

Govt to promote 75 villages as rural tourism hubs in UP

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Lucknow: In an effort to promote rural tourism, the state government will be identifying 75 villages which will be promoted as tourist hubs. Members of the Yuvak Mangal Dal and Mahila Mangal Dal, groups of youth volunteers at the village level, will be trained as 'Paryatan Mitra' and tasked with promoting local tourism in their areas by highlighting local produce, crafts, art etc.

A government spokesperson said that these volunteers will be given special training to familiarise them with the local arts and crafts of their respective areas and how they can promote local artisans from their villages.

"As part of this programme to foster rural tourism, the UP government is also working to develop villages as tourist centres and to create facilities for the convenience of tourists. This initiative will not only highlight the tourism potential of remote and neglected areas, but will also aid in generating employment opportunities for the locals," said Mukesh Meshram, principal secretary, tourism and culture.

He added that the decision to promote rural tourism was taken during the first term of the Yogi Adityanath government under its tourism policy of 2018. The proposal is finally being converted into action with the formation of the Eco and Rural Tourism Board. Meshram added: "It is important for villages to prosper if we want the entire state to progress. Every village has its own identity which needs to be recognised and promoted."

A government spokesperson said that currently there are 42,000 Yuvak Dals and 36,000 Mahila Dals registered in the state. These groups have been utilised by the state government in promoting initiatives like Fit India, Namami Gange, tree plantation, blood donation camps and also during Covid-19 pandemic.