

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 632
ANSWERED ON 02.12.2021

MEASURES FOR REVIVAL OF TOURISM

632. SHRI K.C. VENUGOPAL:
SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR GUPTA:

Will the Minister of **TOURISM** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether foreign and domestic tourism has been on decline due to COVID-19 pandemic during the last two years;
- (b) if so, the steps taken to revive foreign and domestic tourism in the country;
- (c) whether Government has drawn any plans to bring back foreign tourists after the slowdown in Corona cases, the details thereof; and
- (d) the details of relief package announced and disbursed to the stressed hospitality sector?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF TOURISM

(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

(a) to (c): As per information received from States/UTs administration, the number of Domestic Tourists Visits and Foreign Tourists Visits during calendar year 2019, 2020 are given below:

Year	Domestic Tourist Visits (in Million)
2019	2321.98
2020	610.21

Source: States/UTs Administration

Year	Foreign Tourist Visits (in Million)
2019	31.41
2020	7.17

Source: States/UTs Administration

Government of India has taken several steps which are expected to revive tourism in the country including bringing back foreign tourist which are at Annexure-I.

(d): Government of India has announced various fiscal and regulatory relief measures to support the Indian hotel sector from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The details of the same are given at Annexure-II.

ANNEXURE-I

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PART (a) to (c) OF RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.632 ANSWERED ON 02.12.2021 MEASURES FOR REVIVAL OF TOURISM

The following are the various steps taken by the Government of India which are expected to revive the tourism in the country including bringing back foreign tourist:

The Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, has relaxed the restriction for all foreign nationals intended to visit India for Tourism purposes subject to the Covid related guidelines of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW). The e-Tourist Visa / Tourist Visa is fully restored for all individual foreign nationals intended to visit India for tourism purposes w.e.f. 15th November, 2021. Initially, the e- Tourist / Tourist Visa is being issued with the validity of 30 days. Further, the Government of India has announced first 5,00,000 free visa to the international tourists.

Loan Guarantee Scheme for Covid Affected Tourism Service Sector (LGSCATSS)

As announcement by the Ministry of Finance on 28.06.2021 to provide relief to the tourism sector, Ministry of Tourism has implemented the "Loan Guarantee Scheme for Covid Affected Tourism Service Sector (LGSCATSS)". Under this loan guarantee scheme, loan upto Rs. 10.00 lakh will be extended to each Tour Operators/ Travel Agents/ Tourist Transport Operators approved/ recognized by the Ministry of Tourism, upto Rs. 1.00 lakh will be extended to each Regional Tourist Guide/ Incredible India Tourist Guide approved/recognized by the Ministry of Tourism and Tourist Guides approved/ recognized by the State Govt./ UT Administration.

The purpose of the LGSCATSS of the Ministry of Tourism is to provide guarantee coverage for the loans provided by the Scheduled Commercial Banks to the above mentioned beneficiaries, to discharge their liabilities and restart their business affected due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Validity of the said scheme is till 31.03.2022 or till the guarantee of Rs.250.00 crores are issued under the scheme, whichever is earlier and would be applicable to all eligible loans sanctioned under the scheme on or after 04.10.2021 [issuance of LGSCATSS guidelines by National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company (NCGTC)] till 31.03.2022. No guarantee fee will be charged from the Money Lending Institutions (MLIs) by NCGTC for the credit facilities provided under the Scheme.

Market Development Scheme (MDA) for promotion of Domestic Tourism:

The Ministry of Tourism has revised the Guidelines for Scheme of Market Development Assistance (MDA) for promotion of Domestic Tourism in November 2020 to enhance the scope and reach of the scheme. As per the guidelines, the stakeholders are provided with financial support for the promotion of Domestic Tourism. Additional promotional activities have been incorporated including online promotions and the extent of financial assistance

permissible has been enhanced. Tourism Departments of State Governments / UT Administrations are also now eligible for obtaining financial support under the scheme.

Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS)

Under RCS UDAN-3 Tourism, Ministry of Tourism approached Ministry of Civil Aviation, with the purpose of further improving connectivity and got 46 tourism routes included for better connectivity of important tourist places including Iconic sites. Currently 29 tourism routes have been operationalized.

Ministry of Tourism has given its recommendations for inclusion of tourism routes and improving the air connectivity in the North Eastern region. The Ministry of Civil Aviation has recently finalized 78 Routes under RCD UDAN-4 which largely aims at increasing air connectivity to and within the North Eastern Region.

Road Connectivity and Wayside Amenities

Ministry of Tourism had shared a list of 50 Tourism Destinations including Iconic Sites and UNESCO World Heritage Sites with Ministry of Road Transport & Highways for improving road connectivity in the first phase. Where good road connectivity already exists, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways was requested to consider setting up of wayside amenities, prominent signages and beautification of the area, at a distance of 15-20 kms. on either side of the tourist destination. Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has informed that out of the 50 destinations identified by Ministry of Tourism, 23 fall under the purview of Ministry of Road Transport & Highways/National Highway Authority of India, where work is in progress.

For the remaining 27 tourist sites, Ministry of Tourism has addressed letters to the respective State Governments and PWD for improvement of connectivity and provision of wayside facilities as these roads did not fall under the purview of MoRT&H.

Virtual meetings were held with the State/UT Tourism Departments on 24th and 25th November, 2020 to get their inputs and suggestions on tourist destinations which require road connectivity and wayside amenities. Based on the inputs received from the State Governments/UTs a list of 114 destinations has been prepared and further shared with the MoRT&H for improving road connectivity to these tourist sites.

