

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2691
ANSWERED ON 16.07.2019

INCENTIVES TO PROMOTE TOURISM

2691. SHRI A. VIJAYAKUMAR:

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

- (a) whether any incentives have been provided to increase travel by ships/cruise to boost tourism in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the number of schemes available under inland waterways tourism at par with Railway tourism?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR TOURISM (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)

(SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL)

(a) to (b): Ministry of Shipping has brought out a Vision Document with a view to develop India as a cruise shipping destination. The Vision Document envisages to develop supporting infrastructure for cruise tourism at ports, give special focus on developing the domestic cruise industry through policy supports, incentives and port infrastructure development.

Further, considering it as one of the growing areas of travel, the Ministry of Tourism has identified Cruise Tourism as one of the Niche Tourism Products. The Ministry of Tourism provides Central Financial Assistance (CFA) under relevant schemes to State Governments / Union Territory Administrations and the Central Agencies for various tourism projects including Cruise Terminals and Cruise Vessels, subject to availability of funds, submission of Utilization Certificates for funds released earlier and adherence to the scheme guidelines.

The Government has taken following steps to increase travel by ships / cruise to boost tourism in the country:

- (i) Foreign flag vessels carrying passengers with effect from 6th February, 2009 have been allowed to call at Indian ports for a period of 10 years without obtaining a license from Director General of Shipping. This facility has been extended further for a period of 5 years i.e. up to 5th February, 2024.
- (ii) Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for cruise vessels have been revised and operationalized w.e.f. November 2017 for uniform, redefined processes to be observed by all major ports.
- (iii) The port charges have been reduced and all major port now charge a uniform single rate of \$0.35 per Gross Registered Tonnage (GRT) for first 12 hours of

stay w.e.f. 3rd November 2017 and will remain in force for a period of three years.

- (iv) The ports do not levy any priority/ousting/shifting charges for berthing the cruise vessel.
- (v) Walk-in berthing/preferential berthing to homeport cruise without any extra charge is now available.
- (vi) E-visa facility has been extended to five sea ports namely Mumbai, Goa, Mangalore, Cochin and Chennai. Immigration counters have been set up at five major ports visited by cruise ships. In addition cruise passengers arriving with e-visa are exempted from biometric enrolment for a period on three years till 31.12.2020.
- (vii) To address manpower, coordination and logistic issues for handling cruise vessels at ports, Port Level Facilitation Committees have been formed under the respective Chairman of the above-mentioned major Ports to facilitate seamless handling of cruise ships and passengers.
- (viii) Cruise Terminals have been developed at Chennai Port, New Mangalore Port & Mormugao Port with improved facility and infrastructure.

(c): The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) develops and regulates National Waterways declared by the Government for Navigation and Shipping and provides infrastructure and navigation support to riverine cruise vessels on national waterways as per demand. As per IWAI there is no incentive/scheme provided to increase travel by ship/cruise tourism by Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI).
