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15 Tourist Destinations under Swadesh Darshan-2

(Prelims / GS-1)

Source: The Hindu, 20 October 2022



Centre to promote destinations in 15 States as part of Swadesh Darshan 2

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

Prayagraj, Chitrakoot, and Gwalior are among the cities identified in 15 States across the country to be promoted as part of India's new domestic tourism policy which moves away from theme-based tourist circuits and focuses on revving up destination tourism.

The initiative is being taken as part of the first phase of the 'Swadesh Darshan 2' which will be kicked off in January.

Fifteen States are part of the first phase which include Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, and Maharashtra. Two destinations from each State have been identified, sources in the Ministry of Tourism told *The Hindu*.

Some of the prominent



Ellora caves is among the sites included in the scheme. FILE PHOTO

places identified are Jhansi and Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh, Gwalior, Chitrakoot and Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh and Ajanta and Ellora in Maharashtra.

The sources said the destinations had been zeroed in on after consultations with the State Tourism Departments, and the Centre was now waiting for approval from Tourism Minister G. Kishan Reddy. The Swadesh Darshan scheme is 100% centrally

funded. The scheme has been revamped with the mantra of "vocal for local", a top official of the Tourism Ministry told *The Hindu* adding that it was essentially aimed at targeting domestic tourists.

The Swadesh Darshan Scheme was launched by the Centre in 2014-15 for the integrated development of theme-based tourist circuits. Under the scheme, the Ministry of Tourism provides financial

assistance to State governments, Union Territory Administrations or Central Agencies for development of tourism infrastructure in the country.

From December, the revamped scheme would be launched which seeks to enhance the contribution of tourism.

"To create jobs including self-employment for local communities, to enhance the skills of local youth in tourism and hospitality, to increase private sector investment in tourism and hospitality and to preserve and enhance local cultural and natural resources," the vision document said.

According to the third Tourism Satellite Account for 2017-18, 2018-19, and 2019-20, the contribution of tourism to the employment is 14.78%, 14.87% and 15.34%, respectively.

- The Govt. of India had identified **15 tourist circuits** under the **Swadesh Darshan Scheme in 2014-15**.
- Swadesh Darshan, a **Central Sector Scheme**, was launched in **2014 - 15** for integrated development of theme-based tourist circuits in the country.
- 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.

- Center to promote destinations in **15 states as part of Swadesh Darshan 2**.
- Some of the places identified under the SD 2 are **Jhansi, Prayagraj, Gwalior, Chitrakoot, Khajuraho, Ajanta and Ellora etc.**
- The scheme was launched in **2014-15** for the integrated development of theme-based tourist circuit.

Vulture: An Endangered Species

(Prelims / GS-3)

Source: The Hindu, 20 October 2022



Tamil Nadu launches mission to save critically endangered vultures

B. Aravind Kumar
CHENNAI

Alarmed at the 96% decline in India's vulture population between 1993 and 2003, the Central government put into place two action plans to protect the species at the national level – the first in 2006 and the second, ongoing plan for 2020-2025. One of the important action points in this nationwide plan is the formation of State-level committees to save the critically endangered population of vultures.

Acting on it, the Tamil Nadu Government formed a State-level Committee to set up an institutional framework for the effective conservation of vultures, which almost went extinct in the country at the beginning of the 21st century. A



Feathered friend: A white-backed vulture being trained to fly in Siriyur near Mudumalai Tiger Reserve. M. SATHYAMOORTHY

formal order was issued by Supriya Sahu, Additional Chief Secretary, Environment, Climate Change and Forests, on Wednesday.

In Tamil Nadu, four species of vultures are found – the Oriental white-backed vulture, the long-billed vulture, the red-headed vulture, and the Egyptian vulture. "The first three are

residents and can be found in the landscapes of the Nilgiris and Sathyamangalam," S. Bharathidasan, secretary of Arulagam, which works for vulture conservation, said. "There is evidence of Egyptian vulture breeding only at one site in Dharmapuri," he said.

