

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF TOURISM

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**STARRED QUESTION No.52#**  
ANSWERED ON 21.07.2022

**REDUCTION IN FARE FOR RELIGIOUS TOURS**

52# SHRI DEEPAK PRAKASH:

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

- (a) the details of the expenditure incurred by Government on activities like pilgrimage and religious fairs in the financial year 2021-22; and
- (b) whether Ministry, in collaboration with Ministries of Civil Aviation and Railways, is formulating any plan to curtail airfare, to identify air routes and to use rail routes for religious tours?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM

(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

(a) and (b): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

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**STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) AND (b) OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 52# ANSWERED ON 21.07.2022 REGARDING REDUCTION IN FARE FOR RELIGIOUS TOURS.**

(a): The Ministry of Tourism extends financial support to States and Union Territories for organising fairs/festivals/tourism related events. Under the guidelines, there are no separate allocation for religious fairs and pilgrimages and the Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance for promotion of tourism. The details of Central Financial Assistance to various States/UTs for organizing fairs/festivals and events in the year 2021-22 is at **Annexure**.

(b): As regards curtailing/capping of airfare, Ministry of Civil Aviation has informed that Air fares are not regulated by the Governments. Under the provision of Sub Rule (1) of Rule 135, aircraft Rules 1937, airlines are free to fix reasonable tariff having regard to all relevant factors, including the cost of operation, characteristics of service, reasonable profit and the generally prevailing tariff. Air fare so established by the airlines is published on their respective website under the provision of Sub Rule (2) of Rule 135, Aircraft Rules 1937.

However, Ministry of Civil Aviation launched Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) - UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) on 21-10-2016 to stimulate regional air connectivity and making air travel affordable to the masses. While launching the UDAN Scheme in 2016, the Government had capped the Airfare at Rs.2500 for a distance of approximately 500 km (equivalent to one-hour flight) per seat under Regional Connectivity routes. The capping is subject to indexation as per the formula specified in the UDAN Scheme document.

Further, on the recommendation of Ministry of Tourism, 46 tourism routes have been taken by the bidding airlines in the RCS UDAN 3.0, launched by Ministry of Civil Aviation. Out of these, 31 tourism routes are operational till date, which also include connectivity to 5 prominent religious places viz. Varanasi, Bhubaneswar, Khajuraho, Amritsar & Patna. A total of Rs.104.19 crore approx. has been reimbursed to the Airport Authority of India in the form of Viability Gap Funding (VGF) during Financial Year 2020-21 and 2021-22.

Further, Ministry of Tourism has given in-principle approval for 28 new routes to be included in the subsequent bidding process of RCS UDAN scheme, which includes religious places such as Prayagraj, Deoghar and Guwahati.

Ministry of Tourism has also taken up the matter with Ministry of Railways for better rail connectivity. Ministry of Railways has informed that 'Bharat Darshan Trains' run on theme based tourism circuits such as Ramayana Circuit, Jyotirlinga Circuit, Buddhist Circuits etc. Further, Railways have also informed that they have launched 'Bharat Gaurav Trains' (Theme based Tourist Circuit Trains) to showcase India's rich cultural heritage and magnificent historical places. Apart from this, Ministry of Tourism under "Assistance to Central Agencies for Tourism Infrastructure Development" program, joined hands with Ministry of Railways for development of tourist infrastructure amenities at 22 identified railway stations at 50:50 cost sharing basis. Out of these 22 identified railway stations 09 are religious destinations viz. Amritsar, Rameshwaram, Madurai, Gaya, Ajmer, Puri, Tirupati, Kamakhya and Tarkeshwer. Out of Rs.108.54 Crore sanctioned for development of these 22 railway stations, Rs.78.35 crore stands released.

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## ANNEXURE

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.52# ANSWERED ON 21.07.2022 REGARDING REDUCTION IN FARE FOR RELIGIOUS TOURS.

Amount sanctioned to State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for organizing fairs, festivals and events during the Financial Year – 2021-22.

(Rs. in lakh)

Sl. No	States /UTs	Name of Fairs & Festival	Sanctioned Amount
1	Mizoram	(i) Anthurium Festival (ii) Winter Festival	50.00
2	Punjab	(i) Harivallabh Sangeet Sammelan- Jalandhar (ii) Holla-Mohala at Shri Anandpur Sahib	50.00
3	Telangana	(i) Bathukamma Festivals (ii) Medaram Jatara at Mulugu	50.00
4	Madhya Pradesh	(i) Jal Mahotsav (ii) Pachmarhi Utsav, Pachmarhi- (iii) Khajuraho Dance Festival,	50.00
5	Meghalaya	(i) Wangala Dance Festival (ii) Nongkrem Dance Festival	50.00
6	Chandigarh	(i) Chandigarh Carnival (ii) New Year Extravaganza (iii) 50 <sup>th</sup> Chandigarh Rose Festival	30.00
7	Nagaland	(i) Hornbill Festival (ii) Angami's Sekrenyi Festival	30.00
8	Sikkim	(i) Cherry Temi Tea & Tourism Festival Temi Tea Gardens South Sikkim (ii) Khangchendzonga Winter Carnival Festival (iii) Jorethang Maghey Mela	50.00
9	Uttarakhand	(i) Tehri Lake Festival (ii) International Yoga Festival	50.00
10	Arunachal Pradesh	(i) Easterly Essence Ledum Festival (ii) Orange Festival of Music and Adventure	50.00
11	Assam	(i) Bhogali Festival (ii) Rongali Bihu Festival	50.00
12.	Tamil Nadu	Indian Dance Festival	25.00
13	Puducherry	(i) 27 <sup>th</sup> Yoga Festival at Puducherry (ii) Yanam People's Festival (iii) Carnival Festival at Karaikal	30.00
14.	Himachal Pradesh	International Shivratri Fair	25.00
15.	Goa	(i) Carnival Festival (ii) Shigmo Festival	50.00
16.	Haryana	Suraj Kund Mela	30.00

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