

this initiative, the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations are extended Central Financial Assistance (CFA) under the scheme of 'Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits' for the setting up of Caravan Parks.

Further, in order to improve connectivity to inaccessible tourist places in the hilly and rural areas, CFA upto Rs. 75 lakh is also extended for setting up of Helipads and Heliports which will not only open up new destinations for tourism, but also provide a unique experience of heli-tourism to both foreign and domestic tourists.

Tourist destinations in Odisha

4581. SHRI MANGALA KISAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of names of tourist destinations in Odisha, as on date;
- (b) the number of tourists who visit the State annually, the details of the last three years, year-wise;
- (c) the steps proposed by Government to enhance the strength of tourists visiting Odisha; and
- (d) the funds allocated by Government to the State for the development of tourists destinations during the last three years and the amount utilized therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI SULTAN AHMED): (a) to (d) Development, promotion and monitoring of tourism is undertaken primarily by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, extends financial assistance to the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for tourism related projects which are identified in consultation with them, under various tourism schemes of the Ministry.

The number of tourists, domestic and foreign, who visited Orissa during the last three years are given as under:—

| Year | Domestic Tourists | Foreign Tourists |
|------|-------------------|------------------------|
| 2007 | 5944890 | 41880 |
| 2008 | 6358445 | 43966 |
| 2009 | 6891510 | 45684 (Provisional) |

The Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned Rs. 88.61 Crore during the first three years of the Eleventh plan to the Government of Orissa for various tourism related projects.

Buddhist sites in country

4582. SHRI N.K. SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has decided to promote the various Buddhist sites in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;