

Preservation of Mythological Heritage

†*43. SHRI RAM NATH THAKUR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government proposes to preserve Mythological Heritage and convert them into tourist places;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of amount allocated by Government in the current budget for the maintenance, beautification and development of all the tourist places of Bihar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Tourism in consultation with the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations develops and promotes various tourism destinations and products including Mythological Heritage sites as tourist spots in the country. However, the heritage monuments/sites are maintained and preserved by the respective authorities such as Archaeological Survey of India, State Archaeological Departments and Temple Trusts etc.

For development of tourism infrastructure in the country, the Ministry of Tourism has introduced two new schemes in 2014-15 *i.e.* PRASAD-Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive and Swadesh Darshan-Integrated Development of Theme-Based Tourist Circuits. Under PRASAD thirteen cities have been identified for development initially, namely: Amritsar, Ajmer, Mathura, Varanasi, Gaya, Puri, Amravati, Kanchipuram, Vellankanni, Kedarnath, Patna, Dwarka and Kamakhya. Under Swadesh Darshan scheme thirteen thematic circuits have been identified for development 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, Ramayana Circuit and Heritage Circuit.

Under Budget Estimates of 2016-17, PRASAD scheme has a proposed allocation of ₹ 100 crore and Swadesh Darshan Scheme has a proposed allocation of ₹ 706.35 crore. There is no State-wise allocation of funds for States/Union Territory Administrations under the above schemes. The funds are sanctioned to State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for various tourism projects in consultation with them subject to availability of funds, liquidation of pending utilization certificates, submission of suitable Detailed Project Report and adherence to the scheme guidelines.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.