



Chapter - XII

Summary of Recommendations for the New Haj Policy 2018-22

1. On quota and categories:

- a. For the next five years 2018 to 2022, the pilgrim quota for HCoI should be 70% of the total Haj quota of India.
- b. The quota of the PTOs for the next five years 2018 – 2022 should be 30% of the total Haj quota of India.
- c. The reserved category of applicants viz. 70+ and 4th timers should be abolished.
- d. The following procedure for allocations should be followed by the HCoI :-

Stage – I

Out of the total number of quota allocated to India in the agreement between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Government of India, 70% must be allocated to the HCoI and the remaining 30% should be allocated to PTOs.

Stage – II

Out of total seats allocated to HCoI under Stage – I, the seats specified for Khadim-ul-Hujjaj (625) and Government Quota (500) shall be subtracted. The



remaining seats shall be distributed across all the States and UTs in proportion to their Muslim population.

State - III

The distribution of the different States and UTs quota shall proceed as in the current policy through Qurrah or draw of lots. In case there are surplus seats generated by underutilized quota of States, the seats shall be distributed as provided in stages IV and V.

Stage - IV

The surplus seats shall first be utilized for providing upto 500 seats for Mehram. In case seats still remain after this, upto 2000 seats will be allocated to the State of Jammu & Kashmir as a special measure. The remainder of the surplus seats shall be distributed among those States and UTs that have received 500 or less Haj Applications Form (HAF) but have not been able to satisfy all the applicants, in ascending order of the number of applicants.

Stage - V

The remainder of the surplus seats after Stage IV (if any) shall be allocated to the States & UTs in proportion to the number of applications received.



Example (illustration)

Stage- I	Assume Total quota for India Allocation for HCoI (70%) Allocation for PTOs (30%)	= 1,70,000 = 1,19,000 = 51,000
Stage - II	Allocation for Khadim-ul-Hujjaj Allocation for Government Quota Total quota for distribution	= 625 = 500 = 1,17,875
Stage - III	Distribution between each State/UT proportional to its Muslim population	
Stage - IV	Presume surplus seats generated are I. Allocation for Mehram seats II. Allocation of extra seats for Jammu & Kashmir Remaining surplus seats III. Allocation for upto 500 application States/UTs with unsuccessful applicants Finally remaining surplus seats	= 20,000 = 500 = 2,000 <u>2,500</u> 17,500 = Assume 2500 = 15,000
Stage -V	These 15,000 seats shall be distributed among the others > 500 application States/UTs in proportion of the number of HAFs.	



2. Recommendation on Mehram

The conditions of male Mehram accompanying ladies should be insisted only for ladies below 45 years of age. Ladies above 45 years of age, who wish to go for Haj but who do not have a male Mehram and their school of thought permits should be allowed to travel in groups of 4 or more ladies.

3. Accommodation in Makkah

- (a) HCol could consider having one category of accommodation.
- (b) All accommodation could be hired in Azizia and other areas where large chunks of accommodations are available.
- (c) Only new, multi storied modern buildings with proper facilities should be hired. Part accommodation in a building should not be hired for the pilgrims.
- (d) Transporting pilgrims from buildings to Haram Sharif and back should be carefully planned, executed and properly supervised.
- (e) A series of buildings in the same vicinity can be taken for all the HCol pilgrims with a little bit of effort.
- (f) A rehiring understanding or agreement with building owners/management can be done for new good and big buildings, subject to the condition that if the building had complaints during the last Haj, it will not be rehired in the subsequent year.
- (g) In case certain building owners or management are not keen for such rehiring agreement or understanding, there should be the system of automatic re-hiring for the next Haj, if these buildings were without complaints and have not deteriorated since the last Haj.



