

Wheels" and the "Royal Orient Express" trains have been made operational by the State Government of Rajasthan and Gujarat in collaboration with the Ministry of Railways.

(d) For the current financial year (97-98), a budgetary outlay of Rs. 110.35 crores has been approved for the Department of Tourism. The project proposals for 1997-98 are to be submitted by the State Governments.

Promotion of Pilgrim Tourism in Uttar Pradesh

3330. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH SURYA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) what are the schemes and their details under Government have initiated to promote pilgrim tourism in U.P.;

(b) what is the rate and contribution of the State Government in those schemes;

(c) whether Government have any special plan to develop pilgrim tourism in that State as the U.P. has innumerable ancient religious and cultural sites as compared to other States;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA KUMAR JENA):

(a) The Department of Tourism has schemes under infrastructural development for creation of Yatri Niwas, tourist bungalows, wayside amenities, public conveniences, under which it has given central financial assistance for development of pilgrim tourism in U.P. The details of these schemes are enclosed in the statement-I. (see below). Apart from that, infrastructural development under the OECF (Externally Assisted Project Scheme) has also been undertaken at various places in U.P. which form a part of the Buddhist Circuit.

(b) The schemes of the Department of Tourism for infrastructural development are by way of grant. The State Governments contribute the land and maintain and operate the projects. In case of the OECF projects, the State Governments have to incur the expenditure first after which the eligible amount is reimbursed from the OECF. The OECF project is by way of loan assistance to the Government.

(c) to (e) The Department of Tourism has set up a Special Task Force to study the tourism potential in the Himalayan Region. The hilly regions of the State of U.P. also form part of this Task Force study. The Department of Tourism has introduced a scheme for development of pilgrim centres whereby funds are provided to charitable institutions and trusts for setting up facilities for pilgrims.

Statement

Schemes of Pilgrim Tourism

Name of the Project	Amount sanctioned
Tourist Complex at Sravasti	63.00
Tourist bungalow at Mathura	27.64
Stage for Open air theatre and wayside amenities at Ayodhya	26.80
Swiss cottages for Kumbh Mela at Haridwar	15.73
Toilet and drinking water facilities at Sarnath, Kushinagar, Sravasti and Fatchpur Sikri	6.00
Yatri Niwas at Allahabad	29.42

Name of the Project	Amount sanctioned
Fast Food counter at Kumbh Mela Allahabad	3.18
Development of Nehru Ghats at Allahabad	37.18
Public conveniences at nine places (Gorakhpur, Jhansi, Haridwar, Farukhabad, Agra, Mathura, Allahabad, Varanasi and Lucknow)	60.56
Yatri Niwas at Chitrakoot	35.74
Setting up of tented accommodation at Nandprayag	6.38
Yatri Shed at Haridwar including public conveniences	20.68
Tented accommodation at Vrindavan	10.00
Improvement of Ghats at Bateshwar	20.00
Triveni Ghat at Rishikesh	23.97
Meditation centre at Sarnath	28.24
Visitor's centre at Sarnath	64.71
Development around Chaukhandi Stupa	3.40
Flood lighting of Varanasi Ghats	16.50
Restaurant-cum-waiting hall, Sravasti	12.26
Restaurant-cum-waiting hall Kushinagar	12.25
Yatri Niwas at Ayodhya	27.47
Reception centre at Rishikesh	20.00

New tourism policy of Gujarat

3331. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Gujarat have apprised the Central Government of the new tourism policy of the State;

(b) if so, the main features of the said policy;

(c) whether the tourism industry in the State is existing in the name only as a result of which the foreign tourists could not be attracted;

(d) what are the reasons for not constructing/establishing any five star hotel so far at Vadodara and Ahmedabad in the state;

(e) whether it is also a fact that the so called tourists places are lacking in respect of accommodation facilities; and

(f) if so, Governments' reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND TOURISM

(SHRI SRIKANTA KUMAR JENA):

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government of Gujarat has announced the New Tourism Policy and accordingly the Central Department of Tourism, Government of India has been apprised.

Following are some salient features of the Policy:

- Tax exemption for tourism projects.
- Industry status to tourism sector
- Assistance in land procurement and allotment of wasteland
- A fast track mechanism for tourism project approval
- Private sector to be encouraged for setting-up tourism projects in the State

(c) In keeping with its Industry status, the State Govt. has exempted it from seeking prior permission for conversion of agriculture land into non-agriculture and made tourism projects eligible for allotment of Govt. waste land. The State