

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM**

**LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO.*220
ANSWERED ON 03.08.2026**

DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF TOURIST DESTINATIONS IN MEHSANA

***220. SHRI HARIBHAI PATEL:**

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has assessed the potential of developing Modhera Sun Temple, Thol Lake Bird Sanctuary, Taranga Hills, Dharoi Dam, Sharmistha Talav and Kirti Toran, Vadnagar as an integrated heritage, pilgrimage and eco-tourism circuit in Mehsana district;**
- (b) if so, the details of the tourism infrastructure created or proposed at these destinations, including last-mile connectivity, visitor amenities, interpretation centres, signage, parking and digital tourist facilities;**
- (c) whether any proposal has been received from the State Government of Gujarat for the integrated development, conservation and promotion of the said tourist destinations under any Central tourism scheme;**
- (d) the details of the financial assistance sanctioned, released and utilised for tourism infrastructure and heritage conservation in Mehsana district during the last three years; and**
- (e) the details of the steps taken by the Government to promote the said destinations through domestic and international tourism campaigns?**

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM

(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (E) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.*220 ANSWERED ON 03.08.2026 REGARDING DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF TOURIST DESTINATIONS IN MEHSANA RAISED BY SHRI HARIBHAI PATEL

(a) to (e): Development and promotion of tourism including assessment of potential of destinations including Modhera Sun Temple, Thol Lake Bird Sanctuary, Taranga Hills, Dharoi Dam, Sharmistha Talav and Kirti Toran, Vadnagar, is primarily done by the concerned State Government (SG)/UT Administration (UTA). However, Ministry of Tourism under its various schemes such as Swadesh Darshan (SD), Swadesh Darshan 2.0 (SD2.0), Challenge Based Destination Development (CBDD) – an initiative under Swadesh Darshan and Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD) etc. provides financial assistance for development of tourism infrastructure and experiences in the country, to the SGs/UTAs, on receipt of the project proposals from them, in synergy with the scheme guidelines, Government directions, availability of funds, inter-se priority etc.

The Swadesh Darshan Scheme was initially designed for the integrated development of thematic tourism circuits. The same had 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.

Further, the Government of India under its ‘Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI) – Development of Iconic Tourist Centres to Global Scale’ has also sanctioned projects in the country in Financial Year

2024-25, with the primary objective to comprehensively develop iconic tourist centres in the country, branding and marketing them at global scale.

The details of the projects sanctioned under SD, CBDD, SASCI and PRASHAD schemes in the State of Gujarat is annexed.

Further, the State Government of Gujarat has informed that they have assessed the potential of developing said locations as an integrated heritage, pilgrimage and eco-tourism circuit in Mehsana district and destinations i.e. Modhera Sun Temple, Thol Lake Bird Sanctuary, Taranga Hills, Dharoi Dam, Sharmistha Talav, Kirti Toran and Vadnagar. These destinations have adequate last-mile connectivity with well-developed approach pathways for easy access, sufficient directional and informational signage, adequate parking facilities, and essential visitor amenities.

A wide range of tourism infrastructure and visitor amenities have been approved under the Ministry of Tourism's central sector schemes in different destinations in the state of Gujarat. These amenities includes tourist facilitation and interpretation centres, visitor reception facilities, heritage conservation and area development, pathways and promenades, approach roads and last-mile connectivity, parking facilities, wayfinding and informational signage, illumination and façade lighting of heritage structures, landscaping and beautification, amphitheatres and cultural spaces, cafeterias, souvenir and handicraft shops, public conveniences, drinking water facilities, boating and waterfront infrastructure, viewing towers, recreational and eco-tourism facilities, CCTV and public address systems, digital tourism interventions (including websites and destination content), as well as

sustainable tourism measures, destination management initiatives, skill development, MSME support and other infrastructure aimed at enhancing the overall visitor experience.

Ministry of Tourism promotes tourism destinations and experiences of the country in a holistic manner, including destinations of the State of Gujarat through various initiatives in important and potential domestic and international markets.

ANNEXURE**STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (E) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.*220 ANSWERED ON 03.08.2026 REGARDING DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF TOURIST DESTINATIONS IN MEHSANA RAISED BY SHRI HARIBHAI PATEL****(i) Details of Project sanctioned under Swadesh Darshan Scheme in the State of Gujarat:**

S. No.	Name of the Project/Experience	Year of Sanction	Sanctioned Cost (in ₹ Crore)
1.	Development of Ahmedabad- Rajkot- Porbandar-Bardoli-Dandi	2016-17	59.17
2.	Development of Vadnagar- Modhera	2016-17	91.12
3.	Development of Junagadh-Gir- Somnath- Bharuch-Kutch-Bhavnagar-Rajkot-Mehsana	2017-18	26.68

(ii) Details of Project sanctioned under Challenge Based Destination Development Scheme in the State of Gujarat:

S. No.	Name of the Project/Experience	Category	Year of Sanction	Sanctioned Cost (in ₹ Crore)
1.	Transformation of Sharmishtha Lake: Light & Culture at Vadnagar	Culture & Heritage	2024-2025	17.29
2.	The Sacred Ocean Retreat at Harsiddhi Shore at Porbandar	Spiritual	2024-2025	24.66

(iii) Details of Project sanctioned under SASCI Scheme in the State of Gujarat:

S. No.	Name of the Project/Experience	Year of Sanction	Sanctioned Cost (in ₹ Crore)
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1.	Ecotourism Destination at Kerly (Mokarsagar) in Porbandar	2024-25	99.50
2.	Tented City and Convention Centre in Dhordo	2024-25	51.56

(iv) Details of Project sanctioned under PRASHAD Scheme in the State of Gujarat:

S. No.	Name of the Project/Experience	Year of Sanction	Sanctioned Cost (in ₹ Crore)
1.	Development of Dwarka	2016-17	10.46
2.	Development of Pilgrimage Amenities at Somnath	2016-17	45.36
3.	Development of Promenade at Somnath	2018-19	47.12
4.	Development of Pilgrimage Facilities at Ambaji Temple, Banaskantha, Gujarat	2022-23	50.00
