

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2433
ANSWERED ON 18.12.2023**

FUNDS SANCTIONED FOR RURAL TOURISM PROJECTS

2433. SHRI RITESH PANDEY:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has noted the findings of the recently published 2022 UN list of best tourism villages worldwide which does not feature a single Indian village;**
- (b) the State/UT-wise details of the funds sanctioned and utilized for Rural Tourism Projects out of the proposals received during the last five years and the status of progress of these projects;**
- (c) whether the Government has developed any criteria or undertaken any assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of existing schemes in promoting rural tourism;**
- (d) the further steps being taken by the Government to promote rural tourism to generate employment and exhibit India's ancient heritage while also providing better connectivity to rural areas; and**
- (e) whether the Government plans to include tourism in the concurrent list to ensure seamless coordination and promote rural tourism and if not, the reasons therefor?**

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM

(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

(a): Yes, Sir. Khonoma village in Nagaland was selected for the UNWTO upgrade programme in 2022.

In 2021, Pochampally Village in Telangana was selected as Best Tourism Village. In 2023, Dhordo Village in Gujarat has been selected as Best Tourism Village and Madla, Madhya Pradesh has been selected for the upgrade programme for the year 2023.

(b) to (d): Developing and promoting Rural Tourism can generate income and jobs in rural areas and empower local communities, youth and women, fulfilling the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat. With the aim to achieve convergence and synergy between various schemes, Ministry of Tourism has formulated a National Strategy and Roadmap for Development of Rural Tourism in India - An initiative towards Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Rural circuit was identified as one of the thematic circuits for development of tourism related infrastructure under Swadesh Darshan scheme of Ministry of Tourism. Details of funds sanctioned and released for Rural tourism circuits are at Annexure.

Ministry of Tourism has now revamped its Swadesh Darshan scheme as Swadesh Darshan 2.0 (SD2.0) with the objective to develop sustainable and responsible destinations following a tourist & destination centric approach.

Further, Ministry of Tourism has taken the following steps to promote Rural Tourism in the country:

- (i) The Rural Tourism Village portal was launched on 16th February 2023. The website has information about the rural tourism destinations in India, Rural homestays in India, Government and Industry initiatives for rural tourism etc.**
- (ii) Ministry of Tourism in partnership with Central Nodal Agency for Rural Tourism (IITTM) conducted the Best Tourism Village Competition. The final evaluation brought out 35 Best Tourism Villages of India.**
- (iii) Ministry is running Pan-India Incredible India Tourist Facilitator (IITF)/ Incredible India Tourist Guide (IITG) Program w.e.f. 01.01.2020, which is a digital initiative that aims at creating an Online learning platform with the objective of creating a pool of well trained and professional Tourist Facilitators/Guides across the country including the rural and little-known tourist destinations. The system provides basic (IITF), advanced (IITG-heritage and adventure), spoken foreign language and refresher courses for candidates. The candidates can pursue these online courses from anywhere and at any time and at their own pace.**

(iv) “Effective and adequate connectivity is one of the important aspect for developing a tourist destination. For this purpose, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Govt. of India has launched RCS-UDAN scheme, whose primary objective is to facilitate/stimulate regional air connectivity by making it affordable. Ministry of Tourism has collaborated with the Ministry of Civil Aviation to extend financial support in the form of Viability Gap Funding (VGF) under the Champion Service Sector Scheme (CSSS), with the purpose of further improving connectivity to important tourist places including Iconic sites. At present 53 tourism routes are operational.

Pradhan Mantri gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY-I) of Ministry of Rural Development is a one-time special intervention of Government of India to provide rural connectivity, by way of a single all-weather road, to the eligible unconnected habitations in the core network.

Subsequently, new intervention/verticals namely PMGSY-II, Road Connectivity Project for Left Wing Extremism Areas (RCPLWEA) and PMGSY-III were added under the ambit of PMGSY for upgradation of rural roads, construction of strategically important roads in LWE Areas and for consolidation of 1,25,000 Km through Routes and Major Rural Links connecting habitations, inter-alia, to Gramin Agricultural Markets (GrAMs), Higher Secondary Schools and Hospitals.

Since inception till 13.12.2023, 1,86,541 roads of 8,14,522 Km road length and 11,587 bridges have been sanctioned at the value of projects of Rs. 3,76,472.36 crore, out of which 1,77,628 roads of 7,49,363 Km road length and 8,435 bridges have been completed at an investment of Rs. 3,12,986.17 crore (including State Share).

The huge network of rural roads constructed under PMGSY has directly and indirectly connected many important places having potential of rural tourism. Thus PMGSY has helped in promoting rural tourism.

(e): No, Sir. To ensure seamless coordination and promote rural tourism a Task Force for Development of Rural Tourism has been constituted under the Chairpersonship of Secretary (T), comprising of representatives from identified Central Ministries/ organizations, State Governments/ UT Administrations and Industry Stakeholders.

ANNEXURE**STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PARTS (b) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2433 ANSWERED ON 18.12.2023 REGARDING FUNDS SANCTIONED FOR RURAL TOURISM PROJECTS BY SHRI RITESH PANDEY****Details of project sanctioned under the Rural Circuit of Swadesh Darshan Scheme in the country****(₹ in crore)**

Sl. No.	Name of State	Year of Sanction	Project Name	Amount Sanctioned	Amount Released	Amount Utilised*	Physical Status (%)	Implementing Agency
1.	Bihar	2017-18	Development of Bhitiharwa - Chandrahia-Turkaulia	44.27	39.96	39.96	Complete	Bihar State Tourism Development Corporation
2.	Kerala	Rural Circuit 2018-19	Development of Malanad Malabar Cruise Tourism Project	57.35	30.98	25.14	54.60	Kerala Tourism Development Corporation

*** Includes amount released to CNA as per new financial procedure.**
