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THE ADMINISTRATION OF UNION TERRITORY OF LADAKH

LADAKH AUTONOMOUS HILL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL KARGIL LADAKH

DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS KARGIL LADAKH

PRESS RELEASE

Department of Tourism UT Ladakh issues UT Ladakh's first Tourism Incentive Policy

KARGIL, NOVEMBER 29, 2020: The Department of Tourism UT Ladakh has issued UT Ladakh's first Tourism Incentive Policy. According to the Commissioner Secretary Tourism and Culture Ladakh Rigzin Samphel, the Tourism Incentive Policy is a forward looking and liberal Incentive Policy with stress on ensuring equitable and sustainable development of all regions of Ladakh.

The Commissioner/Secretary has laid special emphasis on the new Capital Outright Investment Subsidy which aspires to promote concept of small and beautiful fixed assets in Ladakh based on local tradition and architecture.

As per the Department of Tourism Ladakh, there is an urgent need to give emphasis on promotion of tourism assets in remote and virgin tourist destinations of Ladakh. Any investment made in such assets should be of a value which will have low gestation period. Therefore, instead of large Hotels and Guest Houses, the incentive policy aims at the overarching principal of small and sustainable tourism assets.

As per the brief from the department the upper limit of the Capital Outright Investment Subsidy has been increased by 33% from the previous Rs 30 Lakhs to Rs 40 lakhs.

The Government will grant 30% Capital Outright Investment Subsidy on the fixed assets for new Tourism Units. This subsidy will also be available for expansion of the existing units but will be restricted to investments made on the extension of the unit only. However, subsidy on both accounts will be restricted to an upper ceiling of Rs 40 lakhs for buildings using traditional building materials such as Gyapak, local Stones etc and Rs 25 Lakh for others.

The items Civil Works including Sanitary Fitting, Plumbing and Internal Electrification, Modern Kitchen Equipment and Refrigeration Units, Sewage Disposal System, Plant and Machinery, Geysers and Boilers, Transportation, Water Filtration Plant and Central Heating Plant (HVAC) shall qualify for capital outright investment subsidy.

According to the Commissioner Secretary Tourism and Culture, yet another highlight of the Incentive Scheme is the "Ladakh Tangible Cultural Heritage Conservation Fund" and as per the Incentive Policy, Ladakh has a rich collection of Historic and Heritage sites such as Forts and Old Heritage buildings spread all across the districts of Leh and Kargil.

Most of these sites are in need of professional conservation and maintenance. The Department of Tourism Ladakh with a view to preserve, protect, conserve and promote these very important historical/heritage structures and buildings/ houses will take up the conservation and restoration of these sites. A committee constituted by the department shall identify and make a list of such properties. The committee shall also certify the buildings as "protected historic building and monuments".

Only the listed sites would qualify for the work of restoration and conservation. In case of the site being a private property the ownership would be certified by the Revenue Department (Tehsildar).

Project proposal with restoration plan and design etc. shall be provided by qualified experts (i.e. the Planner/ Designer/ Architect, an expert in the field of cultural heritage conservation on architecture) to be empanelled or nominated by the Department of Tourism.

All works of restoration/conservation would be carried out under the supervision of the Department of Tourism and Culture, Union Territory of Ladakh.

Further, the Tourism Incentive Policy has a scheme to "Support for Adventure/Recreation Tourism" and a subsidy up to 20% of the cost of 50 types of equipments in Mountaineering & Trekking, 25 equipments in Water Sports (White Water)- 13 in rafting and 12 in kayaking & canoeing , 9 types of equipments in Flat Water Kayaking & Canoeing, 6 types of equipments in rowing, 5 types of equipments in Para

Sailing, 5 types of equipments in Para Gliding, 12 types of equipments in Snow Skiing, 7 types of equipments in Wildlife and Astro Tourism and 28 types of equipments in Film/Documentary Tourism.

The other types of equipments include Motor Bikes and Mountain Bikes+ Accessories, Zorbing Ball, Bunjee Jumping equipment, Mountain Bikes, Hot Air balloons, Angling Rod & Bails.

The subsidy up to 20% of the cost of the said equipments will be subject to a maximum of Rs. 5.00 lakhs as a onetime measure which would be available for establishment of equipment stores duly registered with the Tourism Department provided the said equipment is used for hiring out/ providing service at the rates approved by the Tourism Department to the tourists interested in adventure sports, such as Photography, Wildlife Tourism, Mountaineering, Trekking, Skiing, Aero-sports, Aquatic sports, Kayaking, Canoeing, Angling, Golf, Paragliding, Parasailing, White Water Rafting, Rowing, Zorbing Ball, Bungee jumping, Ice climbing, mountain bikes, Hot air-balloon, Film Shooting.

An investor interested in opening a shop for hiring out equipments related to adventure tourism, at the rates duly approved by the Director Tourism, to the interested tourists will be eligible for subsidy on the equipments of standard specification required for such activities. However, the entrepreneur shall get prior written approval of the Director Tourism for the type of equipment to be procured and the equipment shall be of the standard of national level regulator for such activity to ensure safety of the user.

One of the other highlight of the Incentive Scheme is the Training of Personnel in Tourism Industry which has been introduced in order to assist entrepreneurs in upgrading the skills of the personnel engaged by them in running their tourism units and travel agencies etc. registered/approved by the Tourism Department.

The training is to be conducted with the prior approval of the Director of Tourism, Ladakh and the expenditure on the training of managers and other executives shall be reimbursed to the extent of 50% of the actual cost or Rs. 50,000/- whichever is less.

The training should be conducted by reputed training institutions within the Country which are recognized by the Government of India or any State Government or Union Territory and the training period shall not exceed 18 months inclusive of practical training.

Reimbursement of the cost incurred on training, in all cases, shall be payable after the successful completion of the training.

As regards to the Implementing Agency for disbursement of Subsidy it has been stated that a committee comprising of the Commissioner/Secretary Tourism Ladakh , Director Tourism Ladakh, the concerned Assistant Director Tourism of Kargil and Leh Districts and Senior Accounts Officer of Tourism Department Ladakh shall scrutinize the cases recommended by the Director of Tourism, Ladakh.

The Committee shall meet at least once every month and shall take a decision on every case within 60 days. In case the Senior Accounts Officer discovers a lacuna/short coming in an incentive case after its receipt from the Directorate, they shall ensure that necessary information is obtained from the Directorate before the holding of the next meeting of the Committee so that cases complete in all respects alone are put up before the committee for decision.

Further details can be had from the office of the Director Tourism Ladakh Kargil or the Assistant Director Tourism Leh/Kargil during office hours.