

Distribution of Quota for Haj Pilgrimage

2984. SHRI K.E. ISMAIL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that large number of Muslims in the country do undertake Haj pilgrimage every year;

(b) whether more people could not make it due to shortage of quota;

(c) if so, the mechanism and policy of distribution of quota for Haj pilgrimage;

(d) whether Government would take up the matter with Government of Saudi Arabia so that the quota is raised; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) and (b) Yes.

(c) In accordance with the Haj Agreement signed with the Government of Saudi Arabia, the Haj quota is allotted between the Haj Committee of India (HCOI) and the Private Tour Operators (PTOs). Subsequently, HCOI allocates its quota among the various States/Union Territories (UTs) in proportion to the Muslim population of that State/UT as per 2001 Census through computerized Qurrah (draw of lots).

(d) and (e) The Government of Saudi Arabia annually allocates Haj seats on the basis of Muslim population through a bilateral Agreement. Over and above its national quota, Government of India requests the Saudi Government for additional quota to accommodate the excess demand.

Vandalisation of Mahatma Gandhi's Statue in Sri Lanka

2985. SHRI T.M. SELVAGANAPATHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Batticaloa in Sri Lanka has been vandalised;

(b) whether Government has taken up this issue with Sri Lankan Government;

(c) if so, their reaction thereof;

(d) whether this was the second time that the Gandhi's statue was vandalised in Sri Lanka; and

(e) whether the statues of other Indian leaders were also vandalised earlier in Sri Lanka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) An incident of vandalism of the statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Batticaloa in Sri Lanka was reported on 6 April 2012. The statues of Robert Baden-Powell, Swami Vipulananda and Pulavarmani Periyathampi Pillai were also reportedly vandalized on the same day at Batticaloa

(b) and (c) As soon as the report came to notice, the matter was taken up with the Government of Sri Lanka as well as the provincial authorities of the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka through diplomatic channels. They were also requested to have the matter investigated and to take steps to repair and restore the statue of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Sri Lanka authorities had informed that the police in Batticaloa were investigating the case and that they had arrested some persons in this context. As per information available, the statues had since been repaired and restored to their original state.

(d) and (e) There have been no reports of vandalism of the statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Sri Lanka prior to the incident of 6 April 2012. On 9 January 2012, it was reported that the statue of Swami Vivekananda was damaged in Arayampathy-Kattankudy area in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. The local authorities had since repaired the statue.

Pakistan Handing Over Disputed Land to China

2986. SHRI ANIL DESAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistan has passed on to China some disputed territory of India and Pakistan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the Ministry would take up this matter with the United Nations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) to (c) Under the so-called Sino-Pakistan Boundary Agreement of 1963, Pakistan ceded 5,180 sq. kms of Indian Territory in Pakistan occupied Kashmir (POK) to China. Government has never recognized the so-called