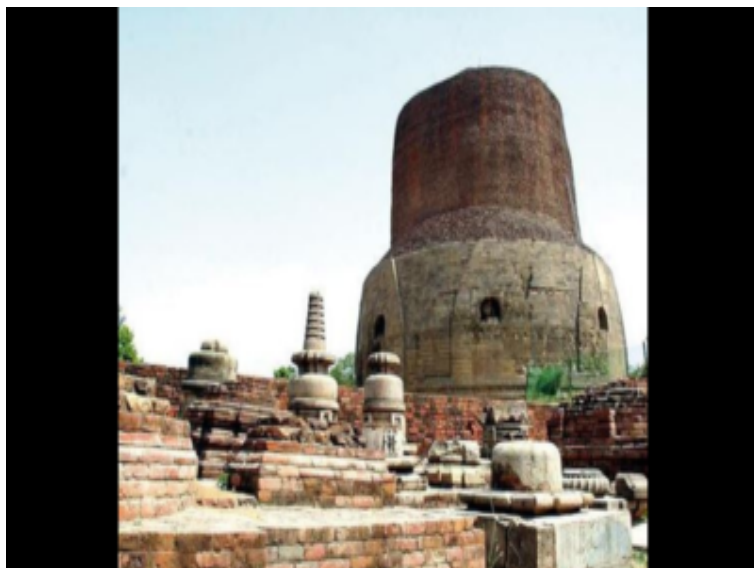


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To showcase UP as best cultural site, state to have its own policy

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LUCKNOW: With the aim to promote Uttar Pradesh as the "best cultural destination in the world", the state government is working on preparing a policy on culture.

The policy will work for conservation of heritage sites, excavations, preserving and showcasing the state's cultural heritage in the form of theatre, art, music etc, encouraging investment in the tourism sector and generating employment.

Principal secretary, culture, Mukesh Meshram said the aim of the policy is to uphold the unique cultural identity of the state, preserve, nurture and popularise UP's culture in all its diversity, showcase it to the world in the best possible manner and create employment opportunities through it on a large scale.

The culture policy will be the 26th policy under the current BJP government to promote investment in the state.

New policy will lay emphasis on preservation of key monuments

Suggestions have been sought from various academies and quarters within a week so that we can start work on the policy," Meshram said.

The culture policy of the central government will also be studied to formulate UP's cultural policy," Meshram said. He added that works identified under the policy would help the government set up a huge tourism network in the state through beautification of heritage buildings, monasteries and temples.

The policy will lay emphasis on preservation of archaeological important monuments, by bringing them under the state's protected list of monuments. Archaeological survey and excavation work will be promoted under the policy, along with management, conservation, presentation, research and publication of artefacts, sculptures, coins, paintings, jewellery, textiles etc.

The government will also promote theatre, while encouraging other forms of visual and fine arts, conservation of endangered and threatened art forms, especially tribal and folk art, and also promotion of the ancient guru-shishya tradition, art and culture of Awadh, Braj, Bundelkhand, Paschimanchal and Purvanchal regions.

Cultural centres will be established at the district, block and panchayat levels to preserve the basic elements of Buddhism, Jainism, Sufism, Bhakti, Shakti, Nath, and Kabir Panths. "Through the policy, the government will encourage cultural and religious tourism, increase public awareness about cultural heritage, and ensure adequate financial resources for proper development of art and culture in the state. It will be an important tool to link art and culture with livelihood and employment, ensure employment-oriented training in the field of art and culture, and provide necessary assistance to institutions working for the welfare of artists," Meshram said.

The government will also encourage individuals, groups, institutions, NGOs, and the corporate sector to preserve and promote various aspects of UP's arts and culture. The government will also carry out cultural mapping of the state under the policy.