

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION. No. 24
ANSWERED ON 03.02.2022

INDUSTRY STATUS TO TOURISM SECTOR

24. Shri T.G. Venkatesh:

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

- (a) whether Government has noted that the tourism sector has been hit drastically by the COVID-19 pandemic and following lockdowns in the country, which caused great losses to the tourism sector;
- (b) whether Government has received any proposal seeking to provide industrial status to the tourism sector for its speedy revival;
- (c) the stand of Government in this regard; and
- (d) the steps being taken by Government to boost tourism in the country?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF TOURISM

(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

(a) to (d): A Statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PART (a) To (d) OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 24 ANSWERED ON 03.02.2022 REGARDING INDUSTRY STATUS TO TOURISM SECTOR

(a): To assess the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the tourism sector, the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India got conducted study on “India and the Corona Virus Pandemic: Economic Losses for Households Engaged in Tourism and Policies for Recovery”. As per the study, the tourism industry faced significant impact due to COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns.

(b) & (c): Development and promotion of tourism products, including industrial status to the tourism sector, is primarily the responsibility of the respective State Government/Union Territory (UT) Administration. The States such as Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan and Kerala have already taken steps to provide benefits of investment subsidy and other measures by treating hospitality projects as industry. Ministry of Tourism, Government of India strongly advised all the States to provide “Industry Status” to hospitality projects by issuing suitable policy guidelines to provide capital subsidy on new investments to hospitality projects and power tariff, water tariff & property tax at industrial rates to encourage investment in the sector. It will strengthen and promote tourism in India and in turn bring social, economic and employment benefits to States.

(d): The Ministry of Tourism has taken several steps/initiatives to boost tourism in the country as per details given below:

- i. 24x7 toll free Multi-Lingual Tourist Helpline to assist tourists.
- ii. Incredible India Tourist Facilitator Programme, a Pan-India digital initiative to provide basic, advanced, spoken foreign language and refresher courses for creating a pool of trained and certified tourist facilitators which would help in creating employment opportunities at the local level.
- iii. Conducting Programmes under the ‘Capacity Building for Service Providers’ (CBSP) Scheme to train and up-grade manpower to provide better service standards.
- iv. 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.
- v. 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.
- vi. 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.
- vii. 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.

- viii. 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.
- ix. 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.
- x. Free Tourist Visa to 5 Lakh: As per the announcement, once Visa issuance is restarted, the first 5 lakh Tourists Visas will be issued free of charge. The benefit of free of charge visa will be available only once per tourist during the issuance of the first 5 lakh tourist visas (free of charge visas). The scheme will be applicable till 31st March 2022 or till 5,00,000 visas are issued, whichever is earlier.
- xi. Financial support under the “Loan Guarantee Scheme for Covid Affected Tourism Service Sector (LGSCATSS)”. The scheme will cover Regional Level Tourist Guides recognised by the Ministry of Tourism and Tourist Guides recognised by the State Governments/ UT Administrations and Travel and Tourism Stakeholders (TTS) recognized by the Ministry of Tourism. TTS’s will be eligible to get a loan upto Rs. 10 lakh each while tourist guides can avail loan upto Rs 1 lakh each. There will be no processing charges, waiver of foreclosure / prepayment charges and no requirement of additional collateral. Scheme to be administered by the Ministry of Tourism through NCGTC.
- xii. Recognising the fact that revival in the tourism sector will be largely spearheaded by Domestic tourism, the Ministry initiated arranging a series of webinars under the overall theme of Dekho Apna Desh. The objective is to generate awareness and at the same time sustain interest amongst stakeholders, students and the general public.
