

## CABINET MEETING

# Nod to homestay policy, to fill in tourist surge

Nominal fee of Rs 500 to Rs 750 will be charged to register a homestay in rural areas and Rs 2,000 in urban areas

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AIMING TO provide comfortable accommodation options for devotees and tourists visiting the state's religious and tourist destinations, the Uttar Pradesh Cabinet on Tuesday approved the Uttar Pradesh Bed and Breakfast (B&B) and Homestay Policy-2025.

The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

According to the Tourism Department, the new policy was necessitated as hotels at religious and tourist destinations usually get fully booked, leaving visitors with limited or no lodging options.

The policy seeks to resolve this issue by enabling local residents to offer homestay accommodations, it said.

Under the policy, only a small fee —ranging from Rs 500 to Rs 750 —will be charged to register homestays in rural areas. For urban and silver-category homestays, the application fee has been fixed at Rs 2,000.

Speaking to media persons after the meeting, state Finance and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Suresh Khanna said under the policy, any individual residing in a proximity to a religious or tourist site will be allowed to register a homestay unit consisting of 1 to 6 rooms, with a capacity of a maximum of 12 beds.

Tourists can avail of the facil-



**Finance Minister Suresh Khanna**

ity for up to seven consecutive days, with provisions for extension through a renewal process, he said.

The registration and approval of homestays will be overseen by a committee headed by the district magistrate and superintendent of police concerned to ensure safety and compliance.

With no state-level policy for homestays till now, homestay operators had to register on the Central government's NIDHI+ portal.

Under the new policy, they can now register easily by getting a no-objection certificate (NOC) from local authorities.

Khanna further said that the policy also includes financial support and incentives to encourage residents to offer part of their homes for tourism purposes.

It will not only provide affordable and convenient accommodation for tourists, but will also create new income and job opportunities for local people, he said, adding that the move is expected to strengthen the state's economy and tourism infrastructure.

Khanna said 10 of the 11 proposals presented before the Cabinet were given approval.

## Annapurna Bhawans to be set up

Among these were the approval for the construction of annapurna bhawans to strengthen the public distribution system (PDS) and ensure smooth availability of food grains to ration card holders. To speed up the construction process, the government has decided to use savings from the fiscal savings as well.

The proposal gives the option of seeking funds for construction from the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), State Finance Commission, MP and MLA funds, Purvanchal and Bundelkhand Development Funds, or any other state or Central government scheme that allows

such construction. If funds are not available from these sources, the Food and Civil Supplies Department will arrange the money from its own savings, it is learnt. Around 75 to 100 Annapurna Bhawans will be built in each district every year. The policy includes provisions for maintaining these bhawans.

## Incentive funds for mega industrial units

Also, the Cabinet has approved incentive funds for five mega-category industrial units under the Uttar Pradesh Industrial Investment and Employment Promotion Policy-2017. The government has approved the first installment to these industrial units.

