



Union Budget 2026–27 Delivers Unprecedented Boost to Tourism, Culture and Heritage: Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat

India Set to Emerge as Global Tourism Hub with Unprecedented Budget Support

From Heritage Sites to Himalayan Trails: Budget 2026 Redefines India's Tourism Vision

Buddhist Circuits, Eco-Trails and Skill Boost Mark Transformative Tourism Budget

World-Class Training, Global Summits and Heritage Revival Anchor Tourism Push

Union Budget 2026 Places Culture, Spirituality and Sustainable Tourism at the Core of Growth

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The Union Minister of Tourism and Culture, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, has welcomed the Union Budget 2026–27, stating that it provides unprecedented and far-beyond-expectations encouragement to the tourism and culture sectors. In a message shared on social media, the Minister described the Budget as forward-looking and transformative, saying it will accelerate development and firmly position India as a global tourism hub and cultural leader.



He extended heartfelt congratulations to Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for his visionary leadership and expressed gratitude to Hon'ble Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman for presenting a Budget that gives an unparalleled boost to heritage, spirituality, skills, and sustainable tourism growth.

The Budget outlines a wide range of initiatives aimed at strengthening tourism infrastructure, preserving cultural heritage, promoting eco-tourism, and enhancing skill development.

Major Announcements

The Budget proposes the development of thematic tourism trails across India, including:

- Mountain Trails in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Jammu & Kashmir
- Eco & Nature Trails in Araku Valley (Eastern Ghats) and Podhigai Malai (Western Ghats)
- Turtle Trails along key nesting sites in Odisha, Karnataka, and Kerala
- Bird Watching Trails at Pulicat Lake in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu

A major cultural initiative includes the development of 15 archaeological sites such as Lothal, Dholavira, Rakhigarhi, Adichanallur, Sarnath, Hastinapur, and Leh Palace into vibrant, experiential destinations blending conservation with visitor engagement.

To strengthen spiritual tourism, a new scheme for Buddhist Circuits in the North-East will be launched, covering Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, and Tripura. The scheme will include preservation of temples and monasteries, pilgrimage interpretation centres, improved connectivity, and pilgrim amenities.

Skill development receives a significant push with a proposal to provide world-class training to 10,000 tour guides across 20 major destinations through a pilot project in collaboration with the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) using both online and offline modes.

In a major education reform, the National Council for Hotel Management will be developed into a National Institute of Hospitality, strengthening professional training and aligning hospitality education with global standards.

To promote India as a medical tourism hub, the Budget proposes support to states for establishing five regional medical tourism hubs.

India will also host the first Global Big Cat Summit, bringing together leaders and ministers from 95 countries, further reinforcing India's leadership in wildlife conservation and eco-tourism diplomacy.

Additionally, the Budget envisions the creation of five major tourism destinations in the Purvodaya States, supporting balanced regional development.

Shri Shekhawat emphasized that these initiatives will generate employment, promote sustainable practices, strengthen local economies, and deepen global engagement with India's civilizational heritage.

Key Highlights

1. Thematic Tourism Trails launched across mountains, coasts, wetlands, and biodiversity zones.
2. 15 Iconic Archaeological Sites to be transformed into experiential heritage destinations.
3. Buddhist Circuit Development in North-East with preservation, connectivity, and pilgrim facilities.
4. 10,000 Tour Guides to Receive IIM-led World-Class Training.
5. National Council for Hotel Management to Become National Institute of Hospitality.
6. Five Regional Medical Tourism Hubs & Global Big Cat Summit to Boost Niche Tourism.

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