

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 115
ANSWERED ON 02.02.2024

PROMOTION OF RIVER CRUISE

115. SHRI RAMESH BIDHURI:

Will the Minister of PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS be pleased to state:

पत्तन, पोतपरिवहन और जलमार्ग मंत्री

- (a) whether the Government has taken any steps for development and promotion of Ocean, coastal and river cruise sector within the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken for development of world class ports?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS
(SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL)

(a) to (c) For Ocean and Coastal Cruise operation various Indian Ports viz. Mumbai, Mormugao, New Mangalore, Cochin, Chennai and Visakhapatnam are used. The steps taken for development and promotion of ocean and coastal cruise within the country is at **Annex-I**. For river cruise, Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) in consultation with the cruise operators and other stakeholders develops adequate infrastructure to boost river cruise tourism. The details of infrastructure facilities created for smooth operation on river cruise on National Waterways is at **Annex-II**.

Steps taken for development and promotion of ocean and coastal cruise

1. For berthing, cruise vessel is given priority over cargo vessel.
2. Rationalised cruise tariff has been introduced.
- i. Port charges are recovered @ \$0.085/GRT (fixed rate) and a nominal passenger head tax of \$ 6 for first 12 hours of stay at berth.
- ii. Cruise ships are provided discounts ranging from 10% to 30% based on volume of their calls.
3. Ousting charges have been removed to attract cruise vessels.
4. E-Visa and on-arrival visa facilities have been extended.
5. Single e-Landing Card has been introduced which is valid for all ports in cruise itinerary.
6. Cabotage has been waived for foreign cruise vessels. This relaxation allows foreign cruise ships to transport Indian nationals from one Indian Port to another Indian Port during their domestic leg.
7. In order to promote tourism, conditional IGST exemption has been approved for foreign flag foreign going vessel when it converts to coastal run, subject to its reconversion to foreign going vessel within six months.
8. During Global Maritime India Summit, 2023 a session on 'Embark on a voyage to attract 50 million Cruise Passengers in India by 2047' and a 'Roundtable with Cruise lines' were organized with participation of stakeholders.
9. Up-gradation and modernization of Cruise Terminals at New Mangalore, Cochin, Chennai, Mormugao and Visakhapatnam have been completed

Details of infrastructure facilities created for smooth operation on river cruise on National Waterways

1. Berthing Facilities: Floating pontoons have been provided at various locations as per requirement on National Waterways for berthing of cruise vessels and embarkation/ disembarkation of tourists.
2. Provision of five special tourist jetties on National Waterway-2 (Pandur, Biswanath Ghat, Neamati, Kamlabari and Guijan) with the funding from Ministry of Tourism.
3. Construction of 62 Community Jetties has been taken up by IWAI on National Waterway-1 between Varanasi and Haldia, which will also cater the berthing of cruise vessels.
4. Navigational Fairway with marking of the channels for safe plying of tourist vessels.
5. Pilotage: Pilots are provided on demand at a very nominal charge of Rs. 750/- per day for the safe navigation of the vessels.
6. Coordination with State government: Assistance is provided to the cruise operators in close coordination with State government for facilitating the voyage through respective State.
7. Assistance to vessels in distress: High-powered tug to tow the cruise vessels to safe locations when they are in distress due to mechanical failure or otherwise on National Waterways.
