

GST on Haj pilgrimage has been reduced

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INVC NEWS New Delhi , Union Minister for Minority Affairs Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi today said here that for the first time after the Independence, more than 2300 Muslim women from India will go on Haj 2019 without Mehram (male companion). While inaugurating new office space of Haj Division, Minority Affairs Ministry, at RK Puram in New Delhi, Shri Naqvi said that 2340 Muslim women from various states of the country have applied to go on Haj 2019 without Mehram. On the directions of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, this year too, the Minority Affairs Ministry has made arrangement to send these women on Haj without lottery system. For the first time, the Centre's Modi Government had lifted ban on women going to Haj without Mehram last year, which resulted into about 1300 Indian Muslim women going on Haj 2018 without any male companion. They had been exempted from the lottery system. He said that above 2 lakh 67 thousand applications had been received for Haj 2019 out of which 1,64,902 applications were online. Shri Naqvi said that for the first time after the Independence, a record number of Muslims from India performed Haj 2018 and that too without any "subsidy". Record 1,75,025 Muslims from India performed Haj 2018 which include about 48 per cent women. The Minister said that GST on Haj pilgrimage has been reduced from 18 per cent to 5 per cent which will ensure that about Rs 113 crore will be saved by Haj pilgrims during 2019 Haj. Reduction in GST on Haj pilgrimage will ensure significant decrease in air fare from various embarkation points. Air fare from Srinagar will be reduced by Rs 11377.07, Ahmadabad will be reduced by Rs 7305.95, from Aurangabad by Rs 9373.68, from Delhi by Rs 7967.62, from Gaya by Rs 11027.85, from Guwahati by Rs 13049.63; from Ranchi by Rs 11946.84, from Kolkata by Rs 9787.22, Hyderabad by Rs 7204.87 this year. Shri Naqvi said that making the Haj process completely online/digital has helped to make the entire Haj process transparent and pro-pilgrims. The Ministry of Minority Affairs, in cooperation with Saudi Arabia Haj Consulate, Haj Committee of India and other concerned agencies, has completed 2019 Haj preparations 3 months before schedule to make this Haj more comfortable for the pilgrims.

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