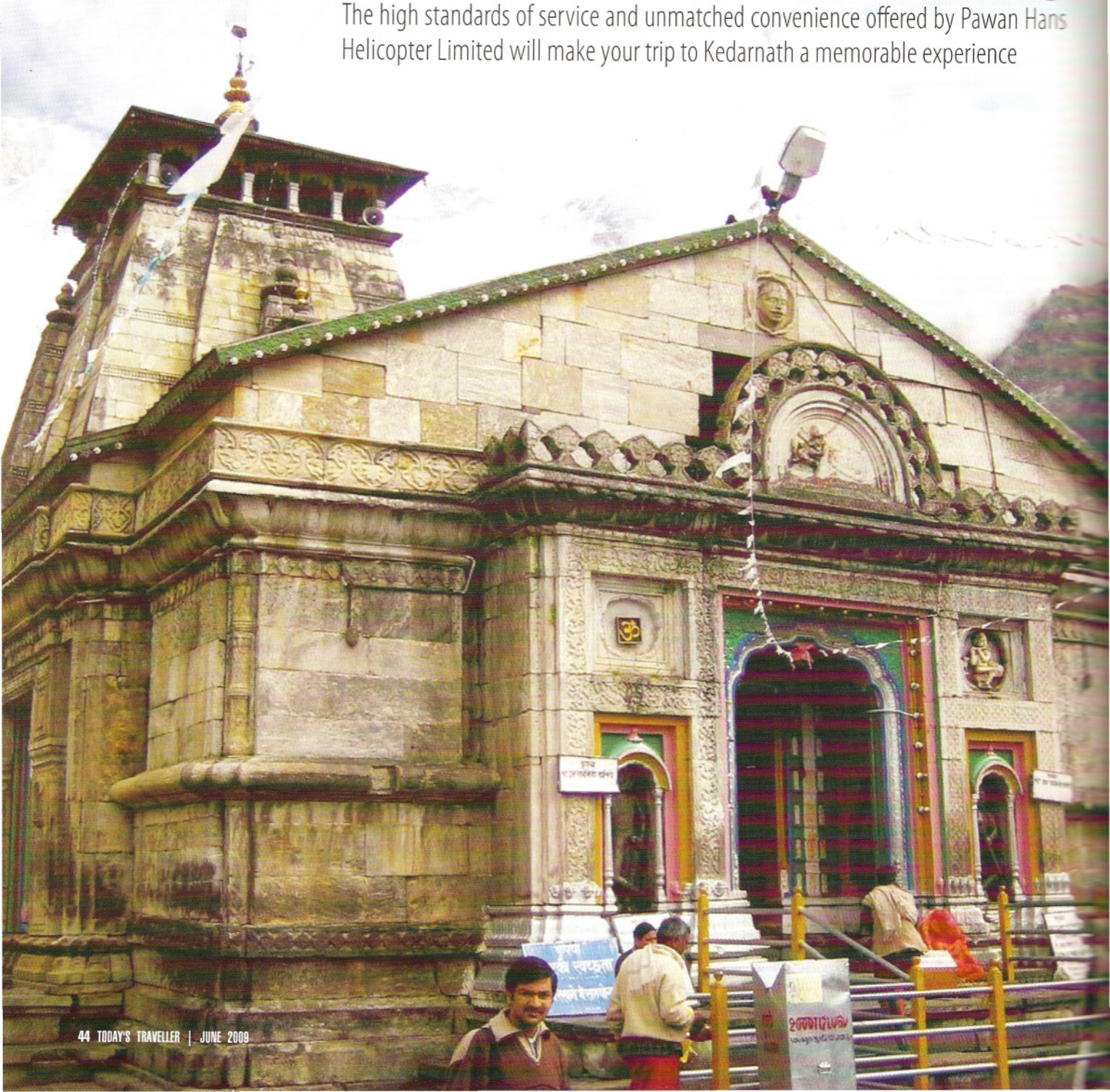


# A pilgrimage made easy

The high standards of service and unmatched convenience offered by Pawan Hans Helicopter Limited will make your trip to Kedarnath a memorable experience





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**A TRIP TO KEDARNATH** is considered one of the holiest pilgrimages for the Hindus. Kedarnath is one of the 12 *vyotirlingams* held in reverence. Every year, thousands of Shiva devotees from all over the country visit the Kedarnath Temple situated at 11,500 feet above sea level in the Tehri-Garhwal hills.