The committee, apart

from the senior officials of the Forest Department, also has other experts, including K. Ramesh from the Wildlife Institute of India, S. Muralidharan of SACON, Vibhu Prakash of the Bombay Natural History Society, and two locals involved in conservation – B. Ramakrishnan of the Government Arts College, Uthagamandalam, Mr. Bharathidasan of Arulagam. The committee, which has a two-year tenure, will take steps for monitoring the conservation and recovery of existing vulture sites.

Vultures play a key role as nature's scavengers, keeping the environment clean. Their social and ecological significance cannot be underestimated, Ms. Sahu said, adding "It is the last level scavenger."

- Vulture population has declined between **1993 and 2003** by an alarming **96%** in India.
- Vultures play a key role as **nature's scavengers, keeping the environment clean.** The social and ecological significance of the vultures is paramount. It also keeps a check on rise in diseases as it feeds on the dead carcasses which can be host to diseases if kept unchecked.
- **Tamil Nadu** launches mission to save critically endangered vultures.

Sr. No.	Name of the Vulture Species	IUCN status	Pictorial Representation
1.	Oriental White-backed Vulture (Gyps Bengalensis)	Critically Endangered	
2.	Slender-billed Vulture (Gyps Tenuirostris)	Critically Endangered	
3.	Long-billed Vulture (Gyps Indicus)	Critically Endangered	
4.	Egyptian Vulture (Neophron Percnopterus)	Endangered	
5.	Red-Headed Vulture (Sarcogyps Calvus)	Critically Endangered	
6.	Indian Griffon Vulture (Gyps Fulvus)	Least Concerned	
7.	Himalayan Griffon (Gyps Himalayensis)	Near Threatened	
8.	Cinereous Vulture (Aegypius Monachus)	Near Threatened	
9.	Bearded Vulture or Lammergeier (Gypaetus Barbatus)	Near Threatened	

China's total trade surplus with India 'surpasses \$1 trillion'

Ananth Krishnan
BEIJING

The favourable trade balance that China has enjoyed with India, since bilateral commerce began to boom in the early 2000s, has cumulatively exceeded \$1 trillion, according to estimates.

The trade gap has particularly widened in the past decade. In 2021, annual two-way trade crossed \$100 billion for the first time, reaching \$125.6 billion, with India's imports accounting for \$97.5 billion, pegging the imbalance at about \$70 billion.



China – Mr. Kondapalli said an imbalance over an extended period of time posed problems. Moreover, Chinese commitments to India to import substantially more Indian goods, particularly pharmaceuticals, have not materialised,

Trade ties began to boom since the early 2000s driven largely by India's imports of Chinese machinery and other equipment, up from \$3 billion in the year 2000 to \$42 billion in 2008, the year China became India's largest trading partner.

"China's trade with India is lopsided and in this period China had a favourable balance of trade that has crossed \$1.2 trillion," said Srikanth Kondapalli, Professor in Chinese Studies and Dean of the School of International Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University. "That is, in pure statistics, Chinese businesses earned that much money [from India]."

While some economists say India's trade imbalance with China should not be viewed in isolation – for instance, pharmaceuticals that India exports to the world require ingredients that are imported from

although Chinese imports of Indian seafood is one area that has recently shown robust growth.

'CAD problems'

"These surpluses are consistent, and not addressed over a period of time, this leads to the problem of a current account deficit for India," he said. The imbalance in 2022 is set to surpass even last year's record. In the six months ended June, India's imports from China surged 34.5% to a record \$57.51 billion, China's trade figures released in July show.

India's exports to China, however, shrank 35% and accounted for only \$9.57 billion of the \$67.08 billion two-way trade. China's Q3 trade data, which was due this week but has been delayed because of the ongoing Communist Party Congress, is expected to reflect continued growth in Indian imports.

