

of the guidelines. The program is aimed at building the capacity of the Hospitality industry particularly small and medium units to restart and grow their business.

- (ii) A robust information system/comprehensive data base of various accommodation units throughout the country has been created for coordinating and ensuring registration of all unclassified accommodation units.
- (iii) Operational recommendations for hotels, restaurants, B&Bs/Home stays and Tourism Service Providers have been formulated and issued on 08.06.2020 to facilitate smooth resumption of business.
- (iv) Validity of approval or certifications of hotels and other accommodation units whose project approval/re-approval and classification/re-classification have expired/were likely to expire, has been extended upto 30th September, 2020.
- (v) The Ministry, in collaboration with QCI, has developed an initiative called SAATHI (System for Assessment, Awareness and Training for Hospitality Industry), for effective implementation of Guidelines/SOPs issued with reference to COVID 19 and beyond for safe operations of Hotels, Restaurants, B&Bs and other units.

Development of river tourism in Odisha

1115. SHRI SUJEET KUMAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) the action taken by Government to develop river tourism in the country; and
- (b) the specific plan for Odisha?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI PRAHALAD SINGH PATEL): (a) Development and promotion of tourism, including river tourism, is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. However, the Ministry of Tourism provides Central Financial Assistance to State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for projects identified by them under their jurisdiction, subject to adherence to scheme guidelines, availability of funds and submission of certificate of utilisation of funds released earlier.

For development of tourism infrastructure in the country, the Ministry of Tourism has introduced the 'National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive' (PRASHAD), the 'Swadesh Darshan - Integrated Development of Theme-Based Tourist Circuits' and 'Assistance to Central Agencies for Tourism Infrastructure Development' schemes. These schemes includes, *inter alia*, development of tourist spots on river banks in the identified circuits/ pilgrimage destinations.

Ministry of Shipping has informed that the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) has awarded a study for preparation of an Action Plan and detailed Road Map for development of River Cruise Tourism in India.

(b) Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, has sanctioned an amount of ₹ 50.00 crore in 2014-15 for Infrastructure Development in Odisha at Puri, Shree Jagannath Dham-Ramachandi - Prachi River front at Deuli under PRASHAD Scheme.

The Department of Tourism, Government of Odisha, has informed that they have undertaken following major steps to develop and promote River Tourism in Odisha:-

- (i) Tied up with Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI), who has completed technical studies and has proposed following routes based on technical feasibility for operations of river cruises:
 - (a) National Waterway 5 (Cruise route - Paradeep - Hukitola bay - Rajnagar -Managalajodi - Bhitarkanika - Chandbali) covering approx. - 95kms
 - (b) National Waterway 64 (Cruise route - Badmul-Muduligadia-Tikarpada-Daruha) -30kms
 - (c) National Waterway 14 (Cruise route - Chandbali-Bhitarkanika-Aradi)
 - (d) Other route - Jobra-Dhabaleswar
- (ii) State Government with support from IWAI, planning for operationalising river cruises, interventions like development/upgradation of shore infrastructure and support facilities like jetties (permanent/floating), storage facilities, visitor amenities, and charting of routes and their maintenance, etc.
- (iii) Private sector cruise operators are being encouraged to operate their cruises for which Department of Tourism, Government of Odisha, will offer necessary facilitation support.
- (iv) Single Window approval has been accorded for water sports in Mahanadi river and Hirakud dam.
- (v) Entered into technical collaboration with Kerala State Inland Navigation Corporation (KSINC) - a Government of Kerala PSU experienced in the area of planning and development of river recreation.

Status of Ramayana and Buddhist circuits

1116. SHRIMATI SHANTA CHHETRI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state: