

There is a suggestion that others also may be taken up. By all means, that will be done.

Survey of Tourist Traffic

*1466. **Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any survey of the pattern of tourist traffic and the likely potential in the matter; and

(b) if so, what are Government's conclusions and its preparedness to protect and take the traffic in 1961-62?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) and (b). A statement giving the position is laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha.

Statement

A survey of the pattern of foreign tourist traffic has been made on the basis of the data available on the Disembarkation Cards which are filled up by arriving passengers. The table below will show that from 65,887 in 1956 it was increased to 1,23,095 in 1960, almost 100 per cent. in 4 years.

Year	Total number of foreign tourists	% increase over the previous year
1956	65,887	..
1957	80,544	22.2
1958	92,202	14.5
1959	1,09,464	18.7
1960	1,23,095	12.5

This trend is likely to continue in the future also unless disturbed by adverse international developments. No survey of the likely potential in this matter has been made but it may be stated that the potential is very large and is only limited by the facilities for accommodation and travel which we can provide within the country.

Home tourism has also been expanding from year to year, but no figures

are available. The limiting factors here also are the facilities available for accommodation and travel. Home tourism, however, is primarily the responsibility of the States.

Various steps have been taken to check malpractices amongst shopkeepers, taxi-drivers, guides, hoteliers and also to check the beggar nuisance and the pestering by touts, etc., to the extent that is possible.

The details of these measures are contained in the Annual Report (1960-61) of the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Department of Tourism).

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: May I know whether the hon. Minister is aware that certain batches of foreign tourists who wanted to come to India during 1960-61 had to cancel their passage to India and to cut India from their programme, because arrangements could not be made in the country for their movement and accommodation?

Shri Raj Bahadur: I do not exactly have the specific information to which reference has been made by the hon. Member, but it might be that certain tourists might have cancelled their trips or visits for certain reasons.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: From the statement, I find that there is a fast increase in the tourist traffic in the country. May I know what quantum of tourist traffic the Ministry can handle during 1961-62, taking into consideration the Indian airlines accommodation and also the hotel accommodation?

Shri Raj Bahadur: If I may say so, I may just correct the impression that the Ministry in charge of tourism as such handles the tourist traffic; it only co-ordinates the activities, the arrangements and other connected matters of the various wings or sections of the industry, such as the hotel industry, the guides services etc. So, we do not handle the traffic ourselves. But for the coming traffic we shall be making arrangements as far as is possible within our resources, to see

that as large a number of tourists as possible are accommodated, and we are able to look after their other needs.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: On a point of clarification. The hon. Minister has said that the Ministry in charge of tourism is not in charge of their movement. I think the Minister of Transport and Communications is also in charge of civil aviation. My question was particularly in respect of civil aviation, that is, with regard to the capacity of the Indian airlines to handle the tourist traffic. I do not know whether he has not got the information that certain batches of tourists had to cut out India from their programme. May I know the capacity of the Indian airlines and our hotel accommodation and the quantum of tourist traffic which they will be able to handle in 1961-62?

The Minister of Transport and Communications (Dr. P. Subbarayan): The Indian airlines as such have no hotel accommodation. But our tourist officers arrange hotel accommodation for tourists that come here. Of course, the Indian Airlines Corporation can only convey the traffic that they are able to and no more.

Shri Morarka: May I know the total earnings from tourist traffic in 1960, and our expectations during the Third Plan period?

Shri Raj Bahadur: In 1960, the first estimates that have been conveyed to us are in the vicinity of Rs. 21 crores in foreign exchange.

So far as our anticipation for the Third Plan period is concerned, it is dependent on so many factors, such as the provision of hotel accommodation, the provision of augmented capacity on the Indian airlines and so on. Therefore, it would be rather hazardous to give a firm figure about it.

Shri Ramanathan Chettiar: In view of the inadequate hotel accommodation in some of the places of interest where the tourists are likely to go, what steps will Government take to have at least tourist bungalows with the help of the State Governments concerned?

