

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2151
ANSWERED ON 02.12.2019**

DEVELOPMENT OF BUDDHIST TOURISM CIRCUIT

2151. SHRI RAJU BISTA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps taken by the Union Government to develop Buddhist Tourism circuit connecting Darjeeling-Sikkim and Bodh Gaya;**
- (b) the details of promotion undertaken by the Ministry of Tourism under the Incredible India initiative to promote Darjeeling and related sites; and**
- (c) whether the Government has any plan to launch direct bus service from Darjeeling to Kathmandu *via* Pashupati Nagar?**

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR TOURISM (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL)**

(a) to (c): Buddhist Circuit has been identified as one of the fifteen thematic circuits for development under Swadesh Darshan Scheme. All places associated with Buddhism in the country are covered under this Circuit. The projects under the scheme are identified for development in consultation with the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations and are sanctioned subject to availability of funds, submission of suitable detailed project reports, adherence to scheme guidelines and utilization of funds released earlier.

The Ministry has sanctioned a project for Development of Buddhist Circuit: Construction of Cultural Centre at Bodhgaya in 2016-17 for Rs.98.73 crores. In Sikkim Ministry has sanctioned two projects under North East Circuit theme namely, Development of

Tourist Circuit linking Rangpo (entry) – Rorathang- Aritar- Phadamchen- Nathang- Sherathang- Tsongmo- Gangtok-Phodong- Mangan- Lachung- Yumthang- Lachen- Thangu-Gurudongmer- Mangan- Gangtok-Tumin Lingee - Singtam (exit) in 2015-16 for Rs.98.05 Crores and Development of Tourist Circuit Linking Singtam– Maka- Temi- Bermoik Tokel- Phongia- Namchi –Jorthang- Okharey- Sombaria-Daramdin- Jorethang- Melli (Exit) in 2016-17 for Rs.95.32 Crores. Both these projects also cover number of Buddhist Monasteries. No project has been received from Government of West Bengal for Darjeeling.

Ministry of Tourism promotes India as a holistic destination under the Incredible India brand-line. As part of its on-going activities, the Ministry annually releases print, electronic, online and outdoor media campaigns in the international and domestic markets, to promote various tourism destinations and products of the country, including Darjeeling. In addition, the Indiatourism Offices in India and overseas disseminate information and undertake various promotional activities with the objective of showcasing the varied tourist destinations and products of the country.

As informed by Ministry of External Affairs there is no proposal to launch direct bus service from Darjeeling to Kathmandu via Pashupati Nagar.
