

Product Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits (PIDDC) scheme. Pursuant to increasing States share in Union taxes and duties to 42% in 14th Finance Commission from 32% in 13th Finance Commission, PIDDC Scheme has been delinked from the Union Support from 2015-16 onwards.

For Integrated Development of Tourist Circuits around Specific Themes, Ministry has a scheme of Swadesh Darshan. Under this scheme, one circuit has been identified for development of Coastal Circuit (Chennai- Mamamallapuram - Rameshwaram - Manpadu -Kanyakumari) during 2016-17.

(c) The amount sanctioned for development of Coastal Circuit (Chennai- Mamamallapuram - Rameshwaram - Manpadu - Kanyakumari) under Swadesh Darshan scheme is ₹99.92 crore and the amount released (as on 30-11-2017) is ₹19.98 crore.

Decrease in foreign tourist arrivals

1914. SHRI VIVEK K. TANKHA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that arrival of foreign tourists have considerably decreased during the last three years;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof, month-wise and country-wise and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government has chalked out any plan to attract foreign tourists; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and by when those measures are likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI K. J. ALPHONS): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Government of India has already taken various initiatives to boost tourism in the country, which *inter-alia* include the following:

- Extended the facility of e- Visa for the citizens of 163 countries.
- Launched campaigns in the international and domestic markets to promote the various tourism products and destinations through an integrated marketing and promotional strategy.
- Launched the Incredible India 2.0 campaign with market specific promotional plans and content creation.

- Launched 24x7 Toll Free Multi-Lingual Tourist Helpline 1800111363 in 12 Languages.
- Constituted Medical & Wellness Tourism Promotion Board.
- Provided Central Financial Assistance (CFA) to State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for development and promotion of tourism.

Promoting medical tourism

1915. SHRI HARIVANSH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the country is among the fastest growing medical tourism destinations of the world; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to promote medical tourism in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI K. J. ALPHONS): (a) It is a fact that India has emerged as a major Medical Tourism destination. While Ministry of Tourism does not maintain any data regarding the growth of India's medical tourism *vis a vis* other countries, Ministry of Commerce informs that as per a FICCI-IMS Knowledge Paper titled, 'Medical Value travel in India: Enhancing value in MVT', published in 2016, India is amongst the top 6 MVT (Medical Value Travel) destinations of the world which include Thailand, Singapore, India, Malaysia, Taiwan and Mexico (India ranked third in the world in 2015).

(b) Ministry of Tourism has recognised Medical and Wellness Tourism as Niche Tourism Products for promotion. The Ministry offers financial support as Marketing Development Assistance, for Publicity, and for organising Wellness and Medical Tourism Promotion shows as well as workshop/events/seminars to accredited Medical and Wellness Tourism Service Providers and Chambers of Commerce, etc. A film on Medical Tourism has been produced in association with BBC and is used at various fora for promotional purposes. Medical and Medical attendant visa has been introduced to ease the travel process of Medical Tourists. The e-tourist visa regime has been expanded to include medical visits as well. It has also been decided to set up facilitation counters at the major airports of Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Hyderabad and Bengaluru for tourists arriving on Medical Visas. 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 and Wellness Tourism including Ayurveda and any other format of Indian system of medicine covered by Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH).

The Department of Commerce and Services Export Promotion Council (SEPC) have launched a Healthcare Portal www.indiahealthcaretourism.com, as a single source platform