

PROMOTION OF RURAL TOURISM

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Development and promotion of tourist destinations and products, including rural tourism is undertaken by the respective State Government / Union Territory (UT) Administration. The Ministry of Tourism promotes India in a holistic manner, through various initiatives.

Under the schemes of 'Swadesh Darshan', 'National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation & Spiritual Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD)' and 'Assistance to Central Agencies for Tourism Infrastructure Development', Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance to State Governments/ Union Territory Administrations for the development of tourism related infrastructure and facilities at various tourism destinations in the country including in the rural backward / tribal areas. Rural Circuit was identified as one of the thematic circuits under Swadesh Darshan Scheme. The details of projects sanctioned under Rural Circuit of the scheme are given at Annexure.

Swadesh Darshan Scheme was revamped as Swadesh Darshan 2.0 (SD2.0) with the objective to develop sustainable and responsible destinations following a destination centric approach.

Ministry of Tourism has formulated guidelines for 'Challenge Based Destination Development' as a sub scheme of Swadesh Darshan 2.0 Scheme to enhance tourist experience and to transform tourist destinations as sustainable & responsible destinations.

With the aim to promote tourism in tribal areas, the Ministry of Tourism has issued guidelines along with template for formulation of proposal by State Governments and UT Administrations for 'Development of Homestays in Tribal Areas' (A sub-scheme of Swadesh Darshan Scheme) under Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan (PM-JUGA). The objective of the initiative is to develop homestays in tribal areas to promote responsible tourism and enhance livelihood opportunities for tribal communities. The guidelines also focus on technical upskilling and training of the Homestay owners. The said initiative includes development of 1000 homestays with support of up to ₹5 lakh for village community requirement, up to ₹5 lakh for construction of two new rooms for each household and up to ₹3 lakh for renovation of existing rooms for each household.

Additionally, in the Budget Announcement 2025-26, the Government introduced a separate category in the PMMY (MUDRA) Loan scheme for homestays. Homestays located in rural areas are also eligible to avail this loan. As part of the promotional campaign, a workshop on MUDRA Loan for Homestays was conducted on 11.09.2025 in New Delhi for State Governments and stakeholders. A booklet on Guide to MUDRA Loans for Homestays was also launched on 27th September, 2025 in collaboration with Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance as a step-by-step guide to stakeholders for availing the MUDRA Loans for homestay units through Jan Samarth Portal.

The Ministry of Tourism launched a national responsible tourism initiative by the name of 'Paryatan Mitra & Paryatan Didi' on 27th September 2024 through which special emphasis is being placed on the training of women and youth to enable them to leverage these skills to obtain gainful employment as homestay

owners, food & cuisine experience providers, cultural guides, natural guides, adventure guides, and other roles, based on the potential of the destination.

The Ministry of Tourism has also formulated a National Strategy and Roadmap for Development of Rural Tourism in India which was circulated to all States/ UTs.

This information was given by Union Minister for Tourism and Culture Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat in a written reply in Lok Sabha today

M Annadurai

ANNEXURE

Details of project sanctioned under the Rural Circuit of Swadesh Darshan Scheme in the country:

S. No.	State/UT	Circuit/ Sanction Year	Name of the Project	Amount Sanctioned (Rs. in Crore)	Amount Released (Rs. in Crore)
1.	Bihar	Rural Circuit 2017-18	Development of Bhitiharwa- Chandrahia-Turkaulia	44.27	40.31
2.	Kerala	Rural Circuit 2018-19	Development of Malanad Malabar Cruise Tourism Project	57.35	45.88
Total				101.62	86.19

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