

responsibility of the respective State Government/Union Territory (UT) Administration. The Ministry of Tourism (MoT) provides Central Financial Assistance (CFA) to State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for various tourism projects prioritized every year including those in rural and backward regions in consultation with them subject to availability of funds, *inter-se* priority, liquidation of pending utilization certificates against the funds released earlier and adherence to the scheme guidelines.

The Ministry of Tourism has a Rural Tourism Scheme under Product/Infrastructure Development for Destination and Circuits (PIDDC) with the main objective of showcasing rural life, art, culture and heritage in villages, that have core competence in art and craft, handloom, textiles, natural environment etc. Under this scheme, Central Financial Assistance (CFA) upto ₹ 50.00 lakh for infrastructure development and upto ₹ 20.00 lakh for capacity building is provided to State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for each identified site by them. Further, Ministry of Tourism also earmarks 2.5% of the total budget allocation for development of tourism under Tribal Sub Plan (TSP).

Foreign tourists

1105. DR. BHALCHANDRA MUNGEKAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the year-wise details of number of foreign tourists who visited India during the last five years;

(b) whether it is a fact that the growing incidents of rapes on women in Delhi and other parts of the country reduce the number of foreign tourists; and

(c) if so, what action plan is being prepared to attract the foreign tourists in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) The numbers of Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India along with growth rate during 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 are as follows:

Year	FTAs (in million)	Growth rate (%)
2010	5.78	11.8
2011	6.31	9.2
2012	6.58	4.3
2013	6.97	5.9
2014 (P)	7.70	10.6

P: Provisionally revised as per Bureau of Immigration

(b) and (c) No decline in number foreign tourist arrivals in India was observed during 2010-2014. However, measures taken to attract the foreign tourists in the country are as follows:

(i) Electronic Travel Authorization

The Tourist Visa on Arrival (TVoA) enabled with the Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) Scheme was launched on 27.11.2014 for nationals of 43 countries whose sole objective of visiting India is recreation, sight-seeing, short duration medical treatment, casual business visit, casual visit to meet friends or relatives etc. for a short stay of 30 days. Earlier the TVoA facility was available for nationals of 12 countries only. The TVoA enabled with ETA will enable the prospective visitor to apply for an Indian Visa from his/her home country online without visiting the Indian Mission and also pay the visa fee online. Once approved, the applicant will receive an email authorising him/her to travel to India and he/she can travel with a print out of this authorization. On arrival, the visitor has to present the authorisation to the immigration authorities who would then stamp the entry into the country. The entry into India will be allowed within 30 days from the date of approval of ETA and will be valid for 30 days stay in India from the date of arrival in India.

(ii) Restriction on gap for re-entry lifted

The restriction of two-month gap on re-entry of foreign nationals coming to India on Tourist Visa and Tourist Visa on Arrival has been lifted with effect from 4th December, 2012.

(iii) Publicity and Promotion

The Ministry of Tourism promotes India as a holistic destination, including the various tourism destinations and products of every State/Union Territory of the country, in the domestic and international markets.

As part of its promotional activities, Ministry of Tourism undertakes centralized international media campaigns (prints, electronics and online) under the Incredible India brand-line in key source markets as well as potential markets across the world.

The Ministry has taken up creation, development and maintenance of Walking Tours product which is an online, interactive web product that will help national and international tourists, plan and take walking tours in all major cities in India.

The Ministry of Tourism has signed an agreement with M/s Worth Your Holidays as part of which an automated holiday planner (*Tripigator.com*) has been linked to the website of the Ministry of Tourism to facilitate the tourists to make itineraries.

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 Scheme.

(iv) Cleanliness and Hygiene

To tackle the problem of hygiene and cleanliness at tourist destinations, the Ministry of Tourism has taken the initiative of launching the Campaign Clean India with a vision to ensure an acceptable level of cleanliness and hygiene practices at tourist destinations. This campaign is to be sustained through adoption and involvement of private and public sector stakeholders as a part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

(v) Trained Language Speaking Guides

Selection and Training of Regional Level Tourist Guides, including linguist guides, is an ongoing process and the Ministry conducts the training programmes, through the Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management (IITTM), periodically.

(vi) Safety of Women Tourists

The Ministry of Tourism had advised the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations to set up Tourist Police at prominent tourist spots. As a result, the State Governments/UT Administrations of Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha have deployed Tourist Police, in one form or the other.

An advisory has been posted on the Ministry of Tourism website www.incredibleindia.org indicating that India remains safe destination for international Tourists including women tourists.

Development of Kurukshetra as pilgrim destination

1106. SHRI RAM KUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Kurukshetra, Haryana is a land of historical and religious importance, the Kurukshetra War of the Mahabharata was fought on this land and the Bhagavad Gita was preached on this land during the war when Lord Krishna found Arjuna in a terrible dilemma; and

(b) if so, the details of the measures taken or proposed to be taken for the comprehensive integrated development of Kurukshetra as a pilgrim destination with international class infrastructure?