

चिन्दपूरनी मन्दिर है, ज्वालामुखी मन्दिर है। मैं उनसे यह जानना चाहती हूँ कि क्या वे इनको भी mega project में लाने की कोशिश करेंगी या इनके बारे में भी सोचेंगी?

श्रीमती अम्बिका सोनी: सर, मैं माननीय सदस्या को बताना चाहूंगी कि हमने पिछले साल 2007 के आखिर से जो 22 mega projects शुरू किए थे, वे trial projects के तौर पर किए गए थे। असल में यह काम स्टेट गवर्नमेंट का है कि वह temple circuit promote करना चाहती है या cultural circuit या कोई और adventure tourism circuit करना चाहती है। यह स्टेट गवर्नमेंट का अधिकार और दायित्व है। लेकिन जैसा कि हमने कहा कि पहले 22 प्रोजेक्ट्स हुए, इस बार 6 और हो रहे हैं, जिनमें से एक का जिक्र माननीय सदस्या ने किया है, लेकिन ये मैगा प्रोजेक्ट्स हैं। ऐसे प्रोजेक्ट्स अगर एक स्टेट में एक भी हो जाएं, तो बहुत बड़ी उपलब्धि होगी। जब तक एक मैगा प्रोजेक्ट पूरे तौर पर, अच्छी तरह से मुकम्मल नहीं हो जाता और हमें यह फीडबैक नहीं मिलता कि वह कितना सक्सेसफुल हुआ, उसके कारण वहां कितने लोग गए, तक तक एक ही स्टेट में दो-तीन स्थानों पर इतना पैसा डालना शायद उचित भी नहीं होगा। अभी हम ट्रायल प्रॉसेस में हैं। कुल्लु-कटरन-मनाली वाला प्रोजेक्ट, जो हमने हिमाचल में शुरू किया है, अगर यह भी पूरी तरह सफल रहा, तो मुझे पूरा विश्वास है कि आने वाले कुछ सालों में इस प्रकार के और भी कुछ प्रोजेक्ट्स लिए जा सकते हैं।

Tourism Scenario in the country

*104. MS. MABEL REBELLO:††

SHRI B. J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has worked out a new action plan to declare 2009 as the 'Visit India Year';
- (b) if so, the details of such a boost;
- (c) the status of foreign tourist arrivals in India in 2008;
- (d) the action plan of Government to give a boost to medical tourism in the country; and
- (e) the status of 'Incredible India' campaign in foreign lands and how far it has helped to add to our foreign exchange kitty during 2008?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) to (e) A "Visit India 2009" Scheme has been announced by the Ministry of Tourism, in collaboration with all stakeholders including airlines, hotels, tour operators, State Governments for incentivising travel to India during the period April to December 2009.

The Incredible India Campaign is an ongoing activity in the print and electronic media and on the internet, in key source markets overseas for promoting India as a preferred tourist destination.

††The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Ms. Mabel Rebello.

Indiatourism offices overseas also undertake a series of promotional activities in overseas markets to promote tourism to the country. These activities include advertising, participation in fairs and exhibitions, organising seminars, workshops and road shows, publication of brochures, offering joint advertising and brochure support and inviting media personalities, tour operators and opinion makers to visit the country under the Hospitality Programme of the Ministry.

Various measures have been taken to give a boost to Medical Tourism in the country. These include extending financial support under the Marketing Development Assistance (MDA) Scheme to Medical Tourism Service Providers and Medical Tourism Facilitators for promotion of Medical Tourism in overseas markets, introduction of an additional category of 'Medical Visa' for foreign tourists coming to India for medical treatment, production of publicity material on Medical Tourism and dissemination of information on Medical Tourism through the Indiatourism offices and on the website of the Ministry of Tourism.

In 2008, foreign tourist arrivals to India were 5366966 *, an increase of 5.6% over the previous year and foreign exchange earnings from tourism were Rs.50730 crore#, an increase of 14.4% over the previous year.

MS. MABEL REBELLO: Sir, the hon. Minister has said in the reply, "A Visit India 2009 Scheme has been announced by the Ministry of Tourism". I would like to know whether this Scheme would include a special package to encourage people to come back to India in 2010-11. If so, what are the details of these packages and how much will it cost the Government of India? In the first place, I would like to know whether it is worth giving so many incentives to foreign tourists to come to India. How much money are we spending to woo tourists coming to India, giving them cheap packages, and so on? Or, is it worth encouraging domestic tourism and spending that money on encouraging domestic tourism?