Pilgrimage to this abode of Lord Shiva is considered to be the toughest, next only to Mount Kailash, due to extreme cold weather conditions and height. The 14-kilometre trek is also one of the main factors that make the journey formidable. Other pilgrimages related to Lord Shiva are well connected by road, but the devotees need to walk or take the help of ponies and dandies to reach Kedarnath.

However, chopper rides have made the journey a lot more easier. As a result, there has been a quantum jump in the number of

pilgrims who wish to keep faith with Lord Shiva. Pawan Hans Helicopter Limited (PHHL) is one of the companies which have come to the aid of the pilgrims through its prompt, efficient and regular service. True to its name that means 'ease of flying, anywhere anytime, anyhow, anyway', India's largest operator of helicopter services has resumed its daily operations from Phata and Agstumuni by 5-seater Bell 407/Bell 206L4 machines. Agustumuni is located 17 kilometres beyond Rudraprayag en-route to Kedarnath, while Phata is around 50 kilometres from Agustumuni enroute to Kedarnath and 18 kilometres short of Gaurikund. And for those who want to take only the aerial route, PHHL has now commenced another service from Dehradun to the shrine via Phata/Gauchar.

Pilgrims can have their tryst with the Lord for one hour and thirty minutes. If spending a night at the feet of the Lord is your wish, take the last flight from Phata that departs at 1.30 pm. However, you need to be lucky as weather gods can ruin your plans. And make sure you have booked your accommodation at Kedarnath well in advance.

The fare for the Phata-Kedarnath-Phata sector is Rs 7,000. And if priority *darshan* is your wish, it

### Easy booking

Tickets are available at PHHL helipads at Agustumuni and Phata on first-come-first-served basis. Passengers may also get in touch with the PHHL's Delhi office at Safdarjung Airport for help. Just dial 011-24651248 or 011-24690924. Tickets can also be booked through the branches of PHHL's authorized travel agents, including M/s Balmer Lawrie & Co Ltd ([www.balmerlawrie.com](http://www.balmerlawrie.com)) as well as through Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam Ltd offices all over India ([www.gmvnl.com](http://www.gmvnl.com)).

will cost you Rs 1,100. One way tickets are available for the Phata-Kedarnath and Kedarnath-Phata sectors at Rs 4,200 and Rs 2,800, respectively—excluding priority *darshan* for Rs 1,100. Pay Rs 14,000 plus Rs 1,100 for priority *darshan* on the Agustumuni-Kedarnath-Agustumuni (via Phata) sector. One way tickets are also available for the Agustumuni-Kedarnath and the Kedarnath-Agustumuni sectors at Rs 8,000 (plus priority *darshan* for Rs 1100) and Rs 6,000, respectively.

In case infants accompany you, pay 10 per cent of the ticket cost if they are less than two years. However, no seats will be provided to them. But children over two years will get full seats.

The first ISO 9001:2000 certified aviation company in India has introduced a service on the Dehradun-Gauchar sector. The return fare on the Dehradun- Kedarnath (via Phata) sector is Rs 25,000 per person up to Phata. The service connects with the Phata-Kedarnath shuttle. One way ticket from Dehradun to Phata is Rs 15,000 per head, and from Phata to Dehradun, it is Rs 10,000 per person. Pay Rs 15,000 per person if you want to fly from Dehradun to Gauchar and Rs 10,000 per person on the way back. The helicopter can also be chartered from Dehradun to Phata and back for Rs 1.25 lakh plus service tax.

And that is not all. PHHL also provides services on a charter basis for *char dhams* or individual *dhams* like Badrinath, Yamunotri and Gangotri pilgrimages.

