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Title: Regarding development of Gingee Fort in Tamil Nadu under PRASAD Scheme-laid.

DR. M.K. VISHNU PRASAD (ARANI): Gingee Fort is located in Villupuram district of Tamil Nadu, with the nearest railway station Tindivanam, 28 kms away. It is a popular tourist attraction for the local people but because of lack of infrastructure facilities it could not be on the national and international map. The foundation for the Gingee Fort was laid in the 12th century and it was later built by the Chola dynasty in the 13th century. In 1677, it came under the control of Maratha King Shivaji and in 1690, it came under the Mughals when it became the headquarters of Arcot. It has got many sculptures and they were shifted to Puducherry by the French around 1755. De Singh Raja was the famous ruler during the Mughal period.

Though the Fort has got historical and architectural importance, it is lacking in infrastructure facility like connectivity, accommodation and other facilities. It has got vast land which can be developed as landscape and lighting arrangements can also be made. With improvement of rail and road connectivity, Light & Sound Show, water/adventure sports, this fort can be brought on the international map of tourism. It would not only generate employment for the local people, but would also bring economic development and contribute to foreign exchange.

I would, therefore, urge upon the Hon'ble Minister of Tourism to develop Gingee Fort as an important tourist attraction with infrastructure facilities for the domestic and foreign tourists under

National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD) Scheme.