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Title : Need to formulate a plan for integrated development of wildlife tourism in Nagpur-Vidarbha region of Maharashtra.

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR (NAGPUR): There are number of tiger reserves around Nagpur which could be the centre of attraction for tourists. Nagpur is considered as the Tiger Capital of the World. There are many tiger reserves in and around Nagpur like Tadoba Andhari, Pench, Nagzira, Melghat, Navegaon, Bor. Owing to easy connectivity from Nagpur, these wildlife sanctuaries are accessible from Nagpur airport and are within a distance of only 70 to 150 kms. from the airport. Apart from these tiger reserves, two other rich wildlife reserves Kanha and Bandhavgarh are also located in the adjoining State of Madhya Pradesh at a distance of about 270 kms. These two wildlife reserves could also be visited without much difficulty by wildlife lovers because of the easy connectivity from Nagpur. About 8 million foreign tourists annually visit India and if the tourist infrastructure is aggressively marketed and created with all the attractive opportunities for productive investments in the Nagpur-Vidarbha region and in that case assuming that 1/10 of the foreign tourists (wild life lovers) visit annually Nagpur-Vidarbha region, the earning from these wildlife lovers will form considerable part of the total earning of Rs. 5000-8000 crores approx. This will go a long way in the economic development of the region and promoting great employment opportunities. The aforesaid tiger reserves are having approximately a population of 150-200 tigers out of the total tiger population of 1300 which is the highest in the world.

I would urge upon the Government to have a blueprint prepared for an integrated development of Tiger based Tourism in this region and proper Regulatory Authority be created with the Central Financial Assistance for the purpose and Nagpur be declared as the World Tiger Capital.