

Improvement of Kanyakumari

*801. SHRI N. DENNIS: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are proposals under the consideration of the Government to convert Kanyakumari into an important Tourist Centre; and

(b) if so, the facilities that would be provided for its improvement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR): (a) and (b) The Tourism Plan is being reviewed with a view to gearing up facilities to meet a likely two-fold increase in tourist arrivals in the next five years. Among the measures contemplated to achieve this objective are (i) identification and development of travel circuits, and (ii) provision of adequate infrastructural facilities at the centres falling along these travel circuits. For this purpose discussions were held with the State Tourist officials, and the details are being worked out by the Department of Tourism, Government of Tamil Nadu. Their proposals are awaited.

SHRI N. DENNIS: In the answer, general proposals are given. Thousands of national and international tourists and pilgrims and others are visiting this southernmost part of India to see the sunset and sunrise and also to see the place where the three seas meet, the Vivekananda Memorial Rock and other places of tourist interest. But the tourists face lot of difficulties. There is water scarcity. There is no Express train service. There is no aerodrome and no adequate hotel facilities. May I know from the hon. Minister whether the government would take immediate steps to provide these and other facilities and develop the Kanyakumari township into an attractive international tourist centre.

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT AND TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI A. P.

SHARMA): I can straightaway tell the hon. Member and the House as to what are the facilities provided there at Kanyakumari.

Then Central Department of Tourism has donated a 100-seater launch to the Vivekananda Memorial Committee for carrying visitors free of cost between Kanyakumari and the Vivekananda Rock. There is also a Tourist Bungalow and the expenditure on this tourist bungalow is shared by the Central Department of Tourism and the State Government on fifty-fifty basis.

These are the facilities provided there and if any other facilities in this respect are required, we expect a proposal from the State government and whatever proposals are received, will be considered by us.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: There is only one bungalow.

SHRI N. DENNIS: Kanyakumari is now in an undeveloped stage. It has got all the potentialities for development into a best place of tourist attraction. May I know from the hon. Minister whether the Government will take immediate steps to develop it through a Master Plan?

SHRI A. P. SHARMA: I have already answered this question. Whatever further tourist development is required there, in regard to that we have already had a discussion with the Tamil Nadu government and we are expecting their proposals and when we receive them, we will consider.

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANI: I would like to know what are the details of the discussions that took place between the Minister and the State Government representatives and what were the reactions of the State Government.

SHRI A. P. SHARMA: I am sorry I will not be able to give the exact date. During the Tourism Ministers' Conference in November, 1978 in Delhi the representative of the government of Tamil Nadu was present

and the discussion took place. Till now the State Government has not sent us any proposals in this regard. The moment they send the proposals to us, they will be considered.

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : अध्यक्ष जी, मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि विवेकानन्द स्मारक का प्रबन्ध किन लोगों के हाथ में है और क्या यह बात सच है कि इसके प्रबन्धकों में आर०एस०एस० का भी कोई हाथ है ?

SHRI A. P. SHARMA: Sir, I think this does not arise out of this question. But, I take a note of this question and I shall furnish the information.

Regional Rural Banks, Orissa

*802. **SHRI LAKSHMAN MALLICK:** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up more Regional Rural Banks during the current calendar year in the State of Orissa; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Two Regional Rural Banks have already been set up in the current calendar year covering the districts of Kalahandi, Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar. It is expected that three more banks will be established in the State in near future covering the districts of Ganjam, Balasore and Dhenkanal.

SHRI LAKSHMAN MALLICK: I would like to know from the hon. Finance Minister the total number of regional rural banks opened so far in the State of Orissa and also the total population of the district-wise coverage so far as these regional rural banks are concerned.

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: Sir, there are thirteen districts in Orissa; eight have already been covered.

The Reserve Bank has agreed to open three more. Therefore, Orissa has an excellent record of rural banks.

MR. SPEAKER: No second supplementary? Mr. Das.

SHRI A. C. DAS: In view of the economic backwardness in the districts like Koraput, Phulbani, Sundergarh, Bolangir and Cuttack which are thickly populated with adivasis and harijans, may I know from the hon. Finance Minister whether more rural banks are likely to be opened in the near future and whether licences will be issued to the other nationalised banks to open their branches in those areas?

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: So far as Ganjam District is concerned, the Reserve Bank has already agreed that regional rural banks should be opened. So far as opening of branches in the places mentioned by the hon. Member is concerned, a list may be submitted to the Orissa Government so that they may take that into account when they select the places. So far as the opening of the branches are concerned, I would require separate notice because this is not connected with the main question.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: May I know from the hon. Minister about the achievements and failures of rural banks? Have any steps been taken to improve the performance and the impact of the existing rural banks? Have these ideas been incorporated in the objectives of old and new banks which are being opened.

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: As a matter of fact the question of utility of the regional rural banks was referred by the previous Government to an expert economist, Prof. Dantawala. He has gone into the whole matter and has said that the regional rural banks will serve a very useful purpose in the economy. The Congress Government originally started this idea. We are going ahead with this.