

been drawn up to exploit West Bengal tourist potentialities in full;

(b) whether Government have any proposal to develop places of tourist interest like Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Mirik etc; and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL AND TRAINING, ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSION AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE (SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO) : (a) The Department in consultation with the State Government has identified 15 tourist centres in West Bengal for phased development of tourism infrastructure through the combined resources of the Centre, State and the private sectors so as to exploit its tourist potential.

(b) and (c). Prior to the Sixth Five Year Plan, the Department has assisted the State Government in the setting up of a Youth Hostel and a Tourist Lodge at Darjeeling. In the VI Plan the Department provided financial assistance for the purchase of boats for Mirik Lake and trekking equipment. Other schemes on which financial assistance has been rendered relate to the provision of a motor launch and construction of a barge for floating accommodation in Sunderbans, a mini bus at Jaldapara, floodlighting of Vishnupur temple, five trekkers huts on the Sandakphu-phalut region and construction of cottages in Ajodhya Hills.

During the VII Five Year Plan it is proposed to take up the following schemes with central assistance :

- (i) Construction of tourist lodge and cottages at Digha.
- (ii) Tourist facilities at Bijanbari in Darjeeling district.
- (iii) Introduction of White Water sports such as rafting and canoeing on the Rangeet-Tista rivers.
- (iv) Introduction of launch cruise on the Hooghly in Calcutta.

(v) Construction of Yatri Niwas.

(vi) Construction of Forest Lodges at Sunderbans and Hasai.

(vii) Construction of Dharamshalas through Bhartiya Yatri Avs Vikas Samiti.

#### Development of Allahabad as a Tourist Centre

2425. SHRI AMITABH BACHCHAN : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the necessity of developing Allahabad as a major tourist centre in order to attract more tourists to that city; and

(b) if so, the details of steps to be taken and the schemes to be implemented for this purpose during the current financial year ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL AND TRAINING, ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSION AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE (SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO) : (a) and (b). Specific proposals from the State Government for improving the tourism infrastructure at Allahabad will be considered by the Central Government when received.

In order to provide inexpensive accommodation to meet the requirements of middle income tourists both international and domestic, a proposal is under the consideration of the Department for the setting up of a Yatri Niwas at Allahabad. The detailed proposal in this regard is, however, awaited from the State Government.

#### Functioning of Zonal Councils

2426. SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Zonal Councils are in existence and they meet at intervals;