of Hajis.

During Haj operations – 2014, capacity available with Air India on its own fleet was not capable of carrying over 50,000 pilgrims from 14 embarkation points. Therefore, Air India sub-contracted the agreement by utilizing Dynamic Airways for undertaking Haj 2014 operations. There were some disruptions in the operations by sub-contractors. Keeping this in view and to ensure that future Haj operations are conducted smoothly and without inconvenience to the Haj pilgrims, it was prescribed that the airlines will not be allowed to outsource their operation to any third party for onward Haj operations. Since Haj 2015, Air India is operating Haj flights with its own fleet.

This information was given by Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, the Minister of State (IC) for Minority Affairs, in written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha today.

BCK/AK

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