

**Special scheme for hilly districts to encourage tourism**

2004. SHRI K.R. ARJUNAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any special scheme to develop the hilly districts to encourage tourism; and

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Tourism has launched two new schemes in the last financial year:

- (i) Swadesh Darshan for Integrated Development of Tourist Circuits around Specific Themes.
- (ii) National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive (PRASAD) to beautify and improve the amenities and infrastructure at pilgrimage centres of all faiths.

Under Swadesh Darshan, the following five circuits have been identified for development :—

- (i) North East Circuit
- (ii) Buddhist Circuit
- (iii) Himalayan Circuit
- (iv) Coastal Circuit
- (v) Krishna Circuit

Under PRASAD, initially twelve cities have been identified namely Ajmer, Amritsar, Amravati, Dwarka, Gaya, Kedarnath, Kamakhya, Kanchipuram, Mathura, Puri, Varanasi and Velankanni.

The circuits/destinations identified under these schemes include hilly area as well.

One project for hilly areas in Arunachal Pradesh *i.e.* Bhalukpong–Bomdila–Tawang has already been sanctioned under Swadesh Darshan for an amount of ₹ 50.00 crore in the North-East Circuit.

**Development of model villages for STs**

2005. SHRI AAYANUR MANJUNATHA: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any proposal to chalk out a programme to develop model villages for Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities in the country;