

(a) how many hotel projects have been approved by his Ministry to tide over the acute shortage of hotel accommodation in the country;

(b) the total number of hotels likely to be completed during the current financial year;

(c) to what extent setting up of these hotels will ease the position; and

(d) the time schedule for completing the remaining hotels ?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (MUFTI MOHD. SYED) : (a) The Ministry of Tourism has approved 238 hotel projects from the point of view of their suitability for tourists.

(b) On the basis of progress reports received in the Ministry and other available indications, about 80 hotel projects are likely to be completed during 1987-88.

(c) The completion of these hotel projects is likely to provide about 7,500 rooms which will go a long way in easing the existing pressure on hotel accommodation in the country.

(d) The remaining hotel projects are expected to be progressively completed during the following two years.

Water sport in Kerala

567. SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering any proposal for development of Water Sports in any of the tourist centres in the State of Kerala; and

(b) if so, the details thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (MUFTI MOHD. SYED) : (a) and (b) There is a scheme for development of Water Sports at Kovalam for which Central Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned

assistance of Rs. 17.31 lakhs. There are also proposals for introduction of Water Sports at Malampuzha and development of beach resort at Kappad. The State Government of Kerala has also got plans to introduce water sports at Veli and Pathiramanal.

Search for location in Indian Ocean for nuclear testing facility by France

568. SHRI BRAJAMOHAN MOHANTY : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Union Government are aware that the Government of France are searching for a location in Indian Ocean for nuclear testing facility;

(b) whether the Kerguelen island in Indian Ocean is being considered for the same;

(c) if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and

(d) whether Non-aligned Movement has reacted against such a move ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH) : (a) and (b) Government have seen reports in this regard.

(c) Government of India are opposed to the military presence in the Indian Ocean region of any non-littoral State.

(d) No, Sir.

Plan to expand hotel industry

569. DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether a crash plan to expand the country's hotel industry to enable it to receive the targeted 2.5 million tourists by 1990 has been worked out;

(b) if so the salient features thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to implement the same ?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (MUFTI MOHD. SYED) : (a) to (c) In order to encourage investment in the hotel industry, Government has extended several incentives/concessions to the hotel industry. These include exemption from the MRTP Act in the matter of both new projects and expansion of existing hotels; income tax holiday to new hotels; higher depreciation allowance; central subsidy for construction of new hotels in specified backward areas; interest subsidy on hotel loans advanced by IFCI, Foreign Exchange Incentive Quota for overseas advertising/publicity, promotional tours, import of provisions, equipment including vehicles (up-to 2 in a year); concessional customs duty on a number of items imported by hotels for actual use; priority in the allotment of telephone/telex connections, etc. Besides some of the State Governments have also accorded hotels/tourism the status of an industry, which entitles hotels to such concessions/incentives as are available to other industries in the respective States.

In the public sector, the India Tourism Development Corporation is setting up a 30-room hotel at Gulmarg besides expansion of 2 hotels and conversion of one Travellers' Lodge into a hotel. It is also constructing 6 hotels as joint venture projects with the State Governments.

The Department of Tourism also is setting up Yatri Niwases and Forest Lodges, in collaboration with the State Governments, to provide accommodation for budget tourists

Setting up of Indo-Soviet Investment Centre

570. DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether an Indo-Soviet Investment Centre has been started recently;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof; and

(c) whether India has mooted the setting up of hundred per cent export production units with the help of the Soviet Union in a number of fields as part of the production cooperation being discussed between the two countries ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P.R. DAS MUNSI) : (a) and (b) An Indo-Soviet Investment Centre has been recently established by India-USSR Chamber of Commerce & Industry, a registered Society under the Indian Societies Act. The Indo-Soviet Investment Centre has indicated that the following will be its major objectives:—

*Provide assistance in promoting economic cooperation between India and Soviet Union and guidance in the establishment of joint cooperation between India and USSR in third countries;

*Serve as a focal point for dissemination of information regarding the organisations, procedures and regulations pertaining to commerce and trade in both the countries.

*Assist in the identification of projects having scope for Indo-Soviet economic and industrial cooperation.

*Provide assistance to arrange technical collaboration between Indian entrepreneurs and Soviet industrial establishments for transfer of technology and know-how.

*Identify projects offering scope for Indo-Soviet joint ventures.

*Arrange to obtain technology documentation such as design, drawings, process charts, manufacturing methods and other associated ancillaries & softwares for industrial products.

*Focus specific areas of industrial production for sharing of production between two countries.