

**Contribution of tourism and hospitality sector to economy**

1269. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether tourism and hospitality as a sector is expected to contribute \$ 418.9 billion to the Indian economy by 2022 and provide employment for an additional 8.29 lakh people by 2016;

(b) whether Government is diluting policy initiatives and implementing them in a manner that may hamper this growth and may not have a significant impact on the lives of the millions of people who have a stake in this industry; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) As per the 2nd Tourism Satellite Account of India (TSA) - 2009-10 and subsequent estimation for the next three years namely 2010-11, 2011-12 and 2012-13, the contribution of tourism to total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12 and 2012-13 were 6.77%, 6.76%, 6.76% and 6.88%, respectively. The contribution of tourism to total Employment of the Country during 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12 and 2012-13 were 10.17%, 10.78%, 11.49% and 12.36%, respectively.

(b) and (c) No, Sir.

Keeping in view this significant contribution of tourism in economy and employment of the country, Ministry makes adequate policies and programmes to attract more tourists. Some of the major initiatives taken by the Ministry of Tourism to attract more foreign tourists in the country are as below:

(i) **Central Financial Assistance (CFA):** Ministry of Tourism operates various schemes through which Central Financial Assistance (CFA) is provided to States/UTs for overall development and promotion of tourism.

Recently, Ministry of Tourism has launched following two new schemes for development of tourism in thematic manner:

**Swadesh Darshan:** Swadesh Darshan was launched for development of theme based tourist circuits in a way that caters to both mass and niche tourism in a holistic manner. Twelve Circuits namely North-East India Circuit, Buddhist Circuit, Himalayan Circuit, Coastal Circuit, Krishna Circuit, Desert Circuit, Tribal Circuit, Eco Circuit, Wildlife Circuit, Rural Circuit, Spiritual Circuit and Ramayana Circuit have been identified for development under this Scheme.

National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive (PRASAD): This new Scheme has been launched for the development and beautification of pilgrimage sites to tap the growth of domestic tourists driven by religious sentiments and to augment tourism infrastructure at places of pilgrimage to facilitate pilgrims/tourists. In the first phase, cities namely Amritsar, Kedarnath, Ajmer, Mathura, Varanasi, Gaya, Puri, Dwarka, Amravati, Kanchipuram, Velankanni, Guwahati and Patna have been identified for infrastructure development.

- (ii) **Publicity and Promotion:** The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, promotes India as a holistic destination in the international markets. As part of its promotional activities, the MoT releases campaigns in the international markets under the Incredible India brand-line to showcase various tourism destinations and products including its cultural heritage.

Moreover, a series of promotional activities are being undertaken in tourist generating markets overseas through the India Tourism Offices abroad with the objective of showcasing India's tourism potential and promoting tourism to the country. These promotional activities include participation in travel fairs and exhibitions; organising road shows, Know India seminars & workshops; organizing and supporting Indian food and cultural festivals; publication of brochures, offering joint advertising and brochure support, and inviting media personalities, tour operators and opinion makers to visit the country under the Hospitality programme of the Ministry.

The Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance to Stakeholders and Tourism Departments of States/Union Territories for undertaking promotional activities under the Marketing Development Assistance (MDA) Scheme.

- (iii) **e-Tourist Visa (e-TV):** The Government of India has introduced the facility of e-TV for the citizens of 113 countries at 16 airports. Introduction of e-TV is a Path breaking measure by the Government in easing entry formalities in the country.

Government of India has also revised the e-TV fee in four slabs of 0, US\$25, US\$48 and US\$60 from November 3, 2015. Earlier e-TV application fee was US\$60 and bank charge as US\$2 which was uniform for all the countries. The revision of Visa fee has been done on the principle of reciprocity. Bank charges have also been reduced from US\$2 to 2.5 % of the e-TV fee. During the period January to October, 2015 a total of 2,58,182 e-TV holders visited India indicating the success of the new online process.