- (h) The informal system of working through agents should be absolutely discouraged.
- (i) Efforts should be made at Government level for keeping the Indian Haj Pilgrims' Office in Makkah operational throughout the year.
- (j) Buildings Selection Teams and Building Selection Committees should also meet the owners or management of the buildings/hotels to ascertain prices and clarify doubts.
- (k) The Azizia rates can be further brought down with some greater effort. The rate that is finally decided should be the maximum hiring rate. New and good buildings which are being offered at cheaper rate should be taken at those lower rates. The pilgrims staying in such buildings should be refunded the balance amount by the HCol after the Haj is over and the final accounting is done by the Consulate as was the practice in the past.
- (l) The system of CGI arranging/contracting for bed sheets, pillow cover, bucket, mug, floor, wiper, disinfectant, broom, and lota for pilgrims in their buildings in Makkah should stop. The rates for the buildings that are fixed should include all these items as was the past practice.
- (m) All the personnel who have been involved in measuring buildings, dealing with agents/owners/representatives/management of buildings as well as checking



bills and making payments should be removed from this work from Haj 2018. New persons should be put on these jobs with maximum tenure of three years. Proper supervision has to be exercised over them and there should be confidentiality and protection for the whistle blower.

4. Accommodation in Medina

- (a) All accommodation should be within the first ring road (Markazia area).
- (b) The cartel of contractors should be broken through a transparent open bidding (auction type) process in which HCoI and CGI representatives are present.
- (c) Prices for pilgrims should be pegged at a more reasonable rate. Contractors, who have bid for higher can be persuaded to bring down their prices.
- (d) The system of blacklisting of contractors should be strictly followed.

5. Staffing of CGI Jeddah

- (a) The Ministry of External Affairs may be requested to transfer three posts of the level of SOs to MoMA, to supervise Haj work in Makkah, Medina and Jeddah.
- (b) The Ministry of Minority Affairs may then post suitable officers drawn from the Ministry and the HCoI to these three positions.



- (c) The post of Consul (Haj) should be with the Ministry of Minority Affairs.
- (d) MEA may consider that the posting of Counsul General Jeddah should be finalized in consultation with the Ministry of Minority Affairs and the Annual Performance Appraisal Report (APAR) of the CGI and other officers performing Haj related duties should be partly assessed/reviewed by officers of appropriate seniority in the Ministry of Minority Affairs.
- (e) A Steering Committee should be constituted to deal with Haj policy and lay down key parameters for the next Haj. It should be co-chaired by Secretary MoMA and Secretary Incharge of Gulf in MEA. Other members of the Steering Committee should be officers not below the rank of Joint Secretaries from the Ministries of MoMA, External Affairs, Civil Aviation, Health, Tourism, Home, Shipping, Telecom, besides the Chairman and C.E.O. from HCol, and Ambassador, CGI and Consul Haj from Saudi Arabia.
- (f) The MEA should put in place a nodal officer with requisite staff to function as a single point interface between MEA and MoMA.
- (g) A mechanism for faster clearances and issuance of official passports for those visiting Saudi Arabia in connection with Haj and Haj arrangements should be put in place in the MEA.

6. Air transport and charter operations

- (a) It is advisable that the existing subsidy reduction plan (phasing out) be followed.



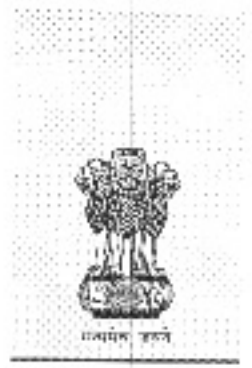
- (b) Embarkation points may be reduced from the present twenty-one (21) to nine (09). These nine are: -
- (1) Delhi (2) Lucknow (3) Kolkata (4) Ahmedabad (5) Mumbai (6) Chennai (7) Hyderabad (8) Bengaluru and (9) Cochin.
- (c) For embarkation points which lack proper Haj House facilities, the Ministry of Minority Affairs/HCol/concerned State Governments should consider having suitable Haj Houses built at these places.
- (d) The tagging of areas with each of these 09 embarkation point should be done by the HCol.
- (e) In the States and UTs from where the embarkation points are proposed to be discontinued, the facilities that have been created for pilgrims should be used for round the year training and orientation of pilgrims and also of prospective pilgrims. These facilities can also be put to other productive and innovative uses for the benefit of the community.
- (f) The Government of India should engage with the Government of Saudi Arabia and try to get the option of undertaking global tenders for the Haj charter.
- (g) During air charter operations one leg of flights go and come back empty. With a view to bring down air fares of Haj pilgrims, it would be appropriate for MoCA and MoMA to explore the possibility of using the empty flights for commercial activity.



