

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.623#
ANSWERED ON 23.07.2026

DEVELOPMENT OF THEME-BASED TOURISM

623# SMT. DARSHANA SINGH:

Will the Minister of **TOURISM** be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps taken by Government to promote spiritual, heritage, adventure, rural and eco-tourism;
- (b) whether new tourism circuits are being developed in these areas;
- (c) whether the initiatives has been taken to ensure participation of local communities and employment generation; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM

(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

(a) to (d): Development and promotion of tourist destinations and tourism products including spiritual, heritage, adventure, rural and eco-tourism is primarily undertaken by the concerned State Governments (SGs)/Union Territory Administrations (UTAs). However, the Ministry of Tourism through its schemes of 'Swadesh Darshan (SD)', 'Swadesh Darshan 2.0 (SD2.0)', 'Challenge Based Destination Development (CBDD)' – a sub-scheme of SD2.0, and 'Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD)' complements the efforts of tourism infrastructure development by extending financial assistance to the State Governments /UT Administrations; subject to adherence to scheme guidelines, submission of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) by them, availability of funds, Government directions, inter-se priority etc. Under these schemes, Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned 76 projects for Rs.5295.24 Crore under SD Scheme, 53 projects for Rs.2207.08 Crore under SD2.0 scheme, 37 projects for Rs.687.99 Crore under CBDD initiative and 54 projects for Rs.1726.74 crore under PRASHAD scheme.

In addition, during the financial year 2025-26, the Ministry has initiated 'Development of Homestays in Tribal Areas' under Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DA-JGUA) scheme as a part of Swadesh Darshan 2.0 to promote community-based tourism and sustainable livelihoods in tribal areas and has sanctioned 5 projects in five states for an amount of ₹17.52 Crore.

The Swadesh Darshan Scheme was initially designed for the integrated development of thematic tourism circuits. The same has been revamped as Swadesh Darshan 2.0 adopting a destination-centric approach with a focus on developing sustainable and responsible tourism destinations to enhance visitor experience and effective destination management.

The Ministry regularly encourages State Governments/ UT Administrations to engage with local communities and to ensure robust operation & management (O&M) of completed projects so as to increase footfall, generate local employment and enhance overall tourist satisfaction.
