

Title: Need to render financial assistance to Government of Maharashtra for providing infrastructural facilities to pilgrims of Kumbhmela at Ramkund and Tapovan in Nasik, Maharashtra.

SHRI UTTAMRAO DHIKALE (NASIK): The Sinhasta Kumbhmela is held after a span of 12 years at Ramkund as well as at the Tapovan in Nasik (Maharashtra). The Kumbhmela is the most religious function and about 35,000 to 40,000 *Sadhus* and 15 to 20 lakhs pilgrims visit the Ramkund during the Parvani period.

The Kumbhmela is almost a year long festival when 35,000 to 40,000 *sadhus* reside in Nasik city and perform the holy rituals. Hence, it is necessary to provide infrastructural facilities for the *sadhus* and pilgrims throughout the year.

The forthcoming Kumbhmela will be the first ever Kumbhmela in the 21st century and it is expected that around one lakh pilgrims will come to Nasik city to celebrate the occasion of Parvani days. Considering the above facts, Nasik Municipal Corporation has decided to develop separate *Sadhu* camp. For this purpose, approximately 100 acres of land will be acquired near Tapovan area and infrastructural facilities like road, plots for creating sheds and toilet blocks, water supply arrangement will be provided. Total expenditure on this project is estimated to be Rs.297 crores. I would like to appeal to the Central Government to provide appropriate financial assistance/funds for this project.