

RAJYA SABHA

Thursday, the 24th February, 1994/5th
Phalgun, 1915 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock MR.
CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

विदेशी पर्यटकों की संख्या में कमी आना

*41. श्री विठ्ठलराव माधवराव जाधव: क्या नागर
विमानन और पर्यटन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि विदेशी पर्यटकों की संख्या
में तथा पर्यटन के माध्यम से अर्जित होने वाली विदेशी
मुद्रा में कमी आयी है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो इसके क्या कारण हैं और गत दो
वर्षों के दौरान पर्यटन के माध्यम से कितनी विदेशी मुद्रा
अर्जित हुई तथा भारत में आने वाले पर्यटकों की संख्या
कितनी रही; और

(ग) इस स्थिति में सुधार लाने के लिये सरकार क्या
कदम उठा रही है?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND
TOURISM (DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM)
(SMT. SUKHBANS KAUR): (a) to (c) A
statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (c) There has been some decline in
foreign tourist arrivals in the first few months
of 1993. This is mainly due to the aftermath of
the Ayodhya incidents, Law and order problems
in various parts of the country, bomb blasts at
Bombay and Calcutta, Maharashtra earthquake
and prolonged elections in four major states and
strikes in National Airlines.

However the tourism scenario in India had
made a major break-through in December, 1993,
which recorded the highest tourist arrivals for a
month during the last 45 years. The positive
trend is continuing, with January, 1994
recording a 28.4% growth in arrivals.

The Foreign Exchange earnings continued
to show positive growth. The foreign tourist
arrivals and foreign exchange earnings for the
last two years are as under:—

1-2 RSS/ND/96

Year	Foreign Tourist Arrivals	Foreign change Earnings	Ex- change Earnings
1992	18,67,651	Rs. 3916	Crores
1993	17,64,830	Rs. 4251	Crores

The steps taken by the Government to boost
tourist arrivals include intensive reassurance
campaigns and aggressive marketing in the
overseas markets, strengthening of publicity and
promotional efforts and development of tourist
attractions and facilities.

SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO
JADHAV: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am surprised to
see the reply given by the hon. Minister. It has
been stated that the decline in the tourist arrivals
is due to the aftermath of the Ayodhya incidents,
law and order problems in various parts of the
country, bomb blasts at Bombay and Calcutta,
Maharashtra earthquake, prolonged elections in
four major States and strikes in the national
Airlines. Sir, these factors had nothing to do with
the tourist arrivals. Even the bomb blasts took
place in Bombay and Calcutta and, as far as my
knowledge goes, there are no major tourist spots
in Bombay and Calcutta. Agra is not situated in
Bombay; Ajanta and Ellora too are not situated
either in Bombay or in Calcutta. What a
wonderful reply! So, I don't agree with the reply
of the hon. Minister. I don't understand what
relationship the bomb blasts and earthquake
have with the reduction in the number of tourists
in our country. The Minister has given his own
reasons for the decline in the tourist arrivals.
...(Interruptions)

SHRI N. E. BALARAM: They are afraid of
elections.

SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO
JADHAV: Let the Minister reply. The reply
further goes on to state that the tourism scenario
in India had made a major breakthrough in
1993...

MR. CHAIRMAN: You don't have to read
out the whole answer. You please put your
question. Why do you read out the Minister's
answer?

SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO
JADHAV: Sir, my question is concerned very
much with the reply given by the hon. Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Please put your
question.

SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV: Normally, tourists come to our country in the months of November and December because of the winter season. And, as per the reply of the hon. Minister, the number of tourists was around 18,67,000 in the last year and this year, it is around 17,64,000 only, but the foreign exchange earnings for this year are more. Sir, the tourism-related capital goods are subject to Customs duty which ranges from 100 per cent to 150 per cent. Even hotels and hospitality services are subject to Expenditure Tax and nearly 40 per cent of the earnings goes to the State exchequers. It also appears that a tourism development plan to the extent of Rs. 39,000 crores has been approved by the Committee of Secretaries...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now will you kindly put the question? There are so many people...
(Interruptions)

SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV: Sir, the Government of India has made a massive plan for the development of tourism. I observe that they are proposing to increase the number of tourists from 1.33 million to 5 million by the end of 1995. The number of tourist rooms, at present, is 40,000 and they are planning to increase the tourist rooms either in the metropolitan cities or in the major tourist spots. So, what is their planning in this regard and what about the reduction of taxes? The tourists are being overtaxed in the form of Customs duties...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do put one question. You cannot make a speech. The Minister cannot be expected to answer everything.

•SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV: This is my question. I want to know what infrastructure they are going to create under the tourist development plan.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please answer this question.

SHRIMATI SUKHBANS KAUR: Sir, I am surprised that the Member has spoken regarding tourist arrivals. A tourist anywhere in the world goes to a place which is safe and secure. He wants peace and security. The moment something happens in any part of the country,

the news that is flashed in the world does affect the tourist arrivals. I would like to inform the hon. Member that till November, 1992, the tourist arrivals were up by 15%. The figures are there. The Member may look at them. It was only in December, 1992, after the Ayodhya incident that there was a sudden drop to the extent of almost 20%. Afterwards, we had bomb blasts, we had an earthquake and we had elections. All these things do affect the tourists abroad. A person who wants to come to India does not know where the blasts had taken place or what distance it was from the place of blasts. The general impression of a tourist is that there is something going on in the country and he does not come. We had cancellations. We have the facts and figures. They cancelled their tours because of these incidents. But we did take action. From December, 1995 the figure has gone up by 24%.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has asked about the infrastructure.

SHRIMATI SUKHBANS KAUR: I am coming to that, Sir. I would like to make it clear to him that these things do affect the tourist arrivals.

Secondly, we have about eighty thousand units of room accommodation. We want to double the number of these rooms in the next five years. About 26 thousand rooms are in the pipeline. They are coming up. They are not only coming up in the metropolitan places they are also coming up wherever there are tourist attractions, tourist places. To augment this, a scheme of paying guest accommodation is being introduced by which spare rooms, extra accommodation of the people who can spare, in any part of the country, especially in the tourist spots, would be taken by the Government. A directive would be issued in this regard. This would augment the room accommodation. We have also a scheme which is called the Heritage Hotels. We have asked the people who own old, beautiful palaces and havelis to come forward and convert them into hotels. We are giving them certain amount of financial assistance and we are very hopeful that our infrastructure would be in tune with our expectation of tourist arrivals. We have also prepared an ambitious plan with a target of 5 million tourists in the next 5 years

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In the next four years, we want to achieve 97% of the target. We are taking action and are planning to ensure that these tourists are able to come to this country.

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): I think the (a) part of the question has not been taken care of. Besides, the hon. member has said that the information in our answer regarding bomb blasts is vague or is not correct. We have said that bomb blasts in Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta had affected the tourist traffic. He wanted to know why the foreigners did not go to Ajanta and Ellora. For the benefit of my hon. friend, I would like to inform him that foreigners come to Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta by international flights. These flights do not go to Ajanta and Ellora. There are no international airports in these places and for that matter in many other places.

SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV: The hon. Minister has said that bomb blasts were there in Bombay. MTDC, the Maharashtra Tourist Development Corporation, is going to develop the Konkan coastal area as a tourist spot and they have a very big plan. May I know from the hon. Minister what the Union Government's share is for the development of this Konkan coastal area?

The (b) part of my question is that Ajanta and Ellora are the internationally-known caves. With the co-ordination of the Japanese Government, they are having a Rs. 200 crores development plan. I visited these places. Nothing has come about. The Japanese Government is ready to meet the expenditure. But the Government of India has not at all responded to them. I want to know when the Japanese plan drawn with the coordination of the Indian Government will be implemented to create the infrastructure at Ajanta and Ellora.

The (c) part of my question is that recently...*(Interruptions)*... This is very important because I have something to do with tourism...*(Interruptions)*... I am grateful to the hon. Prime Minister and the Finance Minister because after the liberalisation started, more number of tourists are getting attracted to our country. That is the reason for the large number of tourists in the month of December last year.

The (c) part of my question is that from Nanded—in Nanded there is an internationally famous Gurudwara Sathsangh Huzoor Saheb—I want to know...*(Interruptions)*... From Amritsar, they have started a flight, an international flight for international travellers..*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Where is the (c) part of your question? Will you kindly put your question? There are so many people who want to put questions. You should not take so much time.

SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV: I will take only 5 minute.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Only half-a-minute.

SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV: So, I want to know whether any international flight is going to be started from Nanded on the lines of the flight which was started from Amritsar to distant destinations such as the USA, Canada, etc. where Sikhs are there. On that line, are you going to consider that place also and will you consider having an international flight from Nanded by developing an airstrip? At least, you resume regular air flights to Nanded.

