

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) to (c) Promotion and assessment of tourism potential is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations including the State of Jharkhand. Central Financial Assistance is provided for tourism projects in consultation with them subject to availability of funds, liquidation of pending utilization certificates and adherence to the scheme guidelines.

The State of Jharkhand has submitted a proposal - "Development of Eco Circuit - Jamshedpur- Ranchi- Hazaribagh" under the Eco-Circuit theme of 'Swadesh Darshan scheme'.

Formation of Himalayan Tourist Circuit

†777. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Ministry has decided to form a Himalayan Tourist Circuit;
- (b) if so, whether the places to be connected under this circuit have been finalized;
- (c) if so, the names of places of Uttarakhand State to be included under this circuit; and
- (d) if not, by when they are expected to be finalized?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) to (d) For the integrated development of theme based tourist circuits in the country the Ministry of Tourism has launched the Swadesh Darshan scheme in the year 2014-15. The Himalayan circuit has been identified as one of the thematic circuits for development under the scheme.

The Himalayan Circuit covers States of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and the North-East region.

Domestic and foreign tourists visited Gujarat

778. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) the year-wise number of domestic and foreign tourist visited Gujarat in the past five years, including the current year;
- (b) the scheme-wise and year-wise details of funds sanctioned, released and utilized by the Gujarat Government for the development of tourism during the said period; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.