

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TOURISM
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2041

ANSWERED ON:09.03.2015

MULTI PRONGED PROGRAMME FOR PILGRIM SITES

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Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is preparing a multi- pronged programme to attract tourists to the pilgrimage sites, modeled on world famous pi- lgrim spots like Italy and Saudi Arabia;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has explored rich potential aspects comprising epics and spiri- tuality; and

(d) if so, the details thereof along with the schemes launched for promoting tourism and cultural sites?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR TOURISM (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) (DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

(a) to (d): In pursuance of budget announcement 2014-15, the Ministry of Tourism has launched two new plan schemes (i) National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmenta- tion Drive (PRASAD) and (ii) SWADESH DARSHAN. Both the schemes are to be implemented in mi- ssion mode. Developing world-class infrastru- cture in the respective destinations/circuits is one of the mission objectives of the schemes.

Under PRASAD, initially, twelve cities namely Amritsar, Ajmer, Amaravati, Dwaraka, Gaya, Kanchipuram, Kedarnath, Kamakhya, Mathura, Puri, Varanasi and Vellankani have been identified for development.

Under SWADESH DARSHAN, five circuits have been indentified namely: Buddhist Circuit, Himalayan Circuit, Coastal Circuit, Krishna Circuit and North-East Circuit for integrated development of tourist circuits around specific themes.

The Ministry of Tourism promotes India as a holistic destination in the domestic and inte- national markets. As part of its promotional activities, the Ministry of Tourism releases campaigns in the international & domestic mar- kets under the Incredible India brand-line to showcase various tourism destinations and pro- ducts including its cultural heritage. In addition to this, the Ministry of Tourism promotes various tourism destinations and products through its websites and publicity and promotional material produced by it from time to time. A series of promotional activities are also undertaken in important and potential tourist generating markets overseas through the India Tourism Offices abroad with the objective of showcasing Indias tourism potential, rich cultural heritage and promoting tourism to the country.