- (h) The privatization of Air India, in case it happens, will have serious consequences on Haj air operations. MoMA, MoCA and HCoI have to consider and plan how best to overcome the challenges that would arise in case of such an eventuality.
- (i) At least two Indian language knowing cabin crew should necessarily be on each Haj charter flight.
- (j) The food that is served to the pilgrims on the Haj charter flights should be hygienically prepared and packed. Random inspection of food by HCoI/ MoCA/MoMA official should be done. Food should be non-spicy, and as far as possible, suitable to the palates of the particular region from where the pilgrims are coming.
- (k) Before pilgrims disembark at Jeddah or Medina, the airlines must necessarily give an extra food packet to each pilgrim and a bottle of water.
- (l) On the journey back from Saudi Arabia to India, the system of pre-check of luggage appears to have worked well and should not be discontinued.
- (m) Airlines staff, both crew as well as ground staff, need to be formally trained about the behaviour and attitude that is expected from them in their dealings with the Indian Haj pilgrims.

7. Other recommendations

- (a) Regarding transportation by ship, we suggest that a global Expression of Interest (EoI) from vessel owners having newer vessels of 4000 + capacity, who are willing to dedicate their ships for carrying pilgrims during the three-



month Haj season each year from Mumbai to Jeddah may be called by MoMA. EoI may be drafted with the help of Ministry of Shipping & Transport and Shipping Corporation of India.

Before calling for the EoI, it would be necessary to formally ascertain the willingness of the Saudi Government to the proposal of transportation of pilgrims by ship from India to Jeddah. Also the Security concerns that are at present, specifically regarding Somali piracy and the instability in Yemen and adjacent areas, need to be factored in.

- (b) A regular Transport Desk should be established at CGI Jeddah 15 days before pilgrims start arriving.
- (c) Regarding misplaced/misdirected baggage, the staff deputed to the airport should identify those baggage which are without proper identification and put these on the bus that is carrying those particular pilgrims to whom they belong. Only after this process is over that the rest of the baggage which have stickers/identification tag should be loaded on the buses. Only baggage with proper identification should be sent separately, if required.
- (d) Pilgrims should be instructed to carry only standard baggage with proper identification from India. Baggage in the form of bundles, loose items, items tied in bed sheets etc. and those with improper identification should not be loaded on the planes at the embarkation point from India.
- (e) All pilgrims should be accommodated within the traditional boundaries of Mina.



- (f) The Indian Haj and Branch Offices at Makkah have to ensure that pilgrims necessarily get a meal on arrival at Makkah from the Moallims and that his people assist pilgrims in the performance of their first Umrah.
- (g) Special care has to be taken to ensure that the meals at Mina and Arafat which the Moallims are supposed to provide as per the deal made with them are actually provided and that they are of reasonable quality.
- (h) It is desirable to have a planning cell in CGI/HCoI which should continue to work for developing the plan for the next Haj even before the current Haj is over.
- (i) Rates charged by Moallims should be fixed for at least a five-year period.
- (j) Moallims against whom there have been serious complaints or have been found to be non-responsive to pilgrim's grievances during Haj should be blacklisted by the Indian Mission.
- (k) Moallims who have performed well should be repeated and recognized (honoured).
- (l) The Adahi (Qurbani) Coupons should be made compulsory for each pilgrim.
- (m) The branch offices should also be assigned the duty to ensure that once the pilgrims reach their rooms, their misplaced/left baggage is traced and delivered to them at the earliest.
- (n) In the complaint register kept in buildings, the person from the branch office who visits the building, should record his name, date and time of visit always.



