

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.136
ANSWERED ON 04.12.2023**

DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TOURISM DESTINATIONS IN WEST BENGAL

136. SHRIMATI SAJDA AHMED:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) the specific measures implemented by the Government to enhance the tourism sector with the aim of generating employment opportunities within the industry during post COVID period;**
- (b) the details of the initiatives undertaken by the Government in the post COVID period to alleviate the substantial losses experienced by the tourism industries;**
- (c) whether any new tourism destinations have been developed in West Bengal over the past two years and if so, the details thereof; and**
- (d) the sector-wise details on the employment generated by the tourism sector in India over the last two years?**

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM

(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

(a) to (d): Ministry of Tourism has taken several measures to give boost to tourism sector and in turn increase its contribution to country's economy and generate employment opportunities through tourism as per details given below:

- i. Development of tourism related infrastructure through projects sanctioned under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme. The Ministry of Tourism has revamped its Swadesh Darshan Scheme as Swadesh Darshan 2.0 (SD2.0) with the objective to develop sustainable and responsible destinations following a tourist & destination centric approach.**

- ii. Development of tourism related infrastructure through projects sanctioned under the National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD) Scheme.**
- iii. Dekho Apna Desh initiative launched with the objective to encourage citizens to travel within the country.**
- iv. Thematic tourism like wellness tourism, culinary tourism, rural, eco-tourism etc., amongst other niche subjects are vigorously promoted so as to expand the scope of tourism into other sectors as well.**
- v. Providing facility of e-Visa for 5 sub-categories i.e., e-Tourist visa, e-Business visa, e-Medical visa, e-Medical Attendant visa and e-Conference visa for the nationals of 167 countries.**
- vi. E-Visa has been further liberalized and the visa fee has been substantially reduced.**
- vii. Lowering of GST on hotels rooms with tariffs of ₹1,001 to ₹7,500/night to 12%; those above ₹7,501 to 18% to increase India's competitiveness as a tourism destination.**
- viii. Ministry of Tourism has collaborated with Ministry of Civil Aviation under their RCS-UDAN Scheme. As on date, 53 tourism routes have been operationalized to improve air connectivity to tourist destinations.**
- ix. Ministry of Tourism is running Pan-India Incredible India Tourist Facilitator (IITF) Certification Program, 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/Guides across the country and generating employment opportunities at local level.**
- x. Conducting Programmes under the 'Capacity Building for Service Providers' (CBSP) Scheme to train and up-grade manpower to provide better service standards.**
- xi. Under the CBSP scheme, Ministry of Tourism conducts a programme namely 'Entrepreneurship Programme (EP)' with the objective of facilitating micro and small business start-ups. The target for the programme are those who are 8th class pass and the age above 18 years.**

As per estimation in accordance with 3rd Tourism Satellite Account (TSA), the contribution of tourism in total employment of the country for year 2020-21 and 2021-22 are:

	2020-21	2021-22
Share in jobs (in %)	12.91	12.66
Direct (%)	5.63	5.52
Indirect (%)	7.28	7.14
Direct + Indirect jobs due to tourism (in million)	68.07	70.04

Source: The above estimates have been updated using 3rd TSA and National Account Statistics 2023.

The details of the various relief measures announced by the Government for redeveloping post-COVID tourism sector of the country is given at Annexure-I.

The details of projects sanctioned under the ‘Swadesh Darshan’ and ‘National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD)’ Schemes in the State of West Bengal is given at Annexure-II.

ANNEXURE-I

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.136 ANSWERED ON 04.12.2023 REGARDING DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TOURISM DESTINATIONS IN WEST BENGAL BY SHRIMATI SAJDA AHMED.

The following are the various relief measures announced by the Government for redeveloping post-COVID tourism sector of the country:

- i. The Government announced Atmanirbhar Bharat Package vide which Rs.3.00 lakh crore collateral free automatic loan was made available for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The loan will have 4- year tenure and 12-month moratorium.**
- ii. Under Atmanirbhar Bharat package, Provident Fund contribution of both employer and employee was reduced to 10% each from existing 12% each for all establishments covered by Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) for three months.**
- iii. Return filing deferred for three months with no penal interest for companies up to Rs.5.00 Crore, rest @ 9% penal interest.**
- iv. 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.**
- v. Deferment of Tax Collected at Source (TCS) up to October 2020.**
- vi. The Central government also gave relief from various regulatory compliances under Income Tax Act, companies Act and Goods and Service Tax (GST) Act for varying period in the wake of COVID-19 crisis to ensure business continuity and survival.**
- vii. Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) was launched in May, 2020 as part of Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan to support eligible Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and business enterprises in meeting their operational liabilities and restarting their businesses. Under the scheme, 100% credit guarantee is extended to the lending institutions for loans extended by them under the scheme to eligible borrowers. The admissible guarantee limit under the**

scheme has been increased from Rs. 4.5 lakh crore to Rs. 5 lakh crore, with the additional guarantee cover of Rs. 50,000 crore earmarked exclusively for the Hospitality and related enterprises including Civil Aviation sector.

- viii. 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'.
- ix. Ministry of Tourism launched 'Loan Guarantee Scheme for COVID Affected Tourism Service Sector (LGSCATSS)', which aims at extending collateral free loan to the distressed tourism sector to help them discharge their liabilities and restart their business affected due to Covid-19 pandemic under this scheme, collateral free Loan up to Rs.10.00 lakh each may be availed by Ministry of Tourism approved Tour operator/Travel Agents/Tourist Transport Operators and up to Rs.1.00 lakh each may be availed by RLGs/IITGs approved by Ministry of Tourism and Tourist Guides approved by State Government/UT Administration.
- x. 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.
- xi. 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.
- xii. 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. 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.

- xiii. For the purpose of restarting inbound tourism and attracting foreign tourists in the country, Government of India extended first 5 lakh visas to the foreign tourists from potential tourism markets, free of cost. The benefit of free of charge visa will be available only once per tourist during the issuance of the first 5 lakh tourist visas.**
- xiv. Owing to the situation which arose out of COVID- 19 pandemic, Ministry of Tourism in consultation with Ministry of Health & Family Welfare issues guidelines/directions to the Tourism Stakeholders, Hotels and Restaurants to facilitate smooth resumption of business.**
- xv. Ministry of Home Affairs restored e-Tourist Visa for foreign nationals of 167 countries as on date.**

ANNEXURE-II

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.136 ANSWERED ON 04.12.2023 REGARDING DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TOURISM DESTINATIONS IN WEST BENGAL BY SHRIMATI SAJDA AHMED.

Swadesh Darshan Scheme (Rs. in Crore)

Sl. No.	State	Circuit / Sanction Year	Name of the Project	Amount Sanctioned
1.	West Bengal	Coastal Circuit 2015-16	Development of Beach Circuit: Udaipur-Digha-Shankarpur-Tajpur-Mandarmani-Fraserganj-Bakkhlai- Henry Island	67.99

PRASHAD Scheme (Rs. in Crore)

Sl. No.	State	Project Name	Sanction Year	Approved Cost
1.	West Bengal	Development of Belur Math	2016-17	30.03

Assistance to Central Agencies for Tourism Infrastructure Development Scheme

(Rs. in Crore)

Sl. No.	State	Name of Projects	Central Agency	Amount Sanctioned
Year 2017-18				
1.	West Bengal	Joint Development of Rampurhat Railway Station	M/o Railways	3.48
2.	West Bengal	Joint Development of Tarakeshwar Railway Station	M/o Railways	3.87
Year 2019-20				
3.	West Bengal	Joint Development of New Jalpaiguri Railway Station	M/o Railways	4.55
