

- (i) Five Year Tax Holiday for 2, 3 and 4 Star category hotels located in all UNESCO declared World Heritage sites (Except Mumbai and Delhi) for hotels operating *w.e.f.* 01.04.2004 to 31.03.2013.
- (ii) Extension of Investment Linked tax incentives under Section 35AD of the Income Tax Act to new hotels of 2-Star category and above anywhere in India, which will facilitate growth of accommodation in the country.
- (iii) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has de-linked credit for hotel projects from Commercial Real Estate (CRE), thereby enabling hotel projects to avail credit at relaxed norms and reduced interest rates.
- (iv) Hotel and Tourism related industry has been declared a high priority industry and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is allowed upto 100% under the automatic route.

The Ministry of Finance, Government of India has also included the following in the 'Harmonized list of Infrastructure sub Sector' to boost supply of hotel rooms in the country:

- (i) Three Star or higher category classified hotels located outside cities with population of more than 1 million.
- (ii) Hotels with a project cost of more than ₹ 200 crore each in any place in India and of any star rating.

Making India a hub of medical tourism

2050. DR. CHANDAN MITRA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has formulated any plan to increase India's share in world tourism market;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the details of country's present share; and
- (c) the steps taken by Government to make India a hub of medical tourism and also to showcase the important tourist spots of the country to the outside world?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Important initiatives taken by the Government to increase India's share in world tourism market include:

- Introduction of facility of e-Tourist Visa for the citizens of 150 countries at 16 airports including extension of Visa on Arrival facility to the nationals of Japan.

- Launch of 24x7 Toll Free Multi-Lingual Tourist Info Line handling ten international languages besides Hindi and English.
- Launch of following two new Schemes during 2014-15:
 - (i) **Swadesh Darshan** for development of theme based tourist circuits in a way that caters to both mass and niche tourism in a holistic manner.
 - (ii) **National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive (PRASAD)** for the development and beautification of pilgrimage sites.
- Launch of 'Welcome Booklet' with information on Dos and Don'ts for tourists, contact details of India Tourism domestic offices and Tourist Helpline Number for distribution at immigration counters to tourists arriving at international airports.
- Organization of biennial International Buddhist Conclave.
- Organization of Annual International Tourism Mart for promotion of tourism in North Eastern States.
- Financial Assistance to Stakeholders and Tourism Departments of States/ Union Territories for undertaking promotional activities under the Marketing Development Assistance Scheme.
- Development and promotion of "Niche Tourism" products.
- Creating an increased pool of trained man power in Hospitality Tourism sectors for delivery of quality service to the tourist.
- Release of regular domestic advertisement campaign in national print electronic media.

The present share of India in International Tourist Arrival is 0.68%.

(c) The Government of India has Medical Visa and Medical Attendant Visa as separate categories of Visa to facilitate entry of medical tourists in India.

A National Medical and Wellness Tourism Board has been constituted to provide a dedicated institutional framework to take forward the cause of promotion of Medical Tourism, Wellness Tourism and Yoga, Ayurveda Tourism and any other format of Indian system of medicine covered by Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy (AYUSH). This Board works as an umbrella organization that governs and promotes this segment of tourism in an organized manner. It has representatives from AYUSH, Quality Council of India, National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH).

For promoting quality in the healthcare sector the NABH provides accreditation to hospitals and wellness centres for adhering to quality standards. Under the MDA Scheme, Ministry of Tourism also provides incentives to stakeholders accredited by NABH.

The Ministry of Tourism promotes Tourism including Medical Tourism for boosting inflow of foreign tourists in a holistic manner, *inter-alia*, by running campaigns in the international markets under the Incredible India brand-line; conducting Road Shows; Know India Seminars; participating in major international tourism fairs and exhibitions and also supporting Events/Seminars/Conferences which have focus on health and medical tourism.

The Ministry of Tourism also produces brochures, CDs, films and other publicity material for promotion of Tourism including Medical and Health Tourism.

Setting up of task force for promoting cruise tourism

2051. DR. V. MAITREYAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has chalked out any plans for setting up of a Task Force for promoting cruise tourism in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the probable composition of the Task Force to be constituted;

(c) the outcome expected out from the recently held discussions during Indian Maritime Summit at Mumbai; and

(d) the modalities to be adopted by Government to regulate and permit various tourist cruises while landing at various ports in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. With the objective of promoting Cruise Tourism in India, a Task Force on Cruise Tourism has been constituted by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. The Task Force comprises members from the Central Ministries, State Governments, various Port Trusts and Private Sector.

The maiden Maritime India Summit, 2016 (MIS-2016) was organized by the Ministry of Shipping in Mumbai from 14th to 16th April 2016. The objective of the Summit was to create awareness of the untapped potential of Indian maritime sector and showcase investment opportunities. The focus was on presenting India as an attractive investment destination and encourage potential investors for investing in the Indian Maritime Sector.

As per the decisions taken by the Task Force on Cruise Tourism, Port Level Facilitation Committees have been set up by Port Authorities under the Chairmanship of respective Port Trust Chairman for coordinating logistic issues with all concerned agencies prior to the landing of cruise vessels.