

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.+3867
ANSWERED ON 24.03.2025**

DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF TOURIST SITES

+3867. DR. LATA WANKHEDE:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps taken by the Government for the development and promotion of tourist sites under Swadesh Darshan Yojana and PRASAD Yojana and the positive changes noticed in tourist industry as a result thereof;**
- (b) the initiatives taken by the Government for the promotion of religious and cultural tourism along with the impact of these efforts on the local economy and employment creation; and**
- (c) the reforms made by the Government to attract foreign tourists and to ease visa norms and the manner in which these have promoted the tourism in the country?**

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

(a) to (b): Development and promotion of tourist destinations and products, is undertaken by the respective State Government/UT Administration. The Ministry of Tourism complements the efforts of States/UTs by developing and promoting various tourism products of the country, including religious and cultural tourism through various schemes and initiatives.

The Ministry of Tourism through its central sector schemes of 'Swadesh Darshan (SD)' and 'Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD)' complements the efforts of tourism infrastructure development in the country by extending financial assistance to the State Governments/UT Administrations.

The Ministry of Tourism had undertaken a third party impact assessment of Swadesh Darshan (Integrated Development of Theme-Based Tourist Circuits) through National Productivity Council in 2019. The study states that 'Swadesh Darshan Scheme' has been able to give a fillip to livelihood opportunities and create employment for the local communities in construction phase.

The Ministry of Tourism after a comprehensive review has now revamped this scheme as Swadesh Darshan 2.0 with the objective to develop sustainable and responsible tourism destinations.

The Swadesh and PRASHAD Schemes aim to boost local economies and create jobs by developing infrastructure, marketing destinations, and supporting community-based tourism.

Ministry of Tourism has also been providing financial assistance to State Governments/ UT Administrations for organizing fairs/festivals and tourism related events under its Domestic Promotion & Publicity including Hospitality (DPPH) Scheme.

(c): Ministry launched the 'Chalo India' campaign during its participation in World Tourism Market held in London in November 2025 to encourage the Indian diaspora to become Incredible India ambassadors and encourage their non-Indian friends to visit India. As an incentive under this initiative gratis e-tourist visa for foreign visitors traveling to India is granted, the program is valid till 31 March 2025.

Ministry of Home Affairs has relaxed the Protected Area Permit (PAP)/Restricted Area Permit (RAP) for a further period of 5 Years i.e. till 31.12.2027 for the identified Islands in the Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

Ministry of Home Affairs has issued relaxation of PAP/RAP for a further period of 5 years beyond 31.12.2022 in the states of Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland.
