

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4152
ANSWERED ON 07.04.2022

PROMOTION OF TOURISM AT SARNATH

4152. SHRI K.J. ALPHONS:

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

- (a) action taken by Government to promote Sarnath, Varanasi as a global Buddhist destination;
- (b) the expenditure incurred by Government in creating tourist infrastructure at Sarnath; and
- (c) the manner in which Government propose to link Sarnath with the rest of the Buddhist Circuit?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF TOURISM

(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

(a): Ministry of Tourism has undertaken several measures for promotions of the Country as a global Buddhist destination, including Sarnath. Promotions are undertaken under the 'Incredible India' brand-line, through the website (www.incredibleindia.org) and the Social Media accounts of the Ministry.

With a view to showcase and project the Buddhist Heritage in India and boost tourism to the Buddhist destinations in the country, Ministry organises the International Buddhist Conclave biennially with participation of tour operators, Media, opinion makers etc. from overseas as well as Indian stakeholders. Ministry has developed a short film "India, the Land of Buddha" used for tourism promotional purposes. Ministry has a dedicated page on its Official Website (www.incredibleindia.org) for the promotion of Buddhist heritage and destinations with aim to promote and showcase the rich Buddhist Heritage in India including Sarnath.

Ministry promotes India as a global Buddhist destination including Sarnath in overseas through its Indiatourism Overseas Offices and Indian Missions by participating in travel fairs/exhibitions, tourism related conferences/seminars/conventions, Road Shows and other promotional activities. Ministry of Tourism has developed and printed a thematic brochure on the Buddhist sites in India including Sarnath.

Under Dekho Apna Desh initiative launched by the Ministry of Tourism a Buddhist Circuit Train FAM tour in collaboration with Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) and conference at Bodhgaya and Varanasi from 4th to 8th October 2021 was organised for promotion of Buddhist Circuits including Sarnath. The event was attended by the tour operators and other stakeholders of tourism sector, media etc.

Webinars have also been organised on Buddhist Circuit and Varanasi including Sarnath.

(b) and (c): Under Assistance to Central Agencies scheme, Ministry of Tourism has provided financial assistance to India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) for illumination of monuments in Varanasi/Sarnath (Dhamek Stupa in Sarnath, Chaukhandi Stupa in Sarnath, Tomb of Lalkan and Man Mahal in Banaras) for an amount of Rs.512.43 Lakh.

Under PRASHAD Scheme of the Ministry of Tourism, Sarnath is one of the destinations included under the PRASHAD Project "Development of Varanasi - Phase I" approved in the year 2015-16 at the cost of Rs.20.40 Cr. The project include following works at Sarnath: - (i) Buddha Theme Park, Sarnath at an approved cost of Rs.220 lakh. (ii) Sound and Light Show, Dhamek Stupa at a cost of Rs.734 lakh.

Under Swadesh Darshan Scheme, Ministry has sanctioned 5 (Five) projects under Buddhist Circuits theme for a total amount of Rs.323.54 crore. Selection of sites is primarily the responsibility of the State Government/Union Territory Administrations. The details of the Projects sanctioned under Buddhist Circuit theme of Swadesh Darshan Scheme are given in the attached ANNEXURE.

Under, RCS UDAN-3 Tourism, launched by Ministry of Civil Aviation, 46 tourism routes recommended by Ministry of Tourism, have been taken by the bidding airlines under which Sarnath has been connected via Bhubaneshwar to Varanasi and Varanasi to Bhubaneshwar Sector.

ANNEXURE**STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PARTS (b) AND (c) OF RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.4152 ANSWERED ON 07.04.2022 REGARDING PROMOTION OF TOURISM AT SARNATH****DETAILS OF PROJECTS SANCTIONED UNDER SWDESH DARSHAN SCHEME****(Amt. Rs. in crore)**

S. No.	Name of State	Name of Circuit & Year	Project Name	Amt. Sanctioned
1.	Madhya Pradesh	Buddhist Circuit (2016-17)	Development of Sanchi-Satna-Rewa-Mandsaur-Dhar.	74.02
2.	Uttar Pradesh	Buddhist Circuit (2016-17)	Development of Sravasti, Kushinagar, & Kapilvastu.	99.97
3.	Bihar	Buddhist Circuit (2016-17)	Construction of Convention Centre at Bodhgaya	98.73
4.	Gujarat	Buddhist circuit (2017-18)	Development of Junagadh- Gir Somnath- Bharuch-Kutch- Bhavnagar- Rajkot- Mehsana	26.68
5.	Andhra Pradesh	Buddhist Circuit (2017-18)	Development of Buddhist Circuit: Shalihundam-Thotlakonda- Bavikonda- Bojjanakonda- Amravati- Anupu in Andhra Pradesh under the theme of Buddhist Circuit of Swadesh Darshan Scheme	24.14
Total				323.54
