

Problems being faced by tourism industry

729. SHRI SANJAY RAUT : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that tourism industry has been adversely affected in various parts of the country during the last three years;
- (b) if so, the details of reasons and problems being faced by tourism industry; and
- (c) the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (DR. MAHESH SHARMA) : (a) No, Sir. A positive growth has been registered in Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India during each of the last three years. The number of Domestic Tourist Visits (DTV's) has also registered a positive growth during 2011, 2012 and 2013. The number of DTV's is not available for the year 2014. The details of number of FTAs and DTV's during 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 along with the growth over previous year are given below:

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014
FTAs (in million)	6.31	6.58	6.97	7.70
Growth rate (%)	9.2	4.3	5.9	10.6
DTV's (in million)	865	1045	1145	NA
Growth rate (%)	15.6	20.9	9.6	NA

NA: Not Available

- (b) Does not arise.
- (c) Steps taken by the Ministry of Tourism to boost tourism in the country are as follows:

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

As part of the above 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.

Contents for interactive multimedia walking tours of major Indian cities, monuments and tourist destinations for hosting on Incredible India website have also been designed, developed and produced.

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.

(ii) New Schemes: In the Budget for 2014-15, following two new schemes were announced:

- (i) Swadesh Darshan - Integrated Infrastructure Development as Theme-Based Tourist Circuits. The five thematic circuits initially identified under this scheme are: Buddhist Circuit, Himalayan Circuit, Coastal Circuit, Krishna Circuit and North-East Circuit;
- (ii) National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive (PRASAD). Twelve cities initially identified under the scheme are Amritsar, Ajmer, Amaravati, Dwaraka, Gaya, Kanchipuram, Kedarnath, Kamakhya, Mathura, Puri, Varanasi and Vellankani.

(iii) e- Tourist Visa: The Tourist Visa on Arrival (TVoA) enabled with the Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) Scheme, presently known as e-Tourist Visa Scheme, was launched on 27.11.2014 for nationals of 43 countries and was subsequently extended to nationals of Guyana and Sri Lanka in January, 2015 and April, 2015, respectively 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 e-Tourist Visa 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.

- (iv) **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.
- (v) **Central Financial Assistance:** Ministry of Tourism operates various schemes through which Central Financial Assistance (CF A) is provided to States/Union Territories (UTs) and other central agencies for overall development of tourism in the country.
- (vi) **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 involvement of private and public sector stakeholders as a part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).
- (vii) **Sustainable Tourism:** The Ministry of Tourism has launched a Comprehensive Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India (STCI) for three major segments of tourism industry, namely Accommodation, Tour operators and Beaches, Backwaters, Lakes and Rivers sector on 26.08.2014.

The Comprehensive Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India (STCI) addresses need of various eco-friendly measures like Sewage Treatment Plan (STP), rain water harvesting system, waste management system, pollution control etc.

- (viii) **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 & 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.

- (ix) **Human Resource Development** : In order to bridge the huge skill gap existing in Hospitality Industry, Ministry of Tourism has adopted a multi pronged strategy to strengthen institutional infrastructure for training and education. At present, there are 21 Central Institutes of Hotel Management (CIHMs), 15 State Institutes of Hotel Management (SIHMs), 7 Food Craft Institutes (FCIs) and 5 Indian Institutes of Tourism and Travel Management (1 Head quarter and 4 Functional Centres). Apart from these, 15 new SIHMs and 15 FCIs have been sanctioned.

Formulation of a new tourism policy

730. SHRI P. BHATTACHARYA : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has formulated a new tourism policy to promote tourism in the country;
- (b) if so, the details and the salient features of the policy; and
- (c) the details of funds allocated by Government in this regard during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (DR. MAHESH SHARMA) : (a) to (c) The Ministry of Tourism had formulated a National Tourism Policy in the year 2002 with a view to positioning tourism as a major engine of economic growth, enhancing employment potential within the tourism sector as well as to foster economic integration through direct linkages with other sectors. The Ministry has now initiated the process of formulating a National Tourism Policy 2015 keeping in mind changes in the global tourism scenario and with the aim of positioning India as a “Must See” destination for global travellers, encouraging Indians to explore their own country and realising the potential of tourism as a major engine for economic growth, employment generation and poverty alleviation in a responsible framework.

Increasing contribution of tourism to GDP

731. DR. K.P. RAMALINGAM : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that India needs to construct 180,000 additional hotel rooms at a cost of US \$ 25.5 billion by 2016;
- (b) whether it is a fact that in most countries tourism contributes to nearly 9 per cent of GDP and to catch up with other countries India needs to increase its tourist arrivals;