

(c) the measures envisaged to check falling profits of ITDC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) and (b) With a view to develop tourism, ITDC have decided to construct new hotels at Chandigarh and Anandpursahib. As regards disinvestment of ITDC, no decision has so far been taken by the Government.

(c) The measures taken by ITDC to check declining trend of profitability include *inter alia* enhanced emphasis on product improvement; aggressive marketing plan; training/motivation of manpower, periodical review of performance at Corporate/Ministry level and cost control by exercising economy in expenditure.

Development Plan for Domestic and External Tourism

1235. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the comprehensive development plan for domestic and external tourism in the country;

(b) the profits from tourism industry in the country; and

(c) the measures to be taken by Government for development of tourism industry in the North-Eastern region State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) The comprehensive development plan for tourism includes Infrastructure development, Product development and diversification, Promotion of self employment opportunities, Tourist Facilitation, Human Resource Development, Research and Computerisation, Promotion and Marketing, Environmental Protection and Cultural Preservation, Monitoring and Evaluation, Provision of Incentives and Strengthening the organisation.

(b) The Foreign Exchange Earnings from Tourism during 1997-98 were Rs. 11032.69 crores.

(c) To develop tourism in the North Eastern region, Ministry of Tourism has extended Central financial assistance during 1997-98 as per details given below:

State	Projects	Amt. Sanctioned (Rs. in lakhs)
Arunachal Pradesh	9	270.00
Assam	12	288.88
Manipur	5	186.11
Meghalaya	5	85.70
Mizoram	6	142.45
Nagaland	4	116.90
Tripura	8	126.68
TOTAL	49	1217.72

For the year 1998-99, Ministry of Tourism has prioritised 77 projects amounting to Rs. 1603 lakhs for Central Financial Assistance to North Eastern region.

कैलाश-मानसरोवर मार्ग

1236. श्री कुशोक नवांग चम्बा स्तनजिन: क्या पर्यटन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या लद्दाख के लोगों ने कैलाश-मानसरोवर मार्ग को वहां से खोलने के लिए कई बार सरकार से अनुरोध किया है;

(ख) क्या देनचोक से यह मार्ग न केवल आसान और सुरक्षित है बल्कि कैलाश तक की दूरी दो या तीन दिन में तय की जा सकती है; और

(ग) सरकार द्वारा इस संबंध में अब तक उठाए गए ठोस कदमों का व्यौरा क्या है?

पर्यटन मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री ओमाक अपांग): (क) से (ग) कैलाश मानसरोवर यात्रा की बढ़ती हुई लोकप्रियता, इसके वर्तमान मार्ग में आने वाली बाधाओं और सीमा के क्षेत्रों, विशेष रूप से लद्दाख के निवासियों के अनुरोध पर इस यात्रा के लिए एक विकल्प मार्ग बनाए जाने की संभावना वर्ष 1992 से विचाराधीन है। इस अवधि के दौरान चीन की ओर से काफी सुझाव रखे गए। वर्ष 1993 में यह प्रस्ताव किया गया कि एक विकल्प मार्ग, हिमाचल प्रदेश में शिमकी

ला से हो कर खोला जा सकता है और वर्ष 1994 से लद्दाख, जम्मू व कश्मीर से हो कर डेमचोक मार्ग का भी प्रस्ताव किया गया है। चीन वालों ने दर्शाया है कि विकल्प मार्गों के लिए हमारे प्रस्ताव तिब्बती स्वायत्त क्षेत्रों (टीएचआर) में स्थानीय प्राधिकारियों के विचारधीन है। उन्होंने, जमीन पर नए मार्ग खोलने में पेशानी बताई है क्योंकि इसमें, मैदानी इलाकों में खराब सड़क अवस्था और आवास व संचार हेतु उचित आधारित संरचना के अभाव में काफी लम्बी दूरी तय करनी शामिल है। उन्होंने यह भी बताया कि इन दूरवर्ती क्षेत्रों में आधारित संरचना का विकास करना कोई आसान कार्य नहीं है और विकल्प मार्गों के लिए सुविधाओं का निर्माण करने में बहुत समय लग सकता है। भारत की तरफ से डेमचोक (लद्दाख) से मार्ग के बारे में भी चीनी प्राधिकारियों ने बताया कि कैलाश मानसरोवर की ओर जाने वाला चीनी मार्ग एक मिलिटरी मार्ग है और इसे तीर्थ यात्रियों के लिए खोला जाना मुश्किल है।

Issue of Liberal Visas to Foreign Tourists

1237. SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken various fresh initiatives, policy decisions including system reforms in issue of liberal visas to the visiting foreign tourists to develop and promote tourism industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof, alongwith proposals under consideration;

(c) the details of action plan finalised for the current year and Nith Plan period for tourists destinations and likely impact thereof; and

(d) the details of proposals cleared/pending for Maharashtra?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) and (b) Government of India follows liberal policy regarding grant of visa to foreign tourists. All Indian Missions abroad have been delegated powers to issue six months multiple entry visa to foreign tourists. Generally such visas are issued on the same day Ten Years Tourist visa for U.S. national only has also been introduced recently on reciprocal basis with

the stipulation that stay during each visit shall not exceed 180 days.

(c) and (d) Development of Tourism is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments, However, on the specific request of the State Government of Maharashtra, the Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned Rs 169.84 lakhs for 12 projects in 1997-98. During the current financial year, 10 projects have been prioritised for Maharashtra. No proposal is pending clearance in the Ministry of Tourism.

Computerised link between Darjeeling-Kalimpong-Kurseon Siliguri

1238. SHRI DAWA LAMA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is no computerised link between Darjeeling-Kalimpong-Kurseon and Siliguri as a result of which tourists are facing problems in reservations;

(b) whether it is also a fact that for want of computerised network foreign tourists are facing problems to reserve accommodations in advance; and

(c) the action proposed by Government to solve the problem for promotion of tourism?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) Computerised reservation facilities are already available at Siliguri and provision of such facilities at Darjeeling will be considered by the Ministry of Railways for inclusion in the Annual Plan 1999-2000 subject to feasibility and availability of funds/resources. Computerised reservation facilities are capital intensive and also necessitate significant recurring costs. The reservation workload at Kalimpong and Kurseon is not of sufficiently high order to warrant this level of investment at present.

(b) and (c) A project has been undertaken for networking of the five systems of Calcutta, Mumbai, Chennai, Delhi and Secunderabad. The software for networking has already been developed. The first