

- (a) whether it is a fact that Government has received charges of corruption in the Haj pilgrimage;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has set up a high level probe to investigate the charges; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S. M. KRISHNA): (a) to (d) No specific charges of corruption in the Haj pilgrimage have been received. However, in the past, some complaints were received mainly regarding pilgrims not getting the desired category of accommodation, inadequate facilities at the place of stay, problems of local transportation etc.. Further, some complaints related to hardships faced due to delay in arrival/departure of flights, change in flight schedules and non-receipt of baggage, Zam Zam (Holy water) etc. There is a system in place for the redressal of the hardships faced by the pilgrims. The improvement in the Haj management is a continuous exercise for which the Government regularly reviews previous arrangements.

#### **National helpline for tourists**

\*399. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has planned to launch a national helpline for tourists;
- (b) if so, the time-frame in which the plan would be implemented; and
- (c) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (KUMARI SELJA): (a) to (c) Ministry of Tourism has received suggestions that the size and diversity of the country requires dissemination of information on the variety of options available for choice of destination, tourism products, transportation, accommodation and other tourism related services.

For the safety and security of tourists, responsibility for which rests with the State Governments/Union Territories, Ministry of Tourism has formulated guidelines for formation of Tourist Security Organization(s), which have been forwarded to the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations in 2008. These guidelines require the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations to obtain a three or four digit helpline telephone number from the concerned

telephone departments for the convenience of tourists which should be managed by the Tourist Security Organization. Ministry of Tourism pursues with the States that with helpline based appropriate technological solutions, they widen the scope to provide other helpful information to tourists.

#### **Slum-free cities**

\*400.DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware of the fact that slums are on the increase in the cities;
- (b) if so, measures taken to make cities slum-free;
- (c) whether Government is serious about the pronouncement in the Presidential address last year that India would be made slum-free within five years; and
- (d) if so, steps taken in this regard and budgetary allocation made for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION (KUMARI SELJA): (a) According to estimates brought out by the Town and Country Planning Organization, slum population in the country is estimated to have gone up from 46.2 million in 1991 to 61.8 million in 2001.

(b) The Government has launched the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) on December 3, 2005 aimed at provision of city-wide infrastructure and basic services to the urban poor especially slum dwellers. Under the Basic Services to the Urban Poor component of JNNURM, Additional Central Assistance is provided to 65 cities of national importance for undertaking affordable housing and basic amenities to the poor especially those residing in slums. Similar facilities are provided in small and medium towns under Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSDP) of JNNURM. The Government has also announced Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) in June 2009 aimed at making the country slum free. Under this scheme, Central support will be provided to States that are willing to assign property rights to the slum dwellers.

(c) and (d) Preparatory activities for operationalizing RAY following the pronouncement in the Presidential Address are in progress. A sum of Rs. 60 crores has been released to State Governments and UTs in March, 2010 to assist them in undertaking preparatory activities for RAY such as slum survey, developing slum MIS, GIS mapping of slums, integration of GIS & MIS and preparation of slum-free city plans and projects. The concept paper of RAY was circulated to Central