

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.144
ANSWERED ON 29.01.2026

DEVELOPMENT OF STZs IN UTTAR PRADESH

144 SHRI RATANJIT PRATAP NARAIN SINGH:

Will the Minister of **TOURISM** be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of policy of Government for developing ‘Special Tourism Zones’ (STZs);
- (b) whether Government has identified any region in Uttar Pradesh to be developed as an STZ;
- (c) the potential for declaring the Kushinagar-Sarnath-Bodhgaya circuit, or Kushinagar alone as an STZ;
- (d) the benefits, such as tax incentives and single-window clearances, that would accrue from such a designation; and
- (e) the status of any proposal to declare Kushinagar as an STZ to attract large-scale investment in hotels and resorts?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM

(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

(a) to (e): The Ministry of Tourism has presently not sanctioned any scheme to develop ‘Special Tourism Zones (STZ)’ in the country. While development and promotion of tourism destinations and products is primarily undertaken by the concerned State Government (SG)/Union Territory Administration (UTA), Ministry of Tourism through its centre sectors schemes of ‘Swadesh Darshan (SD), Swadesh Darshan 2.0 (SD2.0)’, ‘Challenge Based Destination Development (CBDD), a sub-scheme of Swadesh Darshan scheme 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 SGs/UTAs on receipt of the project proposals from the concerned State Government/Union Territory Administration in synergy with the scheme guidelines, Government directions, availability of funds etc.

Government of India under its ‘Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SACI) – Development of Iconic Tourist Centres to Global Scale’ has also sanctioned projects 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 by the Ministry under the above-mentioned schemes in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar is **annexed**.

ANNEXURE

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.144 ANSWERED ON 29.01.2026 REGARDING DEVELOPMENT OF STZs IN UTTAR PRADESH RAISED BY SHRI RATANJIT PRATAP NARAIN SINGH

Details of the projects sanctioned under Swadesh Darshan (SD), SD2.0, CBDD, PRASHAD and SASCI schemes in the state of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar:

Uttar Pradesh

(Amount in ₹Crore)					
Scheme/ Sub- scheme	S. No.	Name of the Project/ Experience	Circuit/ Destination	Year of sanction	Amount sanctioned
Swadesh Darshan (SD)	1	Development of Srawasti, Kushinagar, & Kapilwastu	Buddhist Circuit	2016-17	87.89
	2	Development of Chitrakoot and Shringverpur	Ramayana Circuit	2016-17	69.45
	3.	Development of Ahar-Aligarh-Kasganj-Sarosi (Unnao)-Pratapgarh- Kausambi-Mirzapur-Gorakhpur-Domariyaganj-Basti-Barabanki-Azamgarh-Kairana-Baghpat- Shahjahanpur	Spiritual Circuit	2016-17	71.91
	4.	Development of Bijnor- Meerut- Kanpur- Kanpur Dehat- Banda- Ghazipur- Salempur- Ghosi- Balia- Ambedkar Nagar- Aligarh- Fatehpur- Deoria- Mahoba- Sonbhadra- Chandauli- Mishrikh- Bhadohi	Spiritual Circuit	2016-17	67.51
	5.	Development of Kalinjar Fort (Banda)- Maghar Dham (Sant Kabir Nagar)- Chauri Chaura, Shaheed Sthal (Fatehpur)- Mahuar shaheed Sthal (Ghosi)- Shaheed Smarak (Meerut)	Heritage Circuit	2016-17	36.65
	6.	Development of Ayodhya	Ramayana Circuit	2017-18	127.21
	7.	Development of Jewar-Dadri- Sikandrabad-Noida-Khurja-Banda	Spiritual Circuit	2018-19	12.03
	8.	Development of Gorakhnath Temple (Gorakhpur), Devipattan Temple (Balrampur) and Vatvashni Temple (Domariyaganj)	Spiritual Circuit	2018-19	18.30
	9	Vedic- wellness Experience	Naimisaran ya	2023-24	17.80
	10.	Azad Park and Dekho Prayagraj Trail Experince	Prayagraj	2023-24	14.52
CBDD	11.	Development of Cultural Landscape at Mahoba (under Culture & Heritage Category)	Mahoba	2024-25	24.98

PRASHAD	12.	Development of Varanasi – Phase – I	Varanasi	2015-16	18.73
	13.	Development of Mathura- Vrindavan as Mega Tourist Circuit (Ph-II)	Mathura- Vrindavan	2014-15	10.98
	14.	River Cruise Tourism in Ganga, Varanasi	Varanasi	2017-18	9.02
	15.	Construction of Tourist Facilitation Centre at Vrindavan	Vrindavan	2014-15	9.36
	16.	Development of Varanasi – Phase – II	Varanasi	2017-18	44.60
	17.	Development of Infrastructure facilities at Govardhan	Govardhan	2018-19	37.59
SACI	18	Development of Bateshwar in District-Agra	Bateshwar	2024-25	74.05
	19	Integrated Buddhist Tourism Development in Shrawasti	Shrawasti	2024-25	80.24

Bihar

(Amount in ₹Crore)

Scheme/ Sub-scheme	S. No.	Name of the Project/ Experience	Circuit/ Destination	Year of sanction	Amount sanctioned
Swadesh Darshan (SD)	1	Development of Vaishali- Arrah- Masad- Patna- Rajgir- Pawapuri- Champapuri	Tirthankar Circuit	2016-17	33.96
	2.	Development of Kanwaria Route: Sultanganj – Dharmshala- Deoghar	Spiritual Circuit	2016-17	44.76
	3.	Development of Buddhist circuit- Construction of Convention Centre at Bodhgaya	Buddhist Circuit	2016-17	95.18
	4.	Development of Bhitiharwa- Chandrahia- Turkaulia	Rural Circuit	2017-18	44.27
	5.	Development of Mandar Hill & Ang Pradesh	Spiritual Circuit	2017-18	44.55
Swadesh Darshan 2.0	6.	Development of the Buddhist Meditation & Experience Centre, Bodh Gaya	Bodh Gaya	2024-25	165.44
CBDD	7.	Development of Sonepur Fair Site (under Culture & Heritage category)	Saran Dist. (Sonepur Fair)	2024-25	24.29
PRASHAD	8.	Development at Patna Sahib	Patna Sahib	2015-16	29.62
	9.	Development of basic facilities at Vishnupad temple, Gaya, Bihar	Gaya	2014-15	3.63
	10.	Development of Ambika Bhawani Temple, Saran	Saran	2024-25	13.29
SACI	11.	Development of Matsyagandha Lake in Saharsa	Saharsa	2024-25	97.61
	12.	Karamchat Eco-Tourism and Adventure Hub in Karamchat	Karamchat	2024-25	49.51

Uttar Pradesh and Bihar**(Amount in ₹Crore)**

Scheme/ Sub- scheme	S. No.	Name of the Project/ Experience	Year of sanction	Amount sanctioned
Swadesh Darshan (SD)	1	Development of Wayside Amenities in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar at Varanasi-Gaya; Kushinagar- Gaya- Kushinagar in collaboration with MoRTH	2018-19	17.50