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Sir, I would like to inform the hon. Member, to begin with, our taking any steps to encourage foreign, inbound tourists is not at the cost of domestic tourists; domestic tourism is our priority. I would like to reiterate that when I became the Minister, the Prime Minister had directed that domestic tourism be given priority by the Union Ministry of Tourism. We have taken it as such. I am happy to announce to the House that from 309 million domestic tourists in 2003, we registered over 516 million domestic tourists in 2007. Most of our mega projects are projects dealing with destinations where pilgrims and other people go for spending their leisure time. People from within the country visit those places. It is to facilitate civic amenities, to provide the basic connectivity and to ensure, to the extent possible, synergy with State Governments on as much security as we possibly can provide. As I mentioned in response to another supplementary earlier, most of the incentives which we are giving in this 'Promote India', 'Incredible India', 'Visit India, 2009' campaigns is not being borne by the Government of India. It is a private-public partnership that we have been successfully able to forge in the last couple of years. So, if we are giving an extra night-stay in a

(*Provisional Estimates #Advance Estimates)

hotel, it is because people booked for four nights and it is the hoteliers who are giving that extra night. We are acting only as coordinators and facilitators. The campaign has been going around the world. And I would like to say that most countries have recognised the Incredible India campaign as almost branding India as an incredible country.

MS. MABEL REBELLO: Sir, my second supplementary. Today's Economic Times says that hotel rates will drop by 20 per cent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No newspapers please.

MS. MABEL REBELLO: Already, the hotel rates are down by 20 per cent. This will be a drop of 20 per cent more. People in the industry will find it very difficult to make both ends meet, Sir. I would like to know, in these times of economic meltdown, in these times of the Mumbai incident, in these times of low occupancy of hotel rooms and low room tariffs, what is the hon. Minister doing not only to encourage but also to help the hospitality industry and to keep itself afloat. Sir, in our country. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question, please.

MS. MABEL REBELLO: Sir, here, I will give two examples. To go to the Kanha National Park, you require a lot of time. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please ask the question.

MS. MABEL REBELLO: In Jharkhand, if you want to go to Netrahat, you cannot go there; the road is so bad; besides naxalites. What is the hon. Minister doing to encourage tourists to go to these spots, so that the infrastructure is okay for them to go there?

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Sir, I am afraid, even though some levels of our room occupancy have gone down, but it is a natural phenomenon. When there was a great demand, the private hotel owners, of whom I am not a spokesperson, I am a facilitator, charge exorbitant rates, and, then, people did complain that it was more expensive to get a room in Delhi or Bangalore than it was to get in New York. These are the pressures of market. Some times the demand is more, and some times the supply is not adequate. Having said that, Sir, I would like to inform the hon. Member that it is because of all those people who have invested in the hospitality sector that we are taking pro-active steps in this 'Incredible India Campaign of 2009' not to let that slide continue of in-bound tourists and to encourage tourists from outside the country, so that the hotels can remain full. But, having said that, Sir, whether it is Jharkhand or Chhattisgarh and all those areas where beautiful tribal art and culture exist, it is our endeavour that with State Governments to develop tourism destinations and to develop rural tourism destinations for handicraft but connectivity and law and order problem has to be dealt with by the State Governments.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could I request both the questioner and the hon. Minister to ask shorter questions and give shorter answers? Now, Shri B.J. Panda.

SHRI B.J. PANDA: Sir, the hon. Minister has stated in her answer that last year there were increases in tourist arrivals of 5.6 per cent and increase in foreign exchange earnings of 14.4 per cent. In this context, I would like to bring to her attention a report in a respected financial newspaper, I would just read an extract of it, which says, "Though the tourist arrivals and foreign exchange earnings have been higher than last year, the growth has been significantly lower than expected." So, I would request the hon. Minister to share with us what was the expectation and by how much did the tourist arrivals and foreign exchange earnings actually go down from the expectation last year.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Sir, I have already given in my written reply that India was growing at 14.56 per cent through 2007, whereas the world figures, if I can give a short answer, Sir,...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Short answer, please.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: We were growing at 14.3 per cent, and the growth rate has been sustained over the last couple of years. Till August- September, 2008, we continued to grow at those very high rates when the world growth rate was only six per cent. I would like to say that terrorist attacks do take a toll, even though momentarily, and it is not something confined to India; it is a global thing. But, the global meltdown has been so big that with recession in most of the countries, which are our principal source markets in-bound tourists, the figures fell to 5.56 per cent, where the world figures fell to little under two per cent. So, we are doing much better than what the UNWTO's forecast, and we were hoping that we would continue to grow at 14 plus per cent, obviously, we couldn't.

