



## Press Release

### **TOURISM MINISTER DIRECTS FOR DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE ROUTES TO TACKLE CHAR DHAM TRAFFIC CHALLENGES**

Dehradun, April 23, 2022

Uttarakhand Tourism Minister Shri Satpal Maharaj has stressed on urgent measures towards strengthening alternative roads on Char Dham routes to tackle traffic snarls that take place due to landslides and other reasons.

Presiding the Char Dham review meeting held at the Secretariat in Dehradun today, Shri Satpal Maharaj said traffic congestion has been the biggest challenge in the char Dham routes and have called for developing alternative routes. He said these alternative routes would be of immense benefit for diverting traffic to ease the traffic pressure on Char Dham routes and also help in case of landslides. He called for installation of signage to keep the arriving pilgrim informed about the route diversions.

“Eye level signages should be placed at proper place so that people arriving for pilgrim knows about diversions well in advance. This would considerably ease out traffic pressure on the congested roads of Char Dham, Shri Satpal Maharaj pointed out.

He specifically directed for developing new parking facilities to tackle Char Dham challenges. Emphasizing on the same, he said, “You must acquire land or take the land on lease or even ensure private participation towards developing new parking lots as vehicles parked alongside roads is the major cause of traffic congestion”, Maharaj said calling for preparing a feasible plan on this count. He also asked for making arrangements of drinking water and food items for the pilgrims and tourists in case of vehicles getting stuck due to landslides. Installation of bio toilets were also stressed upon by the minister.

Referring to landslides, the Tourism Minister directed for stationing of stone crushers for prompt clearing of big boulders. He also suggested for installation of wire netting in the landslide zones so that the debris do not fall on houses.

The minister also directed the health authorities present to ensure wearing of masks and sanitizers in their new SOPs for Char Dham yatra. He also stressed on taking assistance from Defence Ministry towards deployment of cardiac specialists on the char dham routes to ensure immediate relief in case of emergency.

Describing taxi drivers as brand ambassadors, Tourism Minister Satpal Maharaj directed for keeping coloured brochures of various circuits for the first hand knowledge of the arriving pilgrims. “The drivers should also be told about importance of keeping their vehicles clean as any emanating foul smell from a vehicle gives a poor impression of the state”, Shri Satpal Maharaj said.

The Tourism Minister, through video conferencing also talked to the District magistrates of

Rudraprayag, Chamoli and Uttarkashi districts to review their preparations for Char Dham yatra.

Earlier, Tourism Secretary Shri Dilip Jawalkar informed the meeting about the Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board's preparations for the coming Char Dham. He informed that more than one lakh online registrations have taken place for the Char Dham shrines. Principal Secretary PWD Shri R K Sudhanshu, Garhwal Commissioner Shri Sushil Kumar, DIG Garhwal KS Nagnyal, Additional Director Health Dr US Kandwal, Additional Chief Executive Officer Adventure UTDB Col Ashwani Pundir and Additional Director UTDB Shri Vivek Singh Chauhan were prominent participants of the meeting.