- (o) Selection of HMM staff need to be done in a transparent manner and with care. It must be ensured that relatives of employees already working with the CGI do not get into this temporary employment.

8. Khadim-ul-Hujjaj

- (a) The calling of nominations for Khadim-ul-Hujjaj should be done immediately after one Haj is over.
- (b) It should be ensured that the persons going as Khadim-ul-Hujjaj are in good physical condition and mentally alert.
- (c) The training of all Khadim-ul-Hujjaj by Haj Committee of India has to be necessarily done in India. Without training he should not be sent to Saudi Arabia.
- (d) Khadim-ul-Hujjaj should be tagged with specific groups of 200 pilgrims from the State, as far as possible, and they should travel to Saudi Arabia before their group of pilgrims arrives.
- (e) The Khadim-ul-Hujjaj on arriving in Saudi Arabia should also be trained at the Main Haj Office at Medina/Makkah and informed about the pilgrims who have been tagged with them.
- (f) It should be the duty of the Khadim-ul-Hujjaj to wear the sleeveless waist-coat with India colours on top of their normal clothes at all times except when they may be in Ehram. This should be insisted upon and checked.



सत्यमेव जयते

- (g) The HCoI should get the requisite number of waist-coats stitched in 40, 42 and 44 cm sizes in appropriate numbers in khadi cloth or cotton with the appropriate markings.
- (h) The Khadim-ul-Hujjaj should necessary mark attendance at their respective branch office in Medina/Makkah every day, once in the forenoon by 10 AM and the other at night before Isha prayers.
- (i) On return from Haj, the Khadim-ul-Hujjaj should submit a detailed report to the respective State Haj Committee and the Haj Committee of India.
- (j) Each branch office incharge at Makkah and Medina should submit an overall assessment report on the Khadim-ul-Hujjaj and comment on the efficacy of the Khadim-ul-Hujjaj system.
- (k) MoMA should have a review of the KuH performance after Haj 2018 and decide if there is need to continue with the system of Khadim-ul-Hujjaj.

9. Haj Goodwill Delegation

- (a) The present system of sending a two member Haj Goodwill Delegation for Haj each year by the Government of India should continue.
- (b) The Haj Goodwill Delegation should make it a point to enquire into the welfare of the pilgrims, visit the places where pilgrims are staying at Makkah, Medina and during Haj, and learn about the problems/difficulties that they are facing.



- (c) One Liaison Officer/ staff who is fluent in Arabic and having full knowledge about Haj and one messenger should be attached to the delegation for the whole period.
- (d) The delegation should be requested to give a formal report after Haj. Secretarial assistance to the delegation should be given by the Consulate in Saudi Arabia and the MoMA in India (if required).

10. Training

- (a) Training should be made compulsory for all the five categories mentioned in the report viz. (i) Trainers; (ii) Pilgrims; (iii) Deputationists; (iv) Khadim-ul-Hujjaj; and (v) Haj Man Month staff.
- (b) Training manuals for each category should be prepared in detail/updated.

11. Private Tour Operators (PTOs)

- (a) The initial screening process of application forms should be out-sourced to a panel of 3-4 Chartered Accountant firms.
- (b) A committee of 2 or 3 experts should be set up to consider representations of PTOs aggrieved by the decisions of the Haj Division, MoMA.
- (c) The Haj Division should develop a robust portal for online receipt and processing of PTOs applications. The Portal should have a strong analytics and



reporting component for tabulation of data on key parameters. The system of manual applications can be done away with for certain specified categories of PTOs such as those having IATA accreditation, ISO certification etc.

The system can be further refined by introducing an accreditation system whereby all PTOs are encouraged to get accredited and get a specific rating. These ratings can be used to give concessions in processing requirements.