SMT. SUKHBANS KAUR: The hon. Member must realise that tourism is a State subject. What we do is to augment their finances by a small amount. We have, in 1992-93, given them Rs. 2 crores as financial assistance, but basically the money has to come from the State, and for that matter, we have held meetings with all the State Governments urging upon them, their Chief Ministers and Finance Ministers, to make larger allocations for their State tourism development projects. This year also, they have sent us eight projects and they are with our Ministry for clearance. As regards Ajanta and Ellora, we have helped in getting them these funds, but it is up to the State Government to take action and see that these funds are utilised. As far as the flights are concerned, I think my senior Minister would be able to tell him.

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: There is no international airport there and the question of any international flight does not arise.

SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV: But are you going to create this airstrip?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Mr. Viren Shah.

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: I am inclined to agree that there is a lot of validity in the first part of the answer, and whatever has been stated there had its effect. But in the last part about the steps taken, it seems three aspects have just been left out. One of them is about issuing visas. About 15 years back, this matter was taken up by me. Even today, there is lack of coordination between our offices abroad, whether our Embassies or Consulate-Generals, in giving visas, and that creates difficulties. I am not sure whether the Minister has examined this aspect of coordination in giving visas.

The second aspect which the people experience is that when they arrive at the airports—I was told only three days back when I was in South Africa, by Indians and by others, that at Delhi Airport particularly—the police people who are there are not trained in dealing with foreigners and tourists. The same thing must be happening at Bombay Airport also, because the same police force who are today operating in the city, would be posted next week in the Immigration. There is no training given to them in dealing with foreigners and tourists arriving here. I want to know whether any attempt has been made to take care of that aspect.

The third aspect which had been raised even in India-Japan Study Centre where the former Japanese Prime Minister was present and I happened to be a Member there, is that the infrastructure particularly with regard to travel within the country, lacks safety and some of the tourists have had a very undesirable experience. I want to know whether the hon. Minister of Civil Aviation and Tourism had taken steps to ensure coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs so far as the question of visas is concerned so that visas are issued without any difficulty, and also to improve or train the Immigration personnel at the airports to see that the tourists are not harassed and they are able to move quickly. Sometimes there is a delay of one and a half hours and they have to keep on standing in the queues when they arrive at the airports and this could be avoided. Will the hon. Minister kindly enlighten us on these aspects?

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: All these

are very pertinent questions. As far as visas are concerned, as has been said, in the past six months I myself and my colleagues visited about 30 countries on reassurance campaign..

SHEI VIREN J. SHAH: There is no visa required at least in 35 countries, and also in Indonesia, but India requires visas everywhere.

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Wherever we went, we received representations from the local travel and trade that they have visa problems, and luckily Ambassadors and High Commissioners were also present in all these meetings. I think in most of the countries, wherever we had been, the issue has been sorted out and visas are being given—tourist visas—within twenty- four hours.

In fact, in the case of some countries, some European countries, we have gone to the extent that they need not come personally to our embassies. We have said that they could send their passports by dak and the visas would be sent to them by post. Therefore, this is being taken care of.

As far as the question of Immigration, Customs, etc., at airports is concerned, I totally agree with the hon. Member. In the African countries which I visited in January, there were a lot of complaints concerning Immigration and Customs. Later, when I came back to Delhi, I held discussions with the Finance Minister. The problem, as far as the airports are concerned, is that there are a number of agencies working. Customs is under the Finance Ministry. Immigration is under the Home Ministry. Police is under the respective State Governments. Airports are under the Civil Aviation Ministry. I held discussions with the Finance Minister. After some time, we will have to have some kind of co-ordination at the airports. Everything should come under one umbrella so that if anything goes wrong at the airports, one institution is able to take action. Otherwise, there is always the tendency that if one recommends action against another, the parent department tries to protect its people. Therefore, we are trying to have co-ordination with the Finance Ministry and the Home Ministry.

