

Promotion of Tourism in North Eastern States

Development and promotion of tourism is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments/UT Administrations. However, Ministry of Tourism provides Central Financial Assistance (CFA) to State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for various tourism projects subject to availability of funds, inter-se priority, liquidation of pending utilization certificates against the funds released earlier and adherence to the relevant scheme guidelines.

For development of tourism infrastructure in the country, the Ministry of Tourism has introduced two new schemes in 2014-15 i.e. PRASAD- Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive and Swadesh Darshan - Integrated Development of Theme-Based Tourist Circuits. Kamakhya in Assam is one of the pilgrimage centres which have been identified under PRASAD. Under Swadesh Darshan scheme, North-East India Circuit is one of the twelve thematic circuits identified initially.

10% of the plan allocation of the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India is earmarked for North Eastern States. Of the funds allocated to the Ministry, funds earmarked and spent for North Eastern Region in the last three years are as under:

(Rs. in Crore)

Year	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Plan Allocation	1050	950	980
10% earmarked for NE	105	95	98
Amount Released	145.93	113.72	149.16*
Percentage %	13.89	11.97	15.22*

*: Provisional

Further the following initiatives are taken by the Government to promote tourism in North Eastern Region:

- (i) Provision of complimentary space to the North Eastern states in India Pavilions set up at major International Travel Fairs and Exhibitions.
- (ii) 100% central financial assistance for organizing fairs & festivals is allowed to the North Eastern States.
- (iii) Ministry of Tourism, as part of its on-going activities, annually releases print, electronic, online and outdoor media campaigns in the international and domestic markets, under the Incredible India brand-line, to promote various tourism destinations and products of the country, including the lesser known destinations which have tourism potential. The Ministry of Tourism undertakes special campaigns on NE Region on TV channels to promote tourism in the regions.
- (iv) International Tourism Mart (ITM) is organized annually with the objective of showcasing the largely untapped tourism potential of North East region in the domestic and international markets. So far, Ministry of Tourism in association with North Eastern States and West Bengal has conducted four ITMs in the North East region. The first ITM was conducted in Guwahati, Assam.

This information was given by Minister of State for Culture and Tourism (Independent Charge) and Minister of State for Civil Aviation Dr. Mahesh Sharma yesterday in a written reply in Rajya Sabha.
