



# Baghpat to be Part of UP's Mahabharata Circuit

## Why in News?

The historic site in **Baranava, Baghpat**, associated with the **Pandavas from the Mahabharata**, is set for major development under **UP's Mahabharata Circuit project** with **Rs 1 crore funding**.

## Key Points

- **About:** Located 35 km from Baghpat, the site features a mound and ruins preserved by the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**, adding historical depth to its significance.
- **History:** In the Mahabharata, the story of the '**Lakshagriha**' or the palace of lac is central, where the **Kauravas** attempted to burn the Pandavas alive.
  - This iconic episode, where the Pandavas and their mother Kunti narrowly escaped, continues to captivate generations.
  - Visitors to Baranava will now be able to **explore traces of this historic site**.
- **Significance:** The project will **enhance Baghpat's standing in India's religious and cultural tourism**, attracting more pilgrims and history enthusiasts while generating new tourism opportunities.
  - The project includes **essential infrastructure upgrades** such as beautification, lighting, sanitation, drinking water, rest areas, and visitor information centers.
  - In addition to its Mahabharata ties, Baghpat has gained attention as a **Harappan archaeological site**. Excavations have uncovered artifacts such as **greyware pottery**, while the 2018 discovery of **bronze chariot remnants** from around 2000 BC in **Sinauli village** brought global recognition.

## UP Mahabharata Circuit Project

- The UP Mahabharata Circuit project is an initiative by the Uttar Pradesh government to **develop and promote sites** associated with the Mahabharata epic as major cultural, religious, and heritage tourism destinations in the state.
- The project **aims to boost tourism** by upgrading infrastructure and beautifying locations linked to the Mahabharata, making them **attractive for pilgrims, historians, and tourists**.
- The initiative focuses on **preserving heritage, enhancing tourism infrastructure, and merging modern facilities with historical sanctity**.
- It seeks to **create job opportunities, boost the local economy, and deepen visitors' connection to India's epic traditions**.

Places Associated With UP's Mahabharata Circuit Project	
Place	Significance
Hastinapur	The <b>capital of the Kuru kingdom</b> , birthplace of the Pandavas and Kauravas, and a significant backdrop for many key events in the Mahabharata,

	including the infamous game of dice.
Keechakvadh Sthal	The site where <b>Bhima killed Keechaka</b> , avenging Draupadi's dignity during their exile in the Virata kingdom. It symbolizes justice and retribution.
Ahichchhatra	A <b>major kingdom of the northern Panchala kingdom</b> , ruled by King Drupada, father of Draupadi. It served as a strategic military base and political center during the Mahabharata era.
Gonda	A region associated with the <b>Pandavas' exile</b> , though not directly involved in major battles, it represents the vast expanse of the Mahabharata's geographical landscape.
Prayagraj	A sacred site where the <b>Pandavas performed rituals</b> post-Kurukshetra war. It is closely linked to spiritual events and Vyasa's guidance in the Mahabharata.
Lakshagraha	The place where the <b>Kauravas tried to kill the Pandavas</b> by setting their house on fire marked the beginning of their 13-year exile.
Kampilya	The <b>capital of the Panchala Kingdom</b> , birthplace of Draupadi, and the site of her swayamvara, where Arjuna won her hand. It was a center of political and cultural activity.
Barnava	The site of the infamous <b>Lakshagraha burning attempt</b> , where the Pandavas escaped, symbolizes resilience and survival in the epic.
Kaushambi	A <b>politically and militarily significant city</b> , mentioned in the Mahabharata, especially in connection with the Pandavas' return to reclaim their kingdom.
Vidur Kuti	The place where Vidura, the wise minister of the <b>Kuru dynasty</b> , spent his later years in exile symbolizes righteousness and dharma.
Mathura	The <b>birthplace of Lord Krishna</b> is a significant spiritual center in Hindu tradition. It symbolizes divine intervention and wisdom in the Mahabharata.