

MR. SPEAKER : Are there any aspersions on anybody ?

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Thomas, you just ask the question. Otherwise I will call it irrelevant.

*(Interruptions)***

MR. SPEAKER : The Minister in charge will refute. What are you doing ?

Is it going on record ?

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I am to record everything, but I will also see that nothing as aspersion goes on, but the Minister is there to refute. If there is anything we will take note of it. Please sit down, there is no allegation.

(Interruptions)

SHRI THOMPAN THOMAS : Will the Central Government take action in this matter for safeguarding the forests in Kerala which were being destroyed with the support of the Government ?

(Interruptions)

PROF. N.G. RANGA : How can he say 'with the support of the Government' ?

SHRI A. CHARLES : No government is allowing it, Sir.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : It is his view. But the Minister's view might be different.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think the hon. Member is totally misinformed. The forests in Kerala are not being destroyed by the support of the Government.

PROF. N.G. RANGA : That is why I took objection. He should not have said that.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI : He is also

misinformed about the lapsing of the Act. I am told that the Act was not allowed to lapse and an Ordinance was issued some time before it could lapse, I think two or three days before but there was no gap between the old Act and the new Act coming in. *(Interruptions)* I have not finished yet.

Sir, the Member has raised a very vital question as to what the Centre can or cannot do with the forests in a particular State. There are certain historical problems regarding this question which we must tackle in this House at some stage. Originally, forests were for exploiting. They were a wealth to be harvested. On top of that, there is a tremendous population pressure on land and the result is that forests have diminished very substantially. The political pressures in the States, in the districts, in the blocks, are invariably much higher than they are here, at the Centre. So, there are certain decisions we can take at the Centre which are very difficult to take at the lower levels, in the particular locality. Unfortunately, we do not have enough jurisdiction over this to actually take action. I would like that this subject is debated sometimes and we come to a conclusion on how the problem is to be handled because the dangers of the depletion of forest wealth are very great and are going to do untold harm to the country.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : That is all now. I think, 15 minutes have passed on this Question.

Steps to Attract Tourists to Andhra Pradesh

*751. SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : Will the Minister of tourism and Civil Aviation be pleased to state the steps taken by Government to attract more tourists to the historically important places like Kondapally near Vijayawada, Amaravathi, Nagarjunasagar, Golconda Fort, Fataknama Palace and other places in and around Hyderabad city in Andhra Pradesh ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT) : A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

The Department in consultation with the State Government had identified a number of centres of tourist importance in the State for phased development with the combined resources of the Centre, the State and the Private sector. The centres mentioned by the Member i.e. Vijayawada, Hyderabad, Nagarjunasagar and Amaravathi are among these centres. Kondapally is near Vijayawada, and Golconda Fort and Falaknama Palace are in Hyderabad. The Department of Tourism has requested the State Government for submitting tourism infrastructure development schemes in these centres for financial assistance.

The Department of Tourism brings out tourist publicity literature in Hindi, English and several foreign languages on various tourists centres in India including Andhra Pradesh to publicise the places of archaeological, historical, cultural and religious importance. This literature is widely distributed free of cost through the Government of India Tourists Offices in India and abroad. The Department has brought out a number of brochures which publicise the places of tourists in Andhra Pradesh mentioned by the Hon'ble Member.

The Department of Tourism also produces documentary films on places of interests in India in which Andhra Pradesh's historical monuments, art and culture has also been depicted and these are shown to foreign Tour Operators and Travel Writers by our overseas offices.

In 1983-84, the Department opened a Government of India Tourist Office at the level of a manager at Hyderabad. In 1984-85, the Department of Tourism invited 10 Belgian Travel Agents on a familiarisation tour of India including Hyderabad. 5 Travel Writers from U.K. and U.S.A. were also invited to visited Hyderabad.

The Department of Tourism provided financial assistance of Rs. 50,000/- to the

State Government for the celebration of Golconda Festival held in February, 1985 which is celebrated annually at the Golconda Tombs.

The State Government operates weekly conducted tours from Hyderabad to Nagarjunasagar. There is also a launch service for tourists from Nagarjunasagar to visit Nagarjunakonda. Another fast launch 'Zaria' is operated from Nagarjunasagar upto Srisaillam for tourists on the river Krishna. Daily conducted tours are also operated by the State Government in and around Hyderabad city.

At present, there is no proposal with the Centre or the State Department of Tourism to develop Kondapally near Vijayawada.

At Nagarjunasagar, a cluster of tourist guest houses is available and the State Government proposes to further develop it as a Buddhist centre during the 7th Plan by providing a meditation pavilion, landscaping and gardeus etc. The State Government also has plans to provide tourists facilities at Golconda. The Falakunma palace is a private property. However, efforts are being made by the State Government to convince the owners to open it for tourists.

SHRI V. SOBHANDREESWARA RAO : Sir, I am happy that several steps are being taken for development of tourism in the places mentioned by me. I would like to know from the Minister this because Kondapally is a very important centre and known for handicrafts and toys, namely Kondapally toys which will earn precious foreign exchange. Will the Government consider to develop Kondapally as a tourist centre and take necessary steps for construction of a tourist hotel at Vijayawada and also necessary steps for operation of fast launch services in the river Krishna to take tourists from Vijayawada to Amara-vathi which is a very famous Buddhist centre and to Nagarjunasagar ?

[Translation.]

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT : The hon. Member has expressed his happiness over

the steps taken by Government. I am happy too. We have done a lot of work in Andhra Pradesh...