In regard to infrastructure—I think the hon. Member might have read about it—in the coming three years, i.e. 1994- 95—1996-97, we

are spending Rs. 1,500 crores which is about Rs. 200 crores more than what has been spent on infrastructure in the country in the past fifty years. I am sure this modernisation programme and infrastructure would be ready within the next two years.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHINATARAJAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister must be aware that in 1989, at the Hague, for the first time, the concept of environmentally-responsible tourism was evolved. The question of protecting our environment while promoting tourism has assumed a great deal of importance today, especially in view of India's fragile eco-system. We need to protect our coastline and the rich mountain ranges; for example, the Aravalli ranges. In this context, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what steps are being taken by the Government to promote environmentally sustainable tourism. Has the Government considered the concept of carrying capacity in relation to tourism, namely the number of people which is environmentally possible for us to sustain while promoting tourism in the country in terms of water, in terms of energy consumption and in terms of making sure that our rich heritage in the form of our coastline, forests and mountains remains intact? What steps are being taken by the Government to see that our rich environment is protected while, at the same time, encouraging tourism?

SHRI GHULAM NABIAZAD: Sir, as you know, the Environment Ministry is very very tough. They would be the last persons to allow any private agency—for that matter, even any Government agency—to violate their norms. In this connection, in 1993, I had a meeting with 33 State Governments, I had a meeting with various Ministers from the States—forests, tourism, housing and other departments—and impressed upon them that while developing infrastructure, they should take due care and caution to protect the environment. This is what we can do. At the same time, as I said, the Environment Ministry is very active and alive to the situation.

श्री दिग्विजय सिंह: सभापति महोदय, यह बात सही है कि दूरिज्म में पिछले वर्ष खास तौर से काफी हास हुआ है। लेकिन एक इलाका अभी भी इस देश में है जहाँ पर काफी पर्यटक आ रहे हैं। लेकिन उस जगह पर जो सुविधा

मुहैया करानी चाहिये थी सरकार की तरफ से या उसको बढ़ावा देने के लिये, उन सुविधाओं की कमी मुझे देखने में आ रही है। वह राज्य है - राजस्थान और राजस्थान में भी खास तौर से जो जैसलमेर का इलाका है जहाँ पर ऐसी कला-कृतियाँ हैं - पटवा की हवेली और दूसरी हवेलियाँ ऐसी हैं जिनको देखने के लिये दुनियाँ भर में आज होड़ मची हुई है। 1975 में श्रीमती गांधी ने स्वयं जाकर बहुत सी जगहों को अपनी तरफ से ठीक कराया था, अगर माननीय मंत्री जी को इसकी जानकारी हो। लेकिन मुझे जानकर बड़ी हैरानी हो रही है कि इन दिनों वहाँ पर इतनी तरह की टेलीफोन लाईन बिछा दी गई हैं, बिजली लाईन लगा दी गई हैं जिस कारण उन कला-कृतियों को देखने में टूरिस्ट एक तरह से अपने को असमर्थ पा रहे हैं।

एक तरफ तो यह व्यवधान है और दूसरी ओर जो इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर वहाँ मौजूद होना चाहिये था, वह वहाँ नहीं है। जैसे नेशनल एयरपोर्ट की कोई व्यवस्था नहीं है। डिफेंस के अंडर एक एयरपोर्ट है, जहाँ पर कोई अपना जहाज लेकर नहीं जा सकता। ट्रेन की व्यवस्था नाममात्र के लिये है। बहुत से भवन वहाँ पर गिर रहे हैं और सरकार का ध्यान जो इस तरफ जाना चाहिये था, खासकर किले, हवेलियाँ और बहुत सी बिल्डिंग्स वहाँ पर गिर रही हैं और सरकार का इस तरफ कोई ध्यान नहीं है। तो मैं आपसे यह जानना चाहूँगा कि क्या आपका ध्यान इस ओर है और अगर है तो आप क्या सुविधा दे रहे हैं या उसकी बढ़ोतरी के लिये क्या प्रयास करने जा रहे हैं?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before the Minister answers I have an announcement to make.

WELCOME TO H.E. PROF. GIOVANNI SPADOLINI, PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ITALY

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, we have with us, seated in the Special Box, His Excellency Prof. Giovanni Spadolini, President of the Senate and Vice-president of the Republic of Italy, currently on a visit to our country as our honoured guest.

On behalf of the Members of the House and on my own behalf, I take pleasure in extending a hearty welcome to our distinguished guest and wish him an enjoyable and fruitful stay in our country. His visit to our country will further strengthen the friendly bonds that exist between India and Italy. Through him we convey our

greetings and best wishers to the President, the Parliament, the Government and the friendly people of the Republic of Italy.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS (Contd.)

