

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1500
ANSWERED ON 09.02.2026**

**MEASURES TO CURB THE FRAUDULENT PRACTICES IN
TOURISM SECTOR**

1500. THIRU S JAGATHRATCHAKAN:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the assessment made by the Government for the increasing number of unlicensed or fraudulent travel agencies operating in major tourist destinations across the country and the extent to which such agencies are involved in overcharging, misleading packages or exploiting tourists;**
- (b) the details of the number of complaints received regarding illegal travel operators during the last five years, State/UT and year-wise, along with the action taken by the authorities;**
- (c) whether the Government has issued any guidelines or directives to States/UTs;**
- (d) whether coordination mechanisms have been established between tourism departments, police authorities and consumer commissions to crack down on illegal operators and safeguard domestic and foreign tourists, and if so, the outcomes of such coordination; and**
- (e) the details of the steps proposed by the Government to promote verified, registered and digital-KYC-based travel service providers to curb fraudulent practices in the tourism sector?**

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

(a) to (e): Complaints regarding deficiency in services or other issues like overcharging, misleading packages or exploiting tourists relating to service providers are received in the Ministry either from the complainants or through the Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) portal. On receipt of such complaints, the matter is taken up with the concerned service providers seeking clarification to facilitate resolution of the issues. In case instances of exploitation of

tourists are brought to the notice of the Ministry of Tourism, the grievance is taken up with the concerned State Government/Union Territory (UT) Administration since service providers are required to be registered/licensed under local rules/acts of the concerned State/UT. The complainant is also advised to approach the appropriate forum, such as consumer court, for redressal on case-to-case basis.

To ensure standardized services for tourists, the Ministry of Tourism Government of India gives approval to different categories of service providers in the Travel and Hospitality industry including Online Travel Aggregators/Tour Operators/Travel Agents/Tourist Transport Operators /different categories of Hotels/Motels/Convention Centres, etc. in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Ministry for each category. This is purely a voluntary scheme and it is not mandatory for the service providers to seek approval of the Ministry for conducting business. In case of complaints of serious nature against the approved service providers, the Ministry of Tourism may take action against them, which may include withdrawal of the approval/re-approval granted.

Safety and Security of tourists is essentially a State subject. However, the Ministry of Tourism has been continuously taking up the matter with all the State Governments and Union Territory (UT) Administrations for setting up of dedicated Tourism Police to strengthen on-ground safety mechanism for tourists. With the efforts of Ministry of Tourism, the State Governments /UT's viz Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim and Uttar Pradesh have deployed tourist police.

Under the recognition under Ministry of Tourism through National Integrated Database of Hospitality Industry (NIDHI⁺) framework, tourism stakeholders are registered through a multi-layered digital verification process, which includes the following steps:

- 1. Mandatory submission and digital verification of Permanent Account Number (PAN) details to establish the legal identity of the service provider.**
- 2. Mandatory verification of registered mobile number and email ID through OTP-based authentication to ensure authenticity and secure communication.**
- 3. Aadhaar-based verification facility (optional).**
- 4. Digital verification of valid Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) licence details for applicable food service-related tourism establishments to ensure regulatory compliance.**
