

- With a view to promoting Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE) Tourism, the scope of the MDA Scheme has been enhanced, so as to include active members of the India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB).
- Enhanced subsidy of 25% in participation fee is being offered by the Ministry of Tourism and the Indiatourism offices overseas in the India Pavilions set up at the major International Travel Fairs and Exhibitions till the end of the financial year 2009-10.
- All States have been requested to beef up security measures in hotels and at tourist sites in their respective States.
- Familiarisation Tours for trade and media representatives to Mumbai and other regions of the country have been specially organized to project the ground realities relating to safety/security conditions in the country.
- Permission has been given to corporates in the hotel sector to avail of External Commercial Borrowings (ECB) upto US\$ 100 million per year for foreign currency and/or rupee capital expenditure for permissible end users.

In addition to the above specific measures initiated recently, the other steps taken by the Government to promote tourism in the country include:—

- Development of tourism infrastructure at tourist sites with the cooperation of other Ministries/Departments and State/UT Governments;
- Focusing on growth of hotel infrastructure, particularly that for budget hotels;
- Enhancing connectivity through augmentation of air capacity and improving road infrastructure to major tourist attractions;
- Direct approach to the consumers through electronic and print media through the “Incredible India” Campaign; and
- According greater focus to the emerging markets, particularly of China, North East Asia and South East Asia.

Decline in tourist arrivals

97. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that tourist arrivals in the country has declined during the last six months due to advisories issued by various countries;

(b) if so, the details of tourist arrivals from abroad during the last six months, region-wise; and

(c) the steps Government is contemplating to promote tourism through Government of India tourist offices abroad?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI SULTAN AHMED): (a) and (b) The estimated number of Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India during January to May, 2009, the period for which estimates are available, is 2.13 million, which is 10.6% lower than the

FTAs of 2.38 million during January to May, 2008. The region-wise details of FTAs are not available.

(c) The activities undertaken by the Ministry of Tourism, through the Indiatourism offices overseas, to promote India as a tourist destination and to increase FTAs to the country include:—

- Advertising in the Print, Electronic and Interactive Media.
- Outdoor Advertising particularly during important international events.
- Participation in Tourism Fairs and Exhibitions.
- Organising India Seminars, Workshops and Road Shows.
- Organising Food and Cultural Festivals.
- Organising/sponsoring India Evenings.
- Organising joint promotions with Departmental Stores, Airlines, Tour Operators and other stake holders.
- Inviting media personalities, tour operators and opinion makers on Familiarization Trips of the country, under the Hospitality Programme.
- Printing of various publicity material in local languages.
- Dissemination of information through telephone, fax, mail, internet monthly newsletters and through interaction with visitors to the office and at India booths at various Travel Fairs and Exhibitions.
- Promotions in cultural/sports events organized by Indian Missions or other Indian organizations.
- Brochure Support/Joint Advertising with Travel Agents/Tour Operators.
- Organising Print Media and TV interviews and Public Relations.

Tour advisory against visiting India

98. DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that USA has issued tour advisory to its nationals against taking visits to India due to security reasons;

(b) if so, whether Government has taken this issue with the US and how it would impact Indian tourism industry due to this advisory;

(c) whether Government is aware that cases of molestation against foreign visitors are increasing day by day; and

(d) the steps that have been taken and publicized by Government to protect foreign tourists at tourist places?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (KUMARI SELJA): (a) and (b) Travel advisories have been issued by various countries from time to time, advising their citizens to avoid travel or to take