Further, a meeting with senior officers of the Ministry of Road Transport & Highway has also been held in the month of November, 2021 regarding improvement of road connectivity to the UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Incredible India Tourist Facilitator Certification Programme:-

The Ministry of Tourism has launched the Incredible India Tourist Facilitator (IITF) Certification Programme- a digital initiative that aims at creating an Online learning platform with the objective of creating a pool of well trained and professional Tourist Facilitators across the country. The system provides basic, advanced (heritage and adventure), spoken language and refresher courses for candidates. The candidates can pursue these online courses from anywhere and at any time and at their own pace. On successful completion of the course, he/she will be a professionally certified tourist facilitator who will support tourists

by disseminating information, eliciting interest in them about the country and providing experiential tourism. The Programme has been made available online w.e.f. 01.01.2020.

This digital initiative will help in employment generation and help boost the tourism industry across the country. This scheme will also help boost tourism in North-East Indian states by enhancing the facilities and quality experience of the tourists visiting in the region.

The first ever Incredible India Tourism Facilitator Basic Course online exam was conducted in Feb, 2021 for which result was announced in March, 2021 for 2230 successful candidates. The 2nd IITFC Basic Course exam was conducted on 03rd & 04th July, 2021, for which 1370 candidates appeared out of which 841 were declared successful.

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PART (d) OF RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.632 ANSWERED ON 02.12.2021 MEASURES FOR REVIVAL OF TOURISM

The following are the various fiscal relief measures announced by the Government, expected to benefit the Indian Hotel Industry:

- i. The Government announced Atmanirbhar Bharat Package vide which Rs.3.00 lakh crore collateral free automatic loan has been made available for MSMEs. The loan will have 4- year tenure and 12-month moratorium.
- ii. The Government waived off PF contribution for three months for organisations with less than 100 pax and 90% of their employees earn below Rs.15000.
- iii. Under Atmanirbhar Bharat package, PF contribution of both employer and employee has been reduced to 10% each from existing 12% each for all establishments covered by EPFO for three months
- iv. Deferment of TCS up to October 2020.
- v. Return filing deferred for three months with no penal interest for companies up to Rs.5.00 Crore, rest @ 9% penal interest.
- vi. The Central government also gave relief from various regulatory compliances under Income Tax Act, companies Act and GST Act for varying period in the wake of COVID-19 crisis to ensure business continuity and survival.
- vii. The RBI extended moratorium on term loans till 31st December 2020.
- viii. The Government announced the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) 3.0 on 31.3.2021 to support eligible Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and business enterprises in meeting their operational liabilities and restarting their business. The scope of the scheme was enlarged to cover business enterprises in Hospitality, Travel & Tourism and Leisure & Sporting sectors. The validity of ECLGS (ECLGS 1.0, ECLGS 2.0 & ECLGS 3.0) was extended up to 30.06.2021 or till guarantees for an amount of Rs. 3.00 lakh crore are issued. Last date of disbursement under the scheme was extended to 30.09.2021. The details of guarantees issued under the scheme are given below:

Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) Tourism and Hospitality Scheme wise data as on 30.09.2021			
Industry Nature	Support Under	No. of Guarantees Issued	Amount of Guarantees issued on account of loans sanctioned under the scheme (in Rs. crore)
Travel and Tourism	ECLGS 3.0	2,732	1,371.62
Hospitality	ECLGS 3.0	3,160	5,430.96
Hotels, Restaurants, Tourism	ECLGS 2.0	218	3,403.90
Tourism, Hotels & Restaurants	ECLGS 1.0	96,219	3559.43
Total		1,02,329	13,765.91

- ix. Ministry of Finance has given concurrence to release Service Exports from India Scheme (SEIS) scrips on 16.06.2021. Earlier, several Industry stakeholders had flagged appeals to the Government to release SEIS Scrips for 2019-20 and DGFT had

put a detailed proposal for the allocation for SEIS for exports made during 2019-20. Taking all circumstances into account, the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance has given concurrence to the proposal of Department of Commerce for continuation of SEIS for 2019-20 with a financial allocation of Rs.2061 crore subject to the condition that the amount will be provided through Expenditure Budget following the procedure of providing a New Minor Head.

- x. On 28th June 2021, the Government announced a stimulus package to boost diverse sectors of economy affected by COVID-19 pandemic and provide impetus for growth and employment measures. The package comprises a total of 17 measures in three broad categories, which included 'Economic relief from Pandemic, with special focus on health and reviving travel and tourism sectors' and 'Impetus for Growth and employment'.
- xi. Operational Recommendations for safe resumption of business with easing of lockdown restrictions have been issued for various segments of the travel and hospitality industry and circulated amongst all stakeholders.
- xii. With a view to prepare for a post-COVID 19 revival, the Ministry has formulated and issued detailed operational guidelines for Covid safety and hygiene for hotels, restaurants, B&Bs/Homestays and Tourism Service Providers on 08.06.2020 to facilitate smooth resumption of business.
- xiii. An initiative called SAATHI (System for Assessment, Awareness & Training for Hospitality Industry) has been developed 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.
- xiv. With an aim to incentivize stakeholders in the Tourism industry, the Guidelines for the scheme of Market Development Assistance (MDA) for providing financial support to stakeholders for the promotion of Domestic Tourism have been modified to enhance the scope and reach of the scheme, so as to provide maximum benefits to the stakeholders. Additional promotional activities have been incorporated including online promotions and the extent of financial assistance permissible has been enhanced.
- xv. Validity of approval or certification of hotels and other accommodation units whose project approval/re-approval and classification/re-classification have expired/were likely to expire has been extended up to 31st March 2022.
- xvi. The Guidelines of the Marketing Development Assistance Programme under the Overseas Promotion and Publicity Scheme has been modified to enhance the scope and reach of the scheme, so as to provide maximum benefits to the stakeholders in the tourism industry.
