

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1897
ANSWERED ON 14.03.2022**

BUDDHIST CIRCUIT IN WEST BENGAL UNDER SDS

1897. SHRI RAJU BISTA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of Loan Guarantee Scheme for Covid Affected Tourism Service Sector and the total funds disbursed and number of beneficiaries in the districts of Darjeeling and Kalimpong in West Bengal since the start of the scheme;**
- (b) the details of sites maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India in the districts of Darjeeling and Kalimpong;**
- (c) the details of heritage sites adopted under “Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan” scheme in the districts of Darjeeling and Kalimpong;**
- (d) the details of new circuits and facilities created under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme (SDS) in the State of West Bengal during the last three years; and**
- (e) whether the Ministry proposes to take cognizance of the fact that Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Sikkim are home to important Buddhist pilgrimage sites and take initiative to start “Buddhist Heritage Circuit” under SDS and if so, the details thereof?**

ANSWER

MINISTER OF TOURISM

(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

(a): 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 Governments/Union Territory Administrations.

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.

As per the information received from the National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Ltd (NCGTC) as on 28.02.2022, 114 tourist guides/tourism stakeholders have been sanctioned loans amounting to Rs.1.18 crore (of which Rs.0.78 crore stands disbursed) under LGSCATSS;

No beneficiary has yet been provided support by the Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) in the districts of Darjeeling & Kalimpong.

(b): As per the information received from Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), there are two monuments, namely (i) Tomb of General Lloyd and (ii) Tomb of Alexander Csoma De- Koros at Darjeeling in Darjeeling District under protection and care of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

(c): No heritage site has been adopted in the districts of Darjeeling and Kalimpong under "Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan" scheme of the Ministry of Tourism.

(d) & (e): Identification and development of tourism destinations is primarily the responsibility of State Governments/Union Territories. However, the Ministry of Tourism under its Swadesh Darshan scheme provides financial assistance to State Governments/UT Administrations/Central Agencies for development of tourism

infrastructure in the country.

The projects under the scheme are identified for development in consultation with the State Governments/UT Administrations and are sanctioned subject to availability of funds, submission of suitable detailed project reports, adherence to scheme guidelines and utilization of funds released earlier etc.

The Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned 1 project in the State of West Bengal and 2 projects in Sikkim under Swadesh Darshan scheme as per the following details:-

| (Rs. in Cr.) | | | | |
|--------------|--------------------|------------------|--|-------------------|
| State | Theme | Year of Sanction | Name of Project | Sanctioned amount |
| West Bengal | Coastal Circuit | 2015-16 | Development of Beach Circuit: Udaipur- Digha- Shankarpur- Tajpur- Mandarmani- Frasersganj-Bakkhlai- Henry Island | 67.99 |
| Sikkim | North-East Circuit | 2015-16 | Development of Tourist Circuit linking Rangpo (entry) – Rorathang- Aritar- Phadamchen- Nathang- Sherathang- Tsongmo- Gangtok-Phodong- Mangan- Lachung-Yumthang- Lachen- Thangu-Gurudongmer- Mangan- Gangtok-Tumin Lingee- Singtam (exit) | 98.05 |
| Sikkim | North-East Circuit | 2016-17 | Development of Tourist Circuit Linking Singtam- Maka- Temi-Bermoik Tokel- Phongia- Namchi –Jorthang- Okharey- Sombaria-Daramdin- Jorethang- Melli (Exit) | 95.32 |

In addition, the Ministry of Tourism has also sanctioned following 5 projects under Buddhist Theme, as part of its Swadesh Darshan scheme.

(Rs . in Cr.)

| S.No. | Name of State | Name of Circuit & Year | Project Name | Sanctioned Amount |
|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| 1. | Madhya Pradesh | Buddhist Circuit (2016-17) | Development of Sanchi-Satna-Rewa-Mandsaur-Dhar. | 74.02 |
| 2. | Uttar Pradesh | Buddhist Circuit (2016-17) | Development of Srawasti, Kushinagar & Kapilvastu. | 99.97 |
| 3. | Bihar | Buddhist Circuit (2016-17) | Construction of Convention Centre at Bodhgaya | 98.73 |
| 4. | Gujarat | Buddhist circuit (2017-18) | Development of Junagadh- Gir Somnath- Bharuch- Kutch- Bhavnagar- Rajkot- Mehsana | 26.68 |
| 5. | Andhra Pradesh | Buddhist Circuit (2017-18) | Development of Buddhist Circuit: Shalihundam- Thotlakonda- Bavikonda- Bojjanakonda- Amravati- Anupu in Andhra Pradesh | 24.14 |
| Total | | | | 323.54 |
