

**Visa-on-Arrival facility for SAARC countries**

894. SHRI AMBETH RAJAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government is extending Tourist Visa-on Arrival (VoA) facility to all the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the details of the tourists from SAARC countries during the last five years ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The details of tourist arrivals from SAARC countries during the last five years is as follows:

<i>Tourist from SAARC countries during last five years</i>					
Countries	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Afghanistan	50446	73389	89605	95231	111370
Bangladesh	468899	431962	463543	487397	524923
Bhutan	10328	12048	15489	15266	15016
Maldives	55159	58152	53999	50428	45270
Nepal	88785	104374	119131	125375	113790
Pakistan	53137	51739	48640	59846	111794
Sri Lanka	239995	266515	305853	296983	262345

**Status of Girnar Ropeway project in Gujarat**

895. SHRI CHUNIBHAI KANJIBHAI GOHEL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a stone laying foundation was held in Junagadh, Gujarat for starting Girnar Ropeways in the year 2007;

(b) the present status of the project and the time schedule for commissioning of the project; and

(c) the reasons behind non-commissioning/delaying of the project ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK):(a) to (c) The development and promotion of various tourism destinations and products is primarily the responsibility of the respective State Government/ Union Territory (UT) Administration. The Ministry of Tourism, however, provides Central Financial Assistance (CFA) to various State Governments and Union Territory Administrations for tourism projects identified in consultation with them, subject to availability of funds, *inter-se* priority and adherence to the scheme guidelines.

The Ministry of Tourism has not sanctioned any project for starting Girnar Ropeways.

According to the facts furnished by the State Government of Gujarat it has been informed that a foundation stone was laid for starting the Girnar Ropeways in Junagadh, Gujarat on 1st May, 2007 and that M/s. Usha Breco, Ghaziabad on behalf of Government of Gujarat has filed an application in August, 2011, being IA No. 3118-31120 of 2011 in W.P. (Civil) No. 202 of 1995 against the objection raised by the Central Empowered Committee (CEC) in the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

The case is pending in the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

#### **Tourist-Visa-on Arrival**

896. SHRI PALVAI GOVARDHAN REDDY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) how strategically his Ministry is planning to move at a time when China has been increasing its grip over travel markets in Asia;

(b) to what extent Tourist Visa-on-Arrival helps in containing China at the same time stopping the entry of unlawful elements; and

(c) the manner in which the Ministry is planning to go ahead at a time when the Ministry of External Affairs has refused to extend Visa-on-Arrival (VoA) to any other country recently?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) The Ministry of Tourism (MoT), as part of its on-going activities, annually releases print, electronic, online and outdoor media campaigns in the international markets, under the 'Incredible India' brand-line, to promote various tourism destinations and products of the country and to increase foreign tourist arrivals to the country. In addition, a series of promotional activities are being undertaken in important and potential tourist generating markets overseas through the India Tourism Offices abroad with the objective of showcasing India's tourism potential and promoting