

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
TOURISM AND CULTURE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:644  
ANSWERED ON:23.02.2006  
MEDICAL, RELIGIOUS AND WATER TOURISM  
Thomas Shri P.C.

**Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government proposes to encourage Medical, Religious and Water Tourism;
- (b) if so, the steps taken by the Union Government in this regard;
- (c) the estimated number of pilgrims visiting Sabarimala in Kerala each year; and
- (d) the steps taken to provide facilities and security to the pilgrims visiting Sabarimala?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SMT. AMBIKA SONI)

(a) & (b): Ministry of Tourism sanctions Central Financial Assistance to State Governments/Union Territories for promotion and development of tourism products including Medical, Cultural and Water Tourism products based on the priorities decided in consultation with State Governments/Union Territories.

(c): It is estimated by the Travancore Devaswom Board that more than 50 lakh pilgrims visit Sabarimala every year.

(d): Based on the proposal received from the State Government of Kerala, the Ministry of Tourism had sanctioned Rs.104.89 lakh (in 1998-99) for construction of Pilgrim Facilitation Complex at Erumeli for use of tourists on their way to Sabarimala.