Important Question From Mains Perspective:

"India's trade with China is lopsided as it favours China heavily. As of today, China has a favourable balance of trade that has crossed \$1 billion." Critically comment on the rising trade gap and the steps needed to address this lopsided trade.

Significance of Oldest Dock of Indus Valley civilization : Lothal (Prelims / GS-1)

Source: The Indian Express, 20 October 2022



'Oldest dock' Lothal to get heritage complex: its features, significance

DIVYAA

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 19

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Tuesday reviewed the construction of the National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC) site at Gujarat's Lothal via video conferencing. "There are many such tales of our history that have been forgotten," the PM said. "Lothal was not only a major trading centre of the Indus Valley Civilisation, but also a symbol of India's maritime power and prosperity."

Where is Lothal?

Lothal was one of the southernmost sites of the Indus Valley Civilisation, located in the Bhāl region of what is now Gujarat. The port city is believed to have been flourished around 2,200 BC. It was a thriving centre of commerce, with its trade of beads, gems, and ornaments reaching West Asia and Africa.

"Lothal" in Gujarati (a combination of

'loth' and (s) 'thal') means "the mound of the dead". Incidentally, the name of the city of Mohenjo-daro (also part of the Indus Valley Civilisation, now in Pakistan) means the same in Sindhi.

Indian archaeologists started the search for cities of the Harappan Civilisation post-1947 in Gujarat's Saurashtra. Archaeologist S R Rao led the team that discovered a number of Harappan sites at the time, including the port city of Lothal. Excavation work was carried out in Lothal between February 1955 and May 1960. According to the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), Lothal had the world's earliest known dock, connecting the city to an ancient course of the Sabarmati river.

The National Institute of Oceanography, Goa, has discovered marine microfossils, salt, and gypsum crystals at the site, indicating that sea water once filled the structure, and that it was definitely a dockyard.

In later excavations, the ASI unearthed a mound, a township, a marketplace, and the dock. Adjacent to the excavated areas



Lothal, which flourished around 2,200 BC, was one of the southernmost sites of the Indus Valley Civilisation, located in what is now Gujarat. Wikimedia Commons

stands the archaeological site museum, where some of the most prominent collections of Indus-era antiquities in India are displayed.

Heritage value

Lothal was nominated in April 2014 as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and its application is pending on the tentative list. As per

the nomination dossier submitted to UNESCO, "The excavated site of Lothal is the only port-town of the Indus Valley Civilisation. A metropolis with an upper and a lower town had on its northern side a basin with vertical wall, inlet and outlet channels which has been identified as a tidal dockyard. Satellite images show that the river channel, now dried, would have brought in considerable volume of water during high tide, which would have filled the basin and facilitated sailing of boats upstream. The remains of stone anchors, marine shells, sealings which trace its source in the Persian Gulf, together with the structure identified as a warehouse further aid the comprehension of the functioning of the port."

As heritage value is comparable to other ancient port towns around the world, such as Xel Ha (Peru), Ostia (Port of Rome) and Carthage (Port of Tunis) in Italy, Hepu in China, Canopus in Egypt, Gabel (Byblos of the Phoenicians), Jaffa in Israel, Ur in Mesopotamia, and Hoi An in Vietnam, according to the dossier. In the neighbour-

hood, it can be compared with other Indus port towns of Balakot (Pakistan), Khirasa (in Gujarat's Kutch) and Kuntasi (in Rajkot).

The project

The heritage complex project began in March 2022, and is being developed at a cost of Rs 3,500 crore. It will have several innovative features such as a Lothal mini-recreation, which will recreate Harappan architecture and lifestyle through immersive technology, and four theme parks – a Memorial theme park, a Maritime and Navy theme park, a Climate theme park, and an Adventure and Amusement theme park.

It will also house the world's tallest light-house museum, 14 galleries highlighting India's maritime heritage starting from the Harappan time till today, as well as a coastal states pavilion displaying the diverse maritime heritage of Indian states and UTs.

Modi said that the National Maritime Heritage Complex at Lothal will act as a centre for learning and understanding of India's maritime history.

