

Development of rural tourism

947. SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is immense potential to develop rural tourism in the country;

(b) the number of districts/villages identified, developed and declared as rural tourism destinations in the country in the last three years and the current year, State/UT-wise;

(c) whether Government has received proposals/suggestions from States/UTs in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof along with the funds allocated by Government for the said purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) to (c) Ministry of Tourism recognising the immense potential of rural tourism in the country has identified the Rural Circuit as one of the 13 thematic circuits under Swadesh Darshan Scheme to promote local arts, culture, handicraft, cuisine to generate livelihoods.

Rural Tourism Scheme formed part of the Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits (PIDDC) Scheme. The details of rural tourism projects sanctioned by the Ministry of Tourism during 2013-14 and 2014-15 is given in the Statement (*See* below). The PIDDC scheme has been delinked from Union Support with effect from 2015-16.

No project proposal have been sanctioned so far for Rural Circuit under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme.

(d) Does not arise.

Statement*The details of rural tourism projects*

(₹ in lakh)

Sl. No.	Name of the States	No. Projects	Amt. Sanctioned	Amt. Released
1	2	3	4	5
2013-14				
1.	Jammu and Kashmir	15	674.03	507.26
	TOTAL	15	674.03	507.26
2014-15				
1.	Jammu and Kashmir	2	94.05	18.80
	TOTAL	2	94.05	18.80

Funds for cleaning up of pilgrimage places

948. SHRI CHUNIBHAI KANJIBHAI GOHEL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that World Bank is providing technical and financial assistance to Government for cleaning up of ten iconic places including Taj Mahal and Vaishno Devi on par with international standards;

(b) if so, complete details in this regard with the names of iconic places to be cleaned;

(c) whether it is also a fact that most of the important Hindu temples in Gujarat are not cleaned for want of funds; and

(d) if so, what steps Government is proposing to provide suitable funds for cleaning of these pilgrimage places?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) and (b) The World Bank is providing only technical assistance. On pilot basis ten iconic places have been identified to be cleaned up. All the Stakeholders, who are responsible for upkeep of these iconic places, that includes the Local Administration, Tourism Department, Archaeological Survey of India etc. have been advised to prepare their plan along with expenditure to be incurred and sources/schemes from where the funds are to be dovetailed. State-wise names of ten iconic places to be cleaned up and upgraded to international standard are given in Statement (*See below*).