Answer to Q.No. 41—Contd.

श्री गुलाम नबी आजाद: माननीय अध्यक्ष जी, हमारा ध्यान राजस्थान और जैसलमेर की तरफ इतना है कि कल ही मैं 25 तारीख को जैसलमेर जा रहा हूँ और मैंने वहाँ मीटिंग रखी है..(ध्वनिध्वनि)..कल मैंने वहाँ मीटिंग रखी है सब आफिस के साथ

श्री चतरानन मिश्र: ऐज ए टूटि जा रहे हैं?

श्री गुलाम नबी आजाद: नहीं, सब अफसरों के साथ मीटिंग करनी है। जहाँ तक राजस्थान का संबंध है, राजस्थान की तरफ हमारा सबसे ज्यादा ध्यान है क्योंकि आज भी हिन्दुस्तान में अगर किसी एक राज्य में सबसे ज्यादा पर्यटक आते हैं तो उसमें राजस्थान का पहला स्थान है। इसलिये उसके इगोर करने का सवाल पैदा नहीं होता है और वह राज्य गोलडन ट्रायंगल में भी आता है। पिछले साल भी हमने कई नेशनल और इंटरनेशनल ट्रेवल और टूड की कॉन्फ्रेंस राजस्थान में की हैं। इसलिये यह कहना कि हम वहाँ ध्यान नहीं दे रहे हैं, यह उचित नहीं होगा। हम पूरा ध्यान दे रहे हैं।

महोदय, इसके साथ-साथ जहाँ तक जैसलमेर का संबंध है, वहाँ डिफेंस का एयरपोर्ट है, इसलिये हम वहाँ टर्मिनल बिल्डिंग नहीं बना सकते। तो भी नेशनल एयरपोर्ट एथोरिटी ने एक छोटी टर्मिनल बिल्डिंग इस दफा बनाई है और हमने एक-दो प्राइवेट एयरलाइन वालों को कहा है और उन्होंने मान लिया है कि मार्च से वे वहाँ रेगुलर फ्लाइट्स चलाएंगे।

Boycott of S.C. Officers in Air India

*42 SHRI ANAND PRAKASH GAUTAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether any letter was received by the Government of India from a member of the National Commission for SCs and STs in September, 1993, regarding complaint of boycott of SC officers working in inflight services Department in Air-India, Bombay during September, 1993;

(b) whether any Government Agency had intervened in the matter; and

(c) what disciplinary action is proposed against the guilty officers under the provisions of Model Standing Order, the SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 and Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The matter was referred to Air India. The management of Air India have discussed the matter with representatives of Air Corporations Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Employee Association. It was explained to them that the directive in question had already been withdrawn by the Air India Cabin Crew Association on 19.7.1993 at the intervention of Air India management. At the request of Air Corporations Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Employees Association, Chairman and Managing Director, Air India is examining the issue in the light of the provisions of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 and the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955.

श्री आनंद प्रकाश गौतम: सभापति महोदय, आज हम विश्व में मानवाधिकारों के संरक्षण की वकालत करते हैं लेकिन मुझे बड़े अफसोस के साथ कहना पड़ता है कि 47 वर्ष हो गये हमारे देश को आजाद हुये लेकिन आज भी भारत सरकार के सार्वजनिक उपक्रमों में जो अनुसूचित जाति और जनजाति के कर्मचारी हैं, उनके साथ दुर्व्यवहार हो रहा है, असामाजिक व्यवहार हो रहा है। छुआछूत और जाति के नाम पर उनका बहिष्कार किया जा रहा है। यह बहुत शर्मनाक बात है और अफसोस की बात है। माननीय मंत्री जी से स्पष्ट पूछा गया था जो सवाल था उसमें कि क्या इस प्रकार की कोई सूचना आपने अनुसूचित जाति और जनजाति के कमीशन के द्वारा प्राप्त की है। लेकिन उस के बारे में आपने कुछ जिक्र नहीं किया।

श्री गुलाम नबी आजाद: मैंने “यस सर” कहा, उसका यही अर्थ है, उसी से मैंने शुरू किया।

श्री आनंद प्रकाश गौतम: लेकिन उसके संबंध में कार्यवाही के बारे में कोई जानकारी नहीं है। एक तो आपने अपने स्टेटमेंट में यह कहा कि एयर इंडिया के कैबिन-क्रू एसोसिएशन