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Sir, my question is related to the impact of medical tourism. Madam, in your answer you have described how your Ministry is promoting medical tourism. You are giving financial support to medical tourism facilitators, you are given support and you are giving financial support to all those who are helping tourists come and avail of medical facilities in India. Now, obviously, if somebody is sick, and they want to come to India for treatment because our doctors are so good, that is fine. The fact of the matter is, it is because compared to their own country; it is cheaper treatment in India. There is a direct impact on the availability of facilities for our own citizens at a reasonable cost. So, has your Ministry studied the impact of this promotional medical tourism? – the impact on our own citizens, because many of these private hospitals now, who are getting Government concessions are not giving any percentage of hospital beds for poor patients, for our Indian citizens, but are diverting the entire facilities for medical tourism which is pushing up the cost of healthcare in this country.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: No, Sir, the statement that medical tourism is depriving the Indian citizen of the right to medicine access, access to medical know-how is not correct. My Ministry is not giving any incentives to any hospitals or any doctors till now. The work of facilitation undertaken by the Ministry of Tourism, along with the Ministry of External Affairs, to provide medical visas for those patients seeking treatment in India, yes; the state-of-the-art hospitals, first-class expertise at one-

fifth the cost is a slogan which is known all across the world. We have facilitated in giving medical visas for one year for the patient and his companion, which can be extended if the doctor so permits. We try to work out packages with hospitals which would allow patients to spend the time which they normally would have to spend in the country for convalescing, to be able to do some kind of a tourism circuit or destination or wellness tourism; we have combined it so that the patients can be benefited by the traditional arts of wellness like Ayurveda, Yoga, etc. We have only tried to facilitate what is naturally our strength in India Yoga, Ayurveda, Unani and Naturopathy plus our tourism destinations given the condition of the patient and visa system which we have facilitated. This is what we have done our best to promote medical tourism. But this is not done at the cost of Indian patients. We are constantly monitoring that. The facilities which are given to an outside patient, I wish, citizens of our country could also have access to that.

SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, regarding this question, whatever the Minister's reply is, it is misleading. As per the WTO, our rank is 42 in the world. Our share is 0.52 per cent. The growth rate of foreign tourist arrivals in 2008 over 2007 was also lower at 5.6 per cent as compared to 14 per cent in 2007 over 2006. During this period, worldwide tourist arrivals grew by 5 per cent. That is why.....

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is your question?

SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Sir, I am coming to that. Tourism means tours for the departmental officers! That is why, I would like to know the reasons for getting poor response to this, though there is Incredible India campaign, 'Visit India, 2009'. With all these things, why is there a poor response for inbound travellers? Our outbound tourism is growing.....

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have already asked the question, please. Thank you.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Sir, I have to repeat myself, the reasons for fall in tourist arrivals. There are no misleading facts which I have given. I stand by my written response. Tourism did fall down to a growth rate of only 5.6 per cent last year because of the international global financial crisis. America, England, the European countries are our principal source markets; people cancelled their tours from those countries; we presume it to be the financial crisis in addition to what happened unfortunately in Mumbai. It all took its toll and the figures came down. But, I do not know what the hon. Member meant when he said departmental tours. I do not know what he was referring to. If he meant officers from my Ministry travelling abroad, I do not have the figures, Sir. I would have to check. But, I can say, with as much confidence and knowledge that I have that I can recall at my command just now, that in the last three years, I think, most of us have gone abroad much less than ever before. We traveled a lot within the country and that is what we have put as our goal to achieve in Tourism Ministry.

सरदार तरलोचन सिंह: सर, मैं मंत्री जी का तो धन्यवाद देता हूँ कि बहुत अच्छा काम हुआ है, लेकिन दुनिया में जो वर्ल्डवाइड ट्रेड है, वह Pilgrimage and Spiritual Tourism का है। इंडिया में आज तक जो फिगर्स आयी हैं - वे