Shri Raj Bahadur: There are three types of accommodation that are in use by the tourists. There are the hotels, the tourist bungalows, formerly known as dak bungalows or inspection bungalows, and low income group rest-houses; and there is another type of accommodation known as the *dharmasalas* etc. for the local tourists or the home tourists. We are trying to improve and expand the capacity in respect of each one of these. The State Governments are conscious of the needs of the tourist traffic, and they are trying to do whatever is possible.

Shri Ansar Harvani: Is it not a fact that certain shipping companies have informed the Government of India that their luxury liners going round the world prefer to have a longer haltage in Singapore and Colombo than in Bombay, because Bombay lacks amenities for tourist traffic?

Shri C. D. Pande: There is prohibition also.

Shri Raj Bahadur: I would not say that Bombay lacks amenities for tourist traffic, but the amenities, so far as hotel accommodation is concerned, are somewhat short of needs, but as I have submitted to the House already the question of hotel accommodation is a problem not only for us in this country but for all countries interested in tourist traffic. In fact, the tourist traffic is increasing at such a pace that the provision of hotel accommodation cannot keep pace with it, particularly so with us, because the tourist traffic here has increased by five hundred per cent. during the last ten years, whereas the hotel accommodation has increased only by 30 per cent. The only thing that we can do is either to ask the State Governments to step into this hotel industry or to allow the private sector to do it. We are trying as far as possible, within the limited means to do what we can on either side.

Shri Inder J. Malhotra: The hon. Minister stated in the reply that there is lack of hotel accommodation. In view of this, may I know what

steps Government are taking to overcome this difficulty?

Shri Raj Bahadur: I have answered this a number of times, and I will repeat it. We have included the hotel industry as one of the industries which can take loans from the Industrial Finance Corporation. The concerned Act has been amended to that extent. It is available to public limited companies and co-operative societies. Secondly, we are trying now to expedite amendment of the State Finance Corporation Acts. At our request, the Ministry of Finance has also granted an incentive to the hotel industry in the form of an income-tax holiday for new enterprises for a period of five years under section 15C of the Income-Tax Act. So we are trying as best as we can. But the question is how far financial resources for investment in this industry can be mobilised.

B.G. Rail Link with Assam

*1467. **Shri N. R. Ghosh:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether a programme has been drawn up for linking Assam by broad gauge from Siliguri;

(b) whether surveys were undertaken for the purpose; and

(c) if so, what action has been taken on the survey reports?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

Shri N. R. Ghosh: Is it a fact that the N.F. Railway is at present carrying from Assam only about 25 per cent. of the jute and tea, and also the inward traffic of coal, foodgrains, etc. and that more than 75 per cent. of the above goods is being carried through Pakistan waters by foreign steamer companies?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: The North-East Frontier Railway is carrying all the traffic that is offered to it.

Shri N. R. Ghosh: Is it not a fact that traffic offered has been refused on account of want of capacity?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: It is not a fact.

Shri P. C. Borooah: May I know whether Government have received any representation from the Government of Assam that the extension of the line from Siliguri to Assam be undertaken?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: For the time being, there is no intention of extending the broad gauge line from Siliguri.

Shri P. C. Borooah: May I know what is the reaction of Government to the proposal?

The Minister of Railways (Shri Jagjivan Ram): Construction of railway lines or their extension or expansion does not depend upon request from any party. It depends on the requirements of the railways.

Shri Rameshwar Tantia: May I know whether Government are aware that on account of the insufficient capacity of the railway lines to carry goods to Assam, goods are being carried there by air involving higher freight as well as foreign exchange? If so, will Government give priority to increasing the capacity of the Assam rail link to cope with this traffic?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: I am amazed at the ignorance of my hon. friend. Government have already taken steps to augment the line capacity on the NEF Railway. He knows very well that a broad gauge link from Tildanga to Malda has already been opened, and it is expected....

Shri Ramanathan Chettiar: On a point of order. Ministers could avoid personal references like 'ignorance' or other insinuations.

Shri Rameshwar Tantia: I also felt it like that. He could have it in some other way. (Interruptions).

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: I am sorry if I have offended my hon. friend I