

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TOURISM
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:129

ANSWERED ON:13.12.2013

TOURIST VISA ON ARRIVAL SCHEME

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Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has conducted any assessment to find out the impact of the Tourist Visa-on-Arrival (TVOA) Scheme in boosting inflow of foreign tourists to India;
- (b) if so, the details and the findings thereof indicating the number of visa-on-arrival issued and inflow of foreign tourists in percentage terms during the last three years and the current year so far, airport-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has recently extended the scheme to some more countries and airports and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has made certain relaxations in the Scheme like receiving of online applications and lifting restriction of the two month gap on re-entry of foreign tourists in the country and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the extent to which travel and tourism industry is likely to be benefited as a result thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR TOURISM (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) (DR. K. CHIRANJEEVI)

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the table of the Sabha.

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.129 ANSWERED ON 13.12. 2013 REGARDING TOURIST VISA-ON-ARRIVAL SCHEME.

(a): Yes, Madam. The Ministry of Tourism had conducted "A Study on Tourist Visa on Arrival Scheme" through Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management (IITM) in 2011.

(b): The key findings of the study are given below:

1. A majority of tourists availing Visa on Arrival (VoA) visit India for purposes of holidaying.
2. Independent tourists are using VoA.
3. The immigration officials provided timely and dependable service, were willing to help and clear doubts and were well informed.
4. VoA significantly influences the decision to travel to India.
5. A majority of the immigration officials view that VoA scheme is a step in right direction of promoting inbound tourism to India.
6. Immigration personnel supported extension of VoA to other airports.

The port-wise Visa on Arrival for the last three years and the current year along with the growth rate is given below:

Port	2010	2011	2012	Jan-Oct, 2013
Chennai	1211	1948	2273	2210
Delhi	3493	7340	9596	8829
Kolkata	334	657	939	1099
Mumbai	1511	2816	3276	3286
Bangalore		174		
Hyderabad		68		
Kochi		75		
Trivandrum		29		
Total	6549	12761	16084	15770
Growth over previous year	94.9	26.0	28.5	
			(in %)	

(c): The Tourist Visa on Arrival (TVOA) facility was initially available to citizens of Finland, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand and Singapore in 2010. This was extended to citizens of Cambodia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Philippines, Laos and Myanmar in 2011. Presently, it is not proposed to extend the Tourist Visa-on-Arrival facility to more countries. As regards Airports, the said facility was extended to four more airports viz. Thiruvananthapuram, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Kochi w.e.f. 15.08.2013.

(d): The provisions relating to two months gap between two visits of a foreign national to India on a Tourist Visa and Tourist Visa on Arrival has been reviewed by the Government. It has been decided to lift the restriction of two-month gap on re-entry of foreign nationals coming to India on Tourist Visa and Tourist Visa on Arrival. However, this relaxation does not include nationals of Afghanistan, Maldives, China, Iraq, Pakistan, Sudan, foreigners of Pakistan origins and Stateless persons.

(e): The benefits that accrue when VoA is implemented by any country are as follows:

- i. Reduction in planning time for the international tourist intending to travel to an overseas destination.
- ii. Attract repeat visitors.
- iii. Enhance the image of the country as being "tourist friendly".