

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.621
ANSWERED ON 04.12.2025

TOURISM CIRCUITS IN KERALA

621 SHRI JOSE K. MANI:

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

- (a) whether the Ministry has identified new tourism circuits in Kerala under the Swadesh Darshan or PRASHAD schemes;
- (b) the measures being taken to promote eco-tourism and cultural tourism in the State; and
- (c) the manner in which the Ministry is addressing the post-COVID challenges faced by local tourism and hospitality sector?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM

(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

(a) and (b): The Ministry of Tourism through its ongoing schemes of Swadesh Darshan and 'Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive' (PRASHAD) complements the efforts of the State Governments (SGs)/UT Administrations (UTs) by extending financial assistance to them for developing tourism related infrastructure in the country, including Kerala.

Under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme, the Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned five projects in Kerala under different themes such as Eco-Circuit, Spiritual Circuit and Rural Circuit at a total cost Rs.312.47 Crore.

The Swadesh Darshan scheme has been revamped as 'Swadesh Darshan 2.0' (SD 2.0) with the objective to develop sustainable and responsible tourism destinations. Till date, three projects have been sanctioned in Kerala by the Ministry of Tourism under SD 2.0 at a total cost of Rs.182.85 Crore.

In addition, the Ministry of Tourism has issued guidelines for 'Challenge Based Destination Development', a sub-scheme under Swadesh Darshan 2.0. This sub-scheme aims for holistic development of destination to enhance tourist experience across all of tourist value chain to transform our tourist destinations as sustainable and responsible destinations. Under this sub-scheme, the Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned two projects in Kerala under categories such as Culture & Heritage and Spiritual Tourism at a total cost of Rs.49.99 crore.

Under the PRASHAD Scheme, the Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned a project in Kerala at a cost of Rs.45.19 Crore, to enhance the spiritual experience of the tourist at the site.

The Government of India under the guidelines for Special Assistance to States/Union Territories for Capital Investment (SASCI) for Development of Iconic Tourist Centres to Global Scale has approved two projects for promoting eco-tourism and cultural tourism in Kerala at a total cost of Rs.155.05 Crore.

The details of the projects sanctioned by the Ministry of Tourism under PRASHAD and Swadesh Darshan Scheme, are given in the **Annexure-I**.

Moreover, the Ministry of Tourism as part of its ongoing endeavour promotes various tourism destinations and products of the country including eco-tourism and cultural tourism in Kerala through promotional activities such as events, website, social media promotions, fairs and festivals, etc.

(c): The details of the various measures announced by the Government for addressing post-COVID challenges faced by the tourism sector, are given in the **Annexure-II**.

ANNEXURE-I

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) AND (b) OF RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.621 ANSWERED ON 04.12.2025 REGARDING TOURISM CIRCUITS IN KERALA RAISED BY SHRI JOSE K. MANI

List of Projects under PRASHAD Scheme in Kerala

Sr. No.	Name of the Project	Sanctioned Cost (Rs. in crore)
1.	Development at Guruvayur Temple	45.19

List of Projects under Swadesh Darshan Scheme in Kerala

Sr. No.	Name of the Project	Sanctioned Cost (Rs. in crore)
1.	Development of Pathanamthitta- Gavi- Vagamon- Thekkadysabari	64.08
2.	Development of Sabarimala - Erumeli-Pampa-Sannidhanam	46.54
3.	Development of SreePadmanabhaArnamula	78.08
4.	Development of Malanad Malabar Cruise Tourism Project	57.35
5.	Development SivagiriSree Narayana Guru Ashram- Arruvipuram-KunnumparaSreeSubrahmania- ChembazhanthiSree Narayana Gurukulam	66.42
	Total Sanction Cost	312.47

List of Projects under Swadesh Darshan 2.0 Scheme in Kerala

Sr. No.	Name of the Project	Sanctioned Cost (Rs. in crore)
1.	Kumarakom Bird Sanctuary Experience, Kumarakom	13.81
2.	Enhancement of Tourist Experience at Malampuzha Garden and Leisure	75.87
3.	Alappuzha: A Global Water Wonderland	93.17
	Total Sanction Cost	182.85

List of Projects under Challenge Based Destination Development (CBDD) Scheme in Kerala

Sr. No.	Name of the Project	Sanctioned Cost (Rs. in crore)
1.	Varkala-Dakshin Kashi	24.99
2.	Thalassery: The Spiritual Nexus	25.00
	Total Sanction Cost	49.99

List of Projects under Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI Scheme) in Kerala

Sr. No.	Name of the Project	Sanctioned Cost (Rs. in crore)
1.	Ashtamudi Biodiversity and Eco-recreational Hub, Kollam	59.71
2.	Sargaalaya: Global Gateway to Malabar's Cultural Crucible	95.34
	Total Sanction Cost	155.05

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PART (c) OF RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.621 ANSWERED ON 04.12.2025 REGARDING TOURISM CIRCUITS IN KERALA RAISED BY SHRI JOSE K. MANI

Relief Measures for Covid-19 Announced By Government of India:

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. As per inputs received from National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC), the details of number of guarantees and loan amount guaranteed to Travel, Tourism, Hotels, Restaurants etc. are given below:

ECLGS data on Hospitality and related enterprises Sector as on 03.03.2023

ECLGS – TRAVEL AND TOURISM DATA AS ON 3rd MARCH 2023		
Scheme Type	No of Guarantees Issued	Loan Amount Guaranteed (Rs. in crore)
ECLGS 3.0	2955	1938.46
ECLGS 3.0 EXTENSION	809	521.60
TOTAL	3764	2460.06
ECLGS - HOTELS, RESTAURANTS ETC. DATA AS ON 3rd MARCH 2023		
Scheme Type	No of Guarantees Issued	Loan Amount Guaranteed (Rs. in crore)
ECLGS 3.0	3757	6883.82
ECLGS 3.0 EXTENSION	1920	3016.33
ECLGS 2.0	219	3437.11
ECLGS 2.0 EXTENSION	4	34.47
ECLGS 1.0	96785	3692.87

ECLGS 1.0 EXTENSION	1181	224.12
TOTAL	103866	17288.72

- 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 aimed 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 could be availed by Ministry of Tourism approved Tour operator/Travel Agents/Tourist Transport Operators and up to Rs.1.00 lakh could be availed by RLGs/IITGs approved by Ministry of Tourism and Tourist Guides approved by State Government/UT Administration. The scheme was operational through 18 Scheduled Commercial Banks. Validity of the scheme was extended by one more year i.e. till 31st March, 2023 or till the guarantee of Rs.250.00 crore are issued under the scheme. Around 476 guarantees were issued amounting to Rs.6.82 crore approx., out of which Rs.6.19 crore (approx.) were disbursed. Rs. 1.60 crore approx. was released to National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company (NCGTC) towards probable bad loans and for execution of the scheme.
- 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. It was announced that the benefit of free of charge visa would be available only once per tourist during the issuance of the first 5lakh 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 171 countries as on date.