(d) The number of categories of PTOs may be increased to at least three in the following manner: -

- (i) **Category - A:** PTOs having experience of 12 or more Haj with an average annual turnover of Rs 5 crore or more from Haj/Umrah operations in the preceding two years and fulfilling other terms and conditions for being eligible as a PTO will be allotted 200 seats each. Category - A PTOs can be allotted up to 30% of the total quota for PTOs. In case the total quota for Category - A is exhausted and still some Category - A PTOs remain, then the quota per PTO can be reduced proportionately to satisfy all the PTOs upto a lower limit of 150 seats each. If on the 150 seats per PTO quota, there still remain some PTOs, then the Qurrah will have to be operated. In case all the PTOs are covered after allocating 200 seats to each and still some seats remain, then these extra seats shall be transferred to Category - B.



- (ii) **Category - B:** PTOs having experience of minimum five Haj with an average annual turnover of Rs 2 crore or more from Haj/Umrah operations in the preceding two years and fulfilling other terms and conditions for being eligible as a PTO will be allotted 100 seats each. Category - B PTOs can be allotted up to 40% of the total quota for PTOs. In case total seats of Category - B are exhausted and some PTOs of Category - B still remain, then Qurrah will have to be done. If surplus seats remain after allotment, then they will be transferred to Category - C.
- (iii) **Category - C:** PTOs having experience of less than five Haj with an average annual turnover of Rs. one crore or more from Haj/Umrah operations in the preceding two years and fulfilling other terms and conditions for being eligible as a PTO will be allotted 50 seats each. In case of a PTO having less than 2 Haj experience (i.e. no Haj or one Haj experience), it will require additional experience of atleast 5 Umrah in the preceding 7 years. Category - C PTOs can be allotted up to 30% of the total quota for PTOs. In case after allotting 50 seats each, still some PTOs remain, then Qurrah will have to be done. In case surplus seats remain after allotting 50 seats all Category -C PTOs, then these surplus seats will be transferred to Category - A/ Category - B as per their requirement.
- (e) There should be a comprehensive empanelment policy for PTOs which the Haj Division should formulate that would facilitate easier and quicker renewals. The Haj Division should prescribe the terms & conditions for the same. The PTO empanelment policy should have a provision for migrating to a higher category on fulfilling the eligibility conditions. The empanelment process



should include scrutiny of documents as well as physical inspection of the premises of the PTO.

- (f) PTOs that misrepresent or mislead the authorities in their applications and documents should be automatically debarred from applying for at least five subsequent years besides forfeiture of security deposit. This debarment will apply to all companies/firms in which the director/proprietor/partner of the debarred firm is present.
- (g) The PTOs should ensure that the Haj pilgrims contracted by them make the entire payment of the agreed Haj package to the firm's account individually through their bank accounts. In case of some members of the group/ family not having bank accounts, payment from spouse or parent's or close relative's bank account may be allowed subject to declaration by the concerned person or his guardian that he does not have a bank account. Further, the PTO will be required to render a detailed account of the payments received from the Hajjis along with the list of names and particulars and bank account numbers of the hajjis from which payment has been received. All this information will have to be furnished before departure of the PTOs hajjis from India with provision of specific exemption to allow submission within 30 days of completion of the core haj period. In case of failure to furnish full details or misleading information, the firm will be liable to be debarred from getting haj quota in future.
- (h) The applicant PTO should have a website in its name giving details about the company, its owners/directors/partners, details of branches, Offices etc., details of employees engaged, details of Haj packages offered including the type of



facilities like details of air travel ,category of accommodation, local transport, meals etc at Makkah and Madinah, insurance, details of personnel to accompany the Hajis group, duration of stay and facilities at Mina-Arafat area should be clearly indicated alongwith the all inclusive cost of the packages.

