

Changes In Draft Policy on Tourism

2787. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of changes are being considered in the draft policy on tourism in order to assign high priority to the tourism sector,

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when these changes are likely to be notified; and

(c) whether these changes also include a proposal to liberalise visa norms to attract more tourists into the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) and (b) The draft national Tourism Policy has been further revised to include some of the action points relating to other Ministries like Civil Aviation, Railways, Surface Transport, Culture, Home Affairs, etc. The revised draft Policy has been circulated to all the concerned Ministries.

(c) Yes, Sir.

Tourism Scenario in Kashmir

2788. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the present tourism scenario in Kashmir;

(b) whether there has been a pick up in tourist flow in Kashmir in recent years;

(c) whether several western countries have put Kashmir on the negative advisory and pinned it as an unsafe destination for their citizens; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to erase this image?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) and (b) The tourism scenario in Kashmir has improved considerably during 1998 with the revival of tourist facilities and increase in tourist traffic.

(e) and (d) Some of the countries in the West have issued advisories against travel to Kashmir. The steps taken to change the image include invitation of Consular staff from various embassies in Delhi and the travel agents and tour operators from abroad to visit Kashmir and sponsoring travel agents and houseboat owners to participate in different travel fairs and exhibitions abroad.

Casinos and Liquor Shops in Uttarakhand

2789. KUMARI NIRMALA DESHPANDE: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the department of Tourism is opening casinos and liquor shops in Uttarakhand to attract tourists; and

(b) whether the local people view it as an act of disrespect and affront to the holy places?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Tourism in Arunachal Pradesh

2790. SHRI NABAM REBIA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State of Arunachal Pradesh figures in the tourism map of India;

(b) whether restriction like PAP and RAP have been lifted to enable free flow of tourists into the State;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) RAP system does not apply to Arunachal Pradesh. The entire Arunachal Pradesh is covered under PAP regime. The relaxation of PAP system is a continuous process. In July 1998, the

Govt, has opened up following circuits for foreign tourists in the state:—

1. Passighat-Jcngging-Yingkiong
2. Bhalukpung-Bomdila-Tawang
3. Roing-Mayodia-Anini
4. Tezu-Hayuling

The other circuits already opened for foreign tourists and Itanagar-Ziro-along-Pasighat-Miao-Namdapha-Daporijo, Itanagar-Ziro-Along-PasighaMtanagar, Margherita-Miao-Namdapha-Margherita, Tezpur-Sejusa-Bhaiukpong-TIPI-Tezpur.

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STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS CORRECTING ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

- I. Unstarred Question No. 37 and 1583 Answered on 23rd July, 1997 and 6th August, 1997.

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table of the House two statements (in English and Hindi) correcting the replies given in the Rajya Sabha on the 23.07.1997 to the Unstarred Question No. 37 regarding the IAF aircraft lost in crashes and on 06.08.1997, to the Unstarred Question No. 1583 regarding helicopters shot-down/met accidents, respectively. (Placed in Library. Sec No. Lt-2357/98)

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA (Karnataka) Sir, these are corrections to statements made in 1997. Afterwards, Parliament had met several times. Why should they take so much time to come out with corrections? What was the Ministry doing all these days? Why should they take such a long time?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: These questions, as I said, figured in this House on 23rd July and 6th August, last year. In April this year, during investiture ceremony, I got to know the actual facts of this case and I sought the information. It took me some time to get

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that information. As soon as the whole information came to me, I felt that this was information that ought to have been given but had not been given to the House, and I sought the permission of the Chair in September. I had written a letter to the hon. Deputy Chairperson in September. Now, here I am with a clarification.

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: I agree. I am not questioning the genuineness of the hon. Minister, But my question is, what was the Ministry doing for one year without noticing this mistake?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: made a point that the reply was given consciously by the Government and that consciously given reply would have remained if, in April, this matter had not come to my notice, I took a policy decision that the information should be shared with the House.

II. Unstarred Question No. 4746 Answered on 29th July, 1998.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): Sir, I lay on the Table a Statement (in English and Hindi) correcting the reply given in the Rajya Sabha on the 29th July, 1998 to the Unstarred Question 4746 regarding shortfall of foreign tourists after nuclear tests. (Placed in Library. See No. LT-2358/98)

- III. Unstarred Question No. 2010 Answered on 16th December, 1998.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): Sir, I lay on the Table a Statement (in English and Hindi) correcting the reply given in the Rajya Sabha on the 16th December, 1998 to the Unstarred Question 2010 regarding observance of 1999 as "Visit India year." [Placed in Library. See No. LT-2359/98]