

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.3173
ANSWERED ON 19.03.2026

IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY TO DARJEELING

3173 SHRI HARSH VARDHAN SHRINGLA:

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

- (a) the impact of recent flight cancellations at Bagdogra Airport on tourist arrivals and booking cancellations for Darjeeling during the peak winter season and how this has affected local tourism businesses and livelihoods;
- (b) the steps taken by Government to enhance air and ground connectivity to Darjeeling, including alternative transport solutions and infrastructure improvements;
- (c) whether Government has coordinated with State Government of West Bengal to mitigate such disruptions; and
- (d) the manner in which the above measures would strengthen tourist confidence and ensure a resilient tourism ecosystem in the region?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM

(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

(a) to (d): As informed by Ministry of Civil Aviation, flights get delayed or cancelled due to various reasons such as weather, technical, operational, Air Traffic Control (ATC), ramp, airport issues, reactionary or may be due to extraordinary circumstance(s) beyond the control of the airline. With the repeal of Air Corporations Act in March 1994, the Indian domestic aviation was fully deregulated. Airlines are free to induct capacity with any type of aircraft, free select whatever markets and network they wish to service. Hence, it is upto the airline operators to introduce air services to / from any airport in the country depending on their operational & commercial viability.

Connectivity is an important aspect for developing tourism in the country. The Government of India undertakes development and upgradation of air, rail and national road infrastructure through the concerned Ministries/Agencies in coordination with the State Governments/Union Territories including State of West Bengal. Ministry of Road Transport & Highways is primarily responsible for development and Maintenance of National Highways (NHs) in the country and based on the traffic density, connectivity/logistic requirements and synergy with PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan. Development and planning of State Highways (SHs) in the region is being done by the concerned State Governments/Union Territory Administrations.

Improved connectivity and infrastructure development enhance accessibility, ensure smoother travel for tourists and strengthen tourist confidence, thereby supporting a resilient tourism ecosystem in the Darjeeling region.