(i) In the existing policy of PTOs, the following ambiguities need to be rectified:-

- (i) The policy in annexure A(ii) stipulates that services should include medical insurance however there is no mention of insurance for accidents etc. The Hajis going through HCoI avail of group accident insurance policies. The Hajis of PTOs should also get the same dispensation.
- (ii) The policy in annexure A(vi) stipulates minimum capital of Rs 15 lakh in any of the last two years duly supported by latest balance sheet audited by statutory auditors and audit report. It is further clarified in annexure D(vi) which says amount of capital should be considered as shown in the audited financial statements of the PTO for the respective year. The capital should be defined as 'Capital employed' which has a specific definition as per accounting standards.
- (iii) The policy in annexure A (vii) stipulates that 'proof of payment made through banking or other authorised channels towards purchase of tickets and hiring of accommodation' etc. is to be submitted. The term 'other authorised channels' is not clarified. Government may amplify the channels that are acceptable forms of transactions in consultation with the CA firm.



- (iv) The policy in annexure A (ix) stipulates that the PTO with adverse police report or involved in criminal court cases will not be considered at all. This needs to be clarified after getting legal opinion.
- (j) The condition of quantum of fixed deposit required may be revised as 50, 40 and 30 lakhs for category A, B and C respectively. Since the element of physical inspection will also be involved, the processing fee per PTO could be Rs.25,000.
- (k) The annexures of the current policy have several other duplications and redundancies. The Ministry should examine and remove such anomalies.
- (l) It is recommended that the PTOs that have conducted Haj tours should be given the nomenclature of Haj Group Organiser (HGO) by the MoMA.
- (m) It is recommended that the HCoI quota be fixed at 70% of the total Haj quota for the five years 2018-2022. The PTO quota should be 30% of the total Haj quota for the five years 2018-2022.

12. Recommendation on amendments to Haj Committee Act, 2002

- (i) In the preamble of the Act, Umrah and Ziyarat to Syria, Iran, Iraq and Jordan may be added.
- (ii) The reference to "pilgrim pass" needs to be deleted (Section 9 and 35).
- (iii) An officer not below the rank of Joint Secretary to the Government of India in the Ministry of Minority Affairs is required to be added as an ex-officio member of the Haj Committee (Section 4).



- (iv) In the duties assigned to the Committee (Section 9), the following sub-section may be added: -

“To utilize the infrastructure of the Haj Committee and State Haj Committees for the educational and social upliftment of the Muslim community”.

- (v) The Executive Officer of the State Committee should be selected from amongst officers of the State Government not below the rank of Joint Secretary to the State Government.

- (vi) A provision needs to be added that the election of Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Haj Committee should be conducted by the Secretary in the Ministry of Minority Affairs (Section 7).

13. Recommendation regarding Haj Committee of India

- (i) Government may consider giving the Chairman, Vice-Chairmen and Members of the Haj Committee certain status levels.
- (ii) Financial delegations to the Haj Committee need to be increased. A qualified Finance Officer with adequate experience of Finance & Accounts should be deployed by the HCol.
- (iii) There should be a specific provision that the Haj Committee of India should be exempted from Income-tax, GST, local taxes etc. and also that the air charter service that are done for the benefit of the pilgrims, be exempted from Service Tax/GST.



- (iv) HCoI staff in the Delhi office should be transferred out every three years starting immediately.
- (v) The Haj Committee of India should have a proper regional office in Delhi in a proper building at a better location and managed by a senior officer not below the rank of Dy. C.E.O..
- (vi) There should be an Ombudsman for the Haj Committee of India and State Haj Committees who should be based in the Delhi Office of HCoI.

14. Recommendation regarding future course of action

While the Committee does not favour replacement of the Haj Committee of India (HCoI) with a Haj Corporation, it does recommend that the Government carry the discussion forward on the idea of (a) a Corporation that would be responsible for Haj for well off Muslims, Umrah and Ziyarat, competing with the PTOs and which could also manage savings of prospective pilgrims and (b) a Mutual Fund by SBI that is "Sharia Compliant" with appropriate nomenclature.


(Afzal Amanullah)
Convener


(Shafi S. Parkar)
Member


(Qaiser Shamim)
Member


(Kamal Faruqui)
Member


(J. Alam)
Member Secretary