

(c) the steps being taken for the sensitization programmes and awareness campaigns in the remaining Eleventh Five Year Plan particularly in the wake of upcoming Commonwealth Games 2010, when a large number of foreigners, are expected to visit India; and

(d) if so, the details worked out so far and expenditure made so far at each level?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI SULTAN AHMED) : (a) to (d) The Ministry of Tourism releases Incredible India Campaigns in international and domestic markets to promote varied tourism destinations of India. Awareness and sensitization of masses and stakeholders about the importance of tourism is an ongoing process for which Ministry of Tourism releases Media Campaigns in the Domestic Markets.

Details of the Budget Estimates/Expenditure incurred for overseas and domestic marketing and promotions including the media campaigns are as under :

Year	Overseas Promotion	(Rs. in Crore)
		Domestic Promotion (Including promotion of North East Areas)
2007-08 (Expenditure Incurred)	170.89	71.11
2008-09 (Budget Estimates)	220.00	72.00
2009-10 (Budget Estimates)	250.00	60.00

Foreign tourist in country

1617. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government proposes to take new initiatives to attract more foreign tourists in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when they are likely to be announced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI SULTAN AHMED) : (a) to (b) The Ministry of Tourism has taken several steps to promote tourism to the country. These include participation in the major travel fairs, liberalizing the Marketing Development Assistance Scheme for service providers promoting India, organizing Road Shows in important tourist generating markets overseas, arranging familiarisation tours to India for international travel trade and media representatives, media campaigns in the print, electronic, online and outdoor media.

Recently Government of India has introduced Visa-on-Arrival scheme for tourists from five countries viz. Singapore, Finland, New Zealand, Luxembourg and Japan on a pilot basis for a period of one year.

New initiatives specially niche tourism areas and new products to attract more foreign tourists is an ongoing process and Ministry of Tourism through the Indiatourism offices in India and overseas disseminate information to the general public through the Incredible India website.

Buddhist tourism in India

1618. SHRI PYARIMOHAN MOHAPATRA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of old and new schemes to attract Buddhist tourists to India;
- (b) whether important places of Buddhist interest in Odisha have been included in such schemes; and
- (c) if so, the allocation made and the connectivity developed for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI SULTAN AHMED) : (a) to (c) Development of tourism schemes to attract Buddhist tourists is primarily undertaken by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. The Ministry of Tourism through India Tourism offices in India and overseas promotes the culture and heritage of India including Buddhist heritage through Incredible India Campaign as well as through production and distribution of brochures, posters, leaflets etc.

To promote the rich heritage of Buddhism in India, a Buddhist conclave titled 'Experience Buddhism in the land of the origin' was held at Nalanda on 6-7 February, 2010 which was attended by international scholars and Tour Operators and media. A special tourist train "Mahaparinirvan Express" run by IRCTC, Ministry of Railways covers the Buddhist sites of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

Ministry of Tourism, however, provides financial assistance for tourism projects on the basis of proposals received from State Government. In the 10th Plan, an amount of Rupees 740.67 lakhs has been sanctioned for integrated development of Buddhist circuit at Lalitgiri, Ratanagiri, Udaigiri and Langudi by the Government of Orissa. Rupees 592.52 lakhs has so far been released.

Hotel rooms for CWG

1619. SHRI SHANTA RAM LAXMAN NAIK : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of hotel rooms of various categories available in Delhi at present;
- (b) whether Government proposes to provide additional rooms capacity in view of the forthcoming Commonwealth Games;
- (c) if so, details of the projects undertaken by various agencies;
- (d) the number of additional rooms proposed to be provided;
- (e) the expenditure involved therein; and
- (f) other related details?