LOTHAL

- Lothal was one of the southernmost sites of the **Indus Valley civilization**, located in the **Bhāl region** of what is now the state of Gujarat.
- The port city is believed to have been built in **2,200 BC**.
- Lothal was a thriving trade centre in ancient times, with its **trade of beads, gems and ornaments** reaching **West Asia and Africa**.
- The meaning of Lothal (**a combination of Loth and (s) thal**) in Gujarati is **"the mound of the dead"**.
- Excavation work was carried out in Lothal between **February 1955 and May 1960**.
- According to the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**, Lothal had the world's earliest known **dock**, connecting the city to an ancient course of the Sabarmati river.

Devajit Saikia Becomes BCCI Joint Secretary (Prelims)

Source: The Assam Tribune, 20 October 2022



 The Assam Tribune @assamtribuneoff · 2d
(1/2)

Assam Cricket Association (ACA), Secretary Devajit Saikia has been elected as the new BCCI Joint Secretary unanimously at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held at Hotel Taj in Mumbai on Tuesday.



Assam ACA Secretary
Devajit Saikia becomes
BCCI Joint Secretary

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Why in news?

Joint Secretary of Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is **Devajit Saikia**.

Phulaguri Dhewa (1861)

(Prelims / GS-5)

Source: MyGovAssam Social Media, 20 October 2022



Phulaguri Dhewa

A historical uprising

A peasant uprising broke out on 18 October 1861 at Phulaguri, Nagaon against the oppressive taxes imposed by the British imperialists. The uprising was brutally suppressed by the British and claimed the lives of many peasants. Firing by troops led by Commander Major Campbell on October 20 **killed 39 peasants**. The saga of sacrifice by the peasants shall forever remain etched in glory in the country's history.



A memorial wall has been constructed in **Raha, Nagaon**, to remember the sacrifice of these sons of the soil and also so that the citizens can revisit and restore the glories of the peasant movement.



Phulaguri Dhewa:

- The farmer uprising in the Phulaguri area of middle **Assam in October 1861 AD** was one of the early peasant movements of the Indian freedom movement.
- A peasant uprising that broke out on **18 Oct, 1861 at Phulaguri, Nagaon** against the oppressive taxes imposed by the British imperialists.
- Firing troops led by **Commander Campbell on Oct 20 killed 39 peasants**.
- It was also the first marker of a significant non-cooperation style movement of the Indian freedom movement wherein the farmers of the Phulaguri region had stopped payment of taxes to the British administration in open defiance of foreign tyranny.

Article 163

According to **Article 163**, the Governor is to be guided by the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers in the discharge of all his functions, with a few exceptions in certain cases.

What Is Council Of Ministers?

- The real executive authority in a state's politico-administrative system is the council of ministers, which is led by the chief minister.
- Article 163 addresses the **status of the council of ministers**.
- Article 164 addresses the **ministers' appointment, tenure, responsibility, qualifications, oath, and salaries and allowances**.

Important Question From Mains Perspective:

"The Governor's position and power in relation to the Council of Ministers has always been a source of contention in determining the extent of the Governor's discretion". Discuss.

Daily MCQ for APSC CCE Prelims

The NABH Nirman Scheme is related to

- A. Providing Affordable Housing for Tribals
- B. Civil Aviation Sector
- C. Irrigation Sector
- D. None of the above

Ans. B. Civil Aviation Sector

NABH Nirman initiative was first announced in Union Budget of 2018.

- ❖ To expand the airport capacity more than five times to handle a billion trips a year.

Daily MCQ for APSC CCE Prelims

The number whose double is 80 more than its two-third is

- A. 80 B. 45 C. 60 D. 90

Solution: C. 60

Suppose, the number is **X**.

$$\text{Given, } 2X = \frac{2}{3}X + 80 \Rightarrow 6X - 2X = 240 \Rightarrow X = \frac{240}{4} = 60$$



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