

(c) whether Government proposes to provide facilities to all pilgrims going to Kailash Mansarovar akin to Haj pilgrims, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M. J. AKBAR): (a) The Kailash Mansarovar yatra is organized annually by the Ministry of External Affairs of Government of India in cooperation with the Government of the People's Republic of China through two routes. The total number of yatris who can undertake yatra this year is 1430, which includes 18 batches of a maximum of 60 yatris in each batch *via* the Lipulekh route in Uttarakhand, and 7 batches of a maximum of 50 yatris in each batch *via* the Nathu La route in Sikkim.

(b) and (c) The Government of India does not extend any direct subsidy to yatris undertaking the Kailash Manasarovar yatra. The Government of India arranges, on self-payment basis, facilities like transportation, accommodation, food, medical tests, guides, visa, porters and ponies for carrying goods and belongings of yatris. A Government official is appointed as liaison officer to accompany each batch of yatris to ensure their welfare. From time to time financial assistance is provided to Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam for improving facilities along the yatra route, and to the Indo-Tibetan Border Police for facilitating the yatra.

Status of India's membership to MTCR

2815. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has received any official communication regarding the status of India's membership to MTCR (Missile Technology Control Regime), if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(b) how would this membership help in development of India's ballistic missile development programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M. J. AKBAR): (a) Yes, this Ministry received a formal communication from the Embassy of France in New Delhi on June 27, 2016 conveying the decision regarding India's accession to the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).

(b) India has an indigenous and well developed ballistic missile programme to meet national security requirements. This programme is not dependent on India's membership of the MTCR.