

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1907
ANSWERED ON 17.03.2022

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM IN WEST BENGAL AND ASSAM

1907. MS. SUSHMITA DEV:

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

- (a) the details of the amount of funds sanctioned and spent for tourism in the States of Assam and West Bengal during the last three years, State-wise;
- (b) the details of the steps taken by Government to promote international tourism in Assam and West Bengal;
- (c) the details of the effect of COVID-19 pandemic on tourism in West Bengal and Assam;
- (d) whether Government has any plans to extend support to the employees of the tourism industry who have been adversely affected due to the pandemic; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and, if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF TOURISM

(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

(a) & (b): Ministry of Tourism under the schemes of “Swadesh Darshan”, “National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD)” and ‘Assistance to Central Agencies for Tourism Infrastructure Development’ provides financial assistance to State Governments/Union Territory Administrations/Central Agencies for the development of tourism infrastructure in the country, including Assam and West Bengal. The details of projects sanctioned under the above schemes in the States of Assam and West Bengal for development of tourism related infrastructure is given at **Annexure-I**.

In addition, the Ministry of Tourism promotes various tourism destinations and products of the country including those in Assam and West Bengal through domestic and international campaigns released under the Incredible India brand-line. Promotions are also undertaken through the Website and Social Media platforms of the Ministry. The India Tourism Offices in India and overseas undertake various promotional activities with the objective of showcasing the tourism potential of the different States/UTs.

(c): Domestic and Foreign Tourist Visits in the States of Assam and West Bengal registered a decline due to pandemic as per details given below:

Sl. No.	State	2019		2020	
		Domestic	Foreign	Domestic	Foreign
1	Assam	5447805	26878	1266898	7285
2	West Bengal	92366025	1656145	28841732	463285

(d) & (e): The Government of India has announced various relief measures including support to the employees of the tourism industry who have been adversely affected due to the pandemic. The details of the same are given at **Annexure-II**.

ANNEXURE-I

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) AND (b) OF RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1907 ANSWERED ON 17.03.2022 REGARDING INTERNATIONAL TOURISM IN WEST BENGAL AND ASSAM.

Swadesh Darshan Scheme

(Rs. in Crore)

Sl. No.	State	Circuit	Sanction Year	Name of the Project	Amt. Sanctioned	Amt. Released
1.	Assam	Wildlife Circuit	2015-16	Development of Manas–Probitora–Kaziranga–Saikhowa Nameri–Dibru–	94.68	89.94
2.	Assam	Heritage Circuit	2016-17	Development of Tezpur – Majuli – Sibsagar	90.98	72.78
3.	West Bengal	Coastal Circuit	2015-16	Development of Beach Circuit: Udaipur- Digha- Shankarpur- Tajpur- Mandarmani- Fraserganj- Bakhlai- Henry Island	67.99	68.31

PRASHAD Scheme

(Rs. in Crore)

Sl. No.	State	Name of the Project	Year of Sanction	Approved Cost	Amount Released
1.	Assam	Development of Kamakhya Temple and Pilgrimage Destination in and around Guwahati	2015-16	29.80	29.80
2.	West Bengal	Development of Belur	2016-17	30.03	23.39

Assistance to Central Agencies for Tourism Infrastructure Development Scheme

(Rs. in Crore)

Sl. No.	State	Name of Projects	Central Agency	Amount Sanctioned	Amount Released
Year 2017-18					
1.	West Bengal	Joint Development of Rampurhat Railway Station	M/o Railways	3.48	1.74
2.	West Bengal	Joint Development of Tarakeshwar Railway Station	M/o Railways	3.87	1.93
Year 2018-19					
3.	Assam	Joint Development of Kamakhya Railway Station	M/o Railways	4.96	3.97
4.	Assam	Joint Development of Guwahati Railway Station	M/o Railways	4.99	3.98
Year 2019-20					
5.	Uttar Pradesh (Varanasi & Allahabad-I, Allahabad-II), Bihar (Bhagalpur), West Bengal	CFA for Development of Jetties at nine (09) main points of embarkation/ disembarkation of River Cruise on National Water Ways No. 1 & 2	IWAI	28.03	7.01

	(Kolkata) & Assam (Neamati, Pandu, Jogighopa & Biswanathgh)				
6.	West Bengal	Joint Development of New Jalpaiguri Railway Station	M/o Railways	4.55	2.27

ANNEXURE-II

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PARTS (d) AND (e) OF RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1907 ANSWERED ON 17.03.2022 REGARDING INTERNATIONAL TOURISM IN WEST BENGAL AND ASSAM.

- 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 organizations 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 RBI extended moratorium on term loans till 31st December 2020.
- vii. The Central Government has also given relief from various regulatory compliances under Income Tax Act, Companies Act and GST Act for varying periods in the wake of Covid-19 crisis to ensure business continuity and survival.
- 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 31.01.2022			
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	3,092	1,696.42
Hospitality	ECLGS 3.0	3,853	6,841.91
Hotels, Restaurants, Tourism	ECLGS 2.0	220	3,426.40
Tourism, Hotels & Restaurants	ECLGS 1.0	96,550	3,569.68
Total		1,03,715	15,534.41

- 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.
- xvii. Ministry of Finance announced the "Loan Guarantee Scheme for Covid Affected Tourism Service Sector (LGSCATSS)" which has been implemented by the Ministry of Tourism to provide relief to the tourism sector.

The purpose of the LGSCATSS of the Ministry of Tourism is to provide guarantee coverage for loans provided by Scheduled Commercial Banks to registered Tourist Guides (recognized/ approved by M/o Tourism and State Governments/UT Administrations) and Travel & Tourism Stakeholders recognized/approved by the Ministry of Tourism to discharge liabilities and restart their business affected due to Covid -19 pandemic. This scheme will be subject to a maximum loan of Rs.10 lakhs each for Travel & Tourism Stakeholders and upto Rs.1.00 lakh each for registered Tourist Guides.

Validity of the said scheme is till 31.03.2022 or till the guarantee of Rs.250.00 Crore 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.