सारे एनआरआईज हैं, जो बाहर से हमारे बड़े-बड़े मंदिरों, अजमेर शरीफ या अमृतसर के गोल्डन टेम्पल आते हैं। अभी लास्ट इयर इंग्लैंड में एक सर्वे छपा है जिसमें कहा गया है कि इंडिया का जो बेस्ट डेस्टिनेशन है, वह आगरा नहीं बल्कि अमृतसर का गोल्डेन टेम्पल है। मैं मंत्री जी से यह पूछना चाहता हूँ कि हमारे जो करोड़ों एनआरआईज बाहर रहते हैं they are keen to visit our mosques, temples and gurdwaras. क्या भारत सरकार ने कोई - एक तो जितनी फिंगर्स आप उनकी देते हैं, इसमें आप यह differentiate नहीं करते कि इनमें से कितने एनआरआईज हैं जो यहां आते हैं। क्या आपने इस बारे में ऐसा कोई प्लान बनाया है कि जितने इंडियंस settle abroad हैं, उनका जो इंडिया में spiritual links हैं, उनके लिए countrywide special programmes कैसे होंगे और उनको क्या facilities दी जाएंगी? ये जो destinations within India है, इनकी development के बारे में आपने लिखा है, लेकिन इसमें जो बहुत बड़े सेक्टर्स बट्रीनाथ और हेमकुंड साहब हैं, वे इसमें missing हैं। उसके बारे में आपने नहीं बताया है। जबकि लाखों लोग बट्रीनाथ और हेमकुंड साहब जाते हैं। पिछले साल वहां चार लाख लोग गए थे जिनमें से 50 हजार foreigners थे, यह उसमें मिसिंग है।

श्री सभापति: आप सवाल पूछ लीजिए, टाइम कम है।

सरदार तरलोचन सिंह: मैं यह पूछना चाहता हूँ कि उसके लिए आपने क्या प्रोग्राम रखा है? थैंक यू सर।

श्रीमती अम्बिका सोनी: सर, यह सच बात है कि लोग Pilgrimage Tourism का बड़े पैमाने पर इस्तेमाल करते हैं और हमारे जो मेगा डेस्टिनेशंस ...**(व्यवधान)**... मैंने जो 22 मेगा डेस्टिनेशंस बताये, उनमें अमृतसर के लिए 15.85 करोड़ sanction किये हैं। अजमेर शरीफ और पुष्कर लेक के लिए 10.69 करोड़ - गोवा के चर्चज - मेरा कहने का मतलब है कि हर धर्म - महाबोधि मंदिर के लिए, मेगा डेस्टिनेशन और तिरुपति के 17 मंदिरों के लिए पहली बार एक सर्किट बनाया गया है। मेरा कहने का मतलब यह है कि हर धर्म में विश्वास रखने वाले लोग नागरिकों, पर्यटकों और यात्रियों को हमने ध्यान में रखते हुए मेगा प्रोजेक्ट्स बनाये थे, जहां हम उनको हर प्रकार की सुविधा दे सकें। इसके अलावा, इन्होंने जो अमृतसर की बात की, तो मैं बताना चाहती हूँ कि जैसे महापरिनिर्वाण स्पेशल टूरिस्ट ट्रेन, बुद्धिस्ट सर्किट के लिए दी है, उसी तरह लालू जी, पंजाब के सी.एम. और मेरे मंत्रालय ने उत्तर भारत के लिए स्पेशल टूरिज्म ट्रेन की घोषणा की है जिससे वे कुरुक्षेत्र में महाभारत सर्किट, अमृतसर, आनंदपुर साहिब, हिमाचल, आगरा और जयपुर में सात दिन की यात्रा करेंगे। इसी तरह से देश की राष्ट्रपति ने कर्नाटक में गोल्डन चैरियट को हरी झंडी दिखाई थी। हम कोशिश कर रहे हैं कि इसी तरह उड़ीसा, आंध्र प्रदेश और तमाम प्रदेश जैसे, राजस्थान के लिए रॉयल राजस्थान शुरू किया है - ये सब प्रयास पर्यटकों के लिए हैं चाहे वे स्टेट एनआरआईज हों या फॉरेनर्स हों। जहां तक एनआरआईज की संख्या का सवाल है, हम अलग से उसकी गणना नहीं करते।

*105. [The questioner Shri Kalraj Mishra was absent. For answer vide page 23 *infra*]

मध्य प्रदेश में विमानपत्तनों का विकास

***106. श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज:** क्या नागर विमानन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या मध्य प्रदेश में भोपाल, खजुराहो और इंदौर के विमानपत्तनों को अंतर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर का बनाने के लिए अपेक्षित भूमि का अधिग्रहण किया गया है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो भूमि अधिग्रहण करने के बाद इन विमानपत्तनों पर किए जाने वाले विकास संबंधी कार्यों की अद्यतन स्थिति क्या है; और