

especially from the National Highways/State Highways and other points under its Plan Scheme of Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits, increasing the availability of trained manpower, etc.

Foreign exchange through tourism

738. SHRI AVINASH PANDE: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that tourism, a 1.2 trillion dollar industry, is growing strongly amidst decline of other sectors;

(b) whether tourism is a big foreign exchange earner yet Government has not paid enough attention to make it globally competitive and India's share in the world tourism is abysmal;

(c) whether Government has planned to take any new radical steps to revitalize tourism in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (DR. K. CHIRANJEEVI): (a) As per the estimates of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation, total receipts from international tourism including international passenger transport, reached US \$1.2 trillion in 2011. The total receipts from international tourism excluding international passenger transport, stood at US \$1.03 trillion (provisional) in 2011, showing a growth rate of 11.1% over 2010.

(b) The Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEEs) through tourism in India during 2011 were Rs. 77591 Crore (Provisional).

The share of India in International Tourist Arrivals in 2011 was 0.64 per cent.

Although the tourism sector in India has grown in the recent years, it is felt that with India's vast bounties of nature, its great treasures of art, architecture and philosophical thought, its rich cultural heritage, its varied rural countryside and wildlife, age – old practices of Yoga, Siddha, etc. spread across different States/ Union Territories, there is immense tourism potential to tap, which can lead to further growth in tourism.

(c) and (d) In order to attract more tourists to the country, the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, is undertaking many activities which include release of print, electronic and online media campaigns, under the 'Incredible India' brand-line. Besides, the Ministry through its overseas offices, *inter-alia* organises Road Shows, Workshops; participates in various Fairs, Exhibitions and Events to promote various Indian tourist destinations and products.

The Ministry of Tourism also provides financial assistance to stakeholders for promotion of tourism in the international and domestic markets under the Marketing Development Assistance (MDA) Scheme.

(e) Does not arise.

Training programme for students as tourism volunteers

739. SHRI AAYANUR MANJUNATHA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has launched a short term training programme known as the 'Earn While You Learn Scheme' to train students as tourism volunteers;

(b) if so, the salient features of the said scheme;

(c) the criteria or norms for availing such training; and

(d) the details of institutions authorized for the said training programme in the country, State-wise and location-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (DR. K. CHIRANJEEVI): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Tourism has launched a Scheme titled 'Earn While You Learn' with a view to inculcate appropriate tourism travel traits and knowledge amongst trainees to enable them to work as 'student volunteers'. The salient features of the Scheme are :

(i) College-going students pursuing graduation courses or graduates in the age group of 18 to 25 years will be eligible for the training programme.

(ii) The candidates are selected by following a transparent procedure.

(iii) The duration of each programme is 21 working days.

(iv) The course content is finalized by the Ministry of Tourism/Implementing Institutes in consultation with stakeholders.