



## Swadesh Darshan Scheme

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### Why in News

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Recently, under the **Swadesh Darshan Scheme**, the Tourism Ministry sanctioned 5 projects of Rs 325.53 crore for Buddhist circuit development.

- It has also organised a **Buddhist Circuit Train FAM Tour** as part of the Union government's **Dekho Apna Desh initiative**.
- The tour **covers the destinations Gaya-Bodhgaya, Rajgir-Nalanda** in Bihar as well as **Sarnath-Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh**.

### Key Points

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- **About:**
  - Swadesh Darshan, a **Central Sector Scheme**, was **launched in 2014 -15** for integrated development of theme based tourist circuits in the country.  
This scheme is envisioned to synergise with other schemes like **Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Skill India, Make in India** etc.
  - Under the scheme, the **Ministry of Tourism provides Central Financial Assistance (CFA)** to State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for infrastructure development of circuits.
  - One of the objectives of the scheme is to **develop theme-based tourist circuits** on the principles of **high tourist value, competitiveness and sustainability** in an integrated manner.
- **Tourism Circuits:**

Under the scheme, **fifteen thematic circuits have been identified-** Buddhist Circuit, Coastal Circuit, Desert Circuit, Eco Circuit, Heritage Circuit, Himalayan Circuit, Krishna Circuit, North East Circuit, Ramayana Circuit, Rural Circuit, Spiritual Circuit, Sufi Circuit, Tirthankar Circuit, Tribal Circuit, Wildlife Circuit.

- **Other Related Initiatives:**

- **PRASHAD Scheme:**

30 projects for development of infrastructure have also been undertaken under the PRASHAD Scheme.

- **Iconic Tourist Sites:**

Buddhist Sites at **Bodhgaya, Ajanta & Ellora** have been identified to be developed as **Iconic Tourist Sites** (aimed at enhancing India's soft power).

- **Buddhist Conclave:**

**Buddhist Conclave** is organised **every alternate year** with the objective of promoting India as a Buddhist Destination and major markets around the globe.

- **Dekho Apna Desh' Initiative:**

It was **launched by the Ministry of Tourism in 2020** to encourage the citizens to travel widely within the country thus enabling the development of Domestic Tourism tourist facilities and infrastructure.

**Source: PIB**