

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (KUMARI UMA BHARATI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Total number of tourists who visited Kashmir during the year 1997 and 1998 were 16,138 and 1,09,883 respectively.

(c) Various measures taken by the Government to attract more tourists in the State include renovating and reviving of infrastructure, direct marketing of products in different metros of the countries, and arranging number of cultural programmes etc.

Decline in Tourists Inflow

196. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the growth of tourist traffic was almost 0% for the year 1998-99;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the prevailing socio-political and recessionary conditions have not been conducive to foreign tourists; and

(c) if so, what are Government's views on this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (KUMARI UMA BHARATI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Creation of Tourism Office in NE Region

197. DR. (SMT.) JOYASREE GOSWAMI MAHANTA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether an office of the India Tourism for NE was created;

(b) if so, the objective thereof and present location of the office at Guwahati, achievements made so far on each of the objective;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Regional Director is operating his office from Culcutta;

(d) if not, the number of days he actually officiated in Assam in

each of the last 24 months; and

(e) the details of programmes initiated and achievements made so far towards development of tourism in the NE through this Office?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (KUMARI UMA BHARATI): (a) Tourist Offices of Govt. of India are already functioning from 4 different locations in the North East, *Viz.*, Guwahati, Naharlagun, Imphal and Shillong since 1981, 1982, 1983 and 1982, respectively.

(b) The objective of the Govt. of India Tourist Offices in North East and elsewhere is to promote tourism. The Govt. of India Regional Tourist Office in Guwahati is located at GL Publication Complex, G.S. Road, Ulubari, Guwahati-781 007 Assam.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The Regional Director is functioning from the Guwahati Office w.e. 13.7.1999.

(e) The newly created Regional Office has organised/initiated tourism related activities in order to develop tourism in the North East such as Organisation of Press Conference, coordination with members of the Classification Committee for Inspection and Classification of Hotels, imparting guidance to the Association of Tour Operators, sponsoring the visit of Travel writers/Journalists/ Tour Operators. Participation in fares and marts etc. These efforts of this office have helped in evoking an awareness about North East in general and promotion of tourism to North East.

Development of Tourism in Gujarat

198. **SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE:** Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Gujarat has sent any proposal for development of tourism in the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether there is any scheme under the consideration of Government for introducing more tourist centres in the State particularly in the backward areas of the State?