MR. SPEAKER : Have you ever been to Kondapally ?

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT : I have not visited the place yet.

MR. SPEAKER : First of all, both and the hon. Minister and myself should be taken there. First, the place should be shown to us, then we would make our recommendations !

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT : You have referred to Kondapally and have also thrown some light on its importance. I welcome the suggestion of the hon. Member. There is no proposal under consideration regarding Kondapally among the proposals sent to us by the State Government. If the State Government send us any such proposal we would consider it sympathetically and try to develop a tourist centre there. So far as operation of launch services in Krishna river up to Amaravathi is concerned, we would not have any objection to considering much a proposal if it is sent to us.

[English]

SHRI V. SOBHANDREESWARA RAO : In the statement given by the Minister, he has said that the Department of Tourism produces documentary films on places of interest in India in which Andhra Pradesh historical monuments are also depicted. I would like to know from the hon. Minister how many such documents were prepared pertaining to Andhra's historical monuments, art and culture ? Will the Government take necessary steps for taking over of Mehaboob Mansion which is very beautiful building with architectural as well as historical importance ? That building is being decayed in the city of Hyderabad. Will the Government take necessary steps for taking over of that building and keeping it under the Archaeological Survey of India ?

[Translation]

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT : You have asked about the documentary films. For the information of the hon. Member, I

would like to tell him that we had invited about ten travel agents from Belgium last year. Five travel-writers from U.S.A. and U.K. had also come, whom we had sent to Hyderabad. In addition we have got a list which contains names of publicity material as also exclusive literature about Andhra Pradesh. If you like, I would read them out, otherwise I would inform you separately. At present, I do not have information about Mehboob Bhawan. If you write to us, we would get it examined.

SHRI OWAISI : Many tourists from outside the country visit these buildings and tourists specially from the Arab countries visit such buildings and when they visit the mosques, they find that a notice board is put up there that nobody can offer 'Namaz' there. It is having a very bad effect and it is bringing a bad name to the entire country. Why should you put up such restriction there that nobody should offer 'Namaz'. Let there be no restriction. One who wants to offer 'Namaz', may be allowed to do so and one who does not want to offer may not do so. The restriction is bringing a bad name to our country.

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT : I do not know which place the hon. Member is referring to.

MR. SPEAKER : He might be referring to old palaces

SHRI OWAISI : I am referring to Hyderabad and all other places which the tourists visit. It is happening in Delhi also and all other places and it is bringing a bad name to our country.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI : The main question relates to Andhra Pradesh and this question does not arise out of it. We have gone there many times and found that these buildings are in a very dilapidated condition and are very old structures. If a large number of people would go inside them, their condition may deteriorate and these buildings may collapse. In other countries also, in the Arab countries and Islamic countries, there are such buildings which are very old and offering of Namaz in those buildings is prohibited. It is not only in India that there is such a restriction but in other countries as well.

SHRI OWAISI : These buildings are at places which are very far off and nobody goes there and if anybody goes there and wants to offer 'Namaz' there, he should be allowed to do so, because such a restriction is bringing a bad name to the country.

[*English*]

SHRI E. AYYAPU REDDY : From Nagarjunasagar to Srisailem Sagar of the entire Krishna river, there is a launch service and the launch by name 'Zariya' purchased from Soviet Russia is now in operation. This river tour is unique in its kind. In the whole of India, there is no such service. The entire launch service goes in the river valley from one Sagar to another Sagar. Unfortunately, this picturesque and beautiful spot has not been brought to the tourist map. No documentary has been prepared. The entire area can be converted into a virtual 'Disney land.' But unfortunately this has not been brought to the tourist map and no documentary has been prepared. No film has been prepared.

Will the Government take steps to see that this is brought into the tourist map and also a film is shown on that ?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI RAJIV GANDHI) : The tourism development programmes are presented by the State to us and then we look into them to see what we can do. I believe there are no plans at the moment pending from Andhra Pradesh.

Regarding making it into a 'Disney Land', I believe the whole of Andhra Pradesh is being made into a make-believe world !

SHRI E. AYYAPA. REDDY : This is a 'Disney Land' where starvation has been banished and people are able to purchase rice at Rs. 2/- per Kg.

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : This dream should be converted into a reality !

SHRI DINEH SINGH : There are many important places of tourist interest in Andhra Pradesh and tourism will

develop there only when there is a programme of organised groups that are taken to Andhra Pradesh.

Would it be possible for Air India and the Tourism Development Council to organise groups ?

So far, the groups are only travelling in the North. They come to Delhi, Agra, Jaipur, Benaras and onwards.

Would it be possible to organise tour that takes them to the South and then they can have the exit point in Madras ?

PROF. N.G. RANGA : It is a good suggestion.

[*Translation*]

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT : The tourists who come from outside the country, have their tour programmes preplanned. The travel agents formulate prior programmes to bring them here and according to the programme, the tourists are go to Andhra Pradesh and the South.

[*English*]

Economic Upliftment of Tribals Through Forestry Programmes

***752 SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO :** Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Committee on Forestry Programmes for alleviation of poverty has submitted its report;

(b) if so, the main recommendations concerning different aspects of tribal economic upliftment through the forestry programmes;

(c) whether his Ministry has discussed with the concerned Ministries/Departments and the States on the basis of these recommendations and prepared schemes and programmes during the Seventh Five Year Plan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI VIR SEN) : (a) Yes, Sir,