

Protection of Taj Mahal

†1477. SHRIMATI CHHAYA VERMA:
SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD:
CH. SUKHRAM SINGH YADAV:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that there has been dereliction in maintenance of the Taj Mahal causing serious threat to the monument;
- (b) the amount spent on the protection of Taj Mahal during the last three years;
- (c) from the point of view of tourism, the steps taken to provide amenities to the domestic as well as foreign tourists near Taj Mahal in order to increase the number of tourists; and
- (d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) No Sir. Conservation and maintenance work of the Taj Mahal is attended regularly by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and it is in a good state of preservation.

(b) The details of expenditure incurred for conservation, preservation and environmental development works of Taj Mahal during the last three years are as under:—

Sl.No.	Year	Expenditure incurred. (Amount in ₹)
1.	2015-16	3,65,55,570
2.	2016-17	4,69,94,913
3.	2017-18	4,12,32,851

(c) and (d) From the tourism point of view better amenities have been provided at Taj Mahal like e-ticketing, turnstyle gates, toilets, drinking water, audio-visual guides, ramps, signage, Wi-Fi, wheelchairs, dustbins benches, publication sale counter, etc.

GST exemption in mat stick and finished mat

1478. SHRI MANAS RANJAN BHUNIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any place for exemption of GST on mat stick and finished mat (Agricultural product);

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether it would be done and declared by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SHIV PRATAP SHUKLA): (a) No Sir.

(b) and (c) Based on the recommendations of the GST Council, finished mat (falling under Chapter heading 4601) of vegetable material and the vegetable material from which it is made, have been kept at lowest GST rate slab of 5%. Further, the small suppliers will be eligible for threshold exemption of ₹ 20 lakhs. Also, concessional rate of 1% GST on turnover is prescribed where aggregate turnover in preceding financial year is up to ₹ 1 crore, under composition scheme.

Duties and taxes levied on tobacco products

1479. PROF. M. V. RAJEEV GOWDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether different components of E-cigarettes or Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) are subject to different import duties;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether bidis despite being taxed under the 28 per cent GST slab, are exempt from any cesses being levied on it; and
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SHIV PRATAP SHUKLA): (a) and (b) The specific components of ENDS attract 18% GST and 7.5% BCD Ancillary/general components of ENDS are subject to tax as applicable to respective heading in the tariff under which such goods are classified.

(c) and (d) Bidis attracts highest GST rate of 28%. However, The GST Council did not recommend imposition of Compensation Cess on Bidi.

Lateral entry of domain experts in PSBs

1480. SHRI NARAYAN LAL PANCHARIYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has made any policy for lateral entry of domain experts in Public Sector Banks;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;