

# UP to encourage FDI from SE Asian countries in Buddhist tourism infrastructure

The government will offer land parcels on a 90-year lease to countries or private entrepreneurs from those countries to set up Buddhist monasteries, guest houses and other hospitality facilities.



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High Commissioner of Singapore, Simong Wong, being received at the Bodhi Yatra event by both union culture and tourism minister, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, and Jaiveer Singh, tourism and culture minister of UP.

countries as well as private stakeholders from those countries to invest in country specific hospitality facilities and infrastructure in the Buddhist circuit in the state.

This was announced at the first-ever Bodhi Yatra event organised by the state tourism department in national capital Delhi by the tourism and culture minister and other senior officials of the state.

Sharing the details of the FDI facilitation, Mukesh Kumar Meshram, principal secretary - tourism and culture of the state said that the Land Lease policy of 2024 by the government allows long lease of land for 90 years to set up infrastructure through different routes including FDI.

He said that the government has developed land banks in all the six destinations associated with Buddhist heritage in the state like Sarnath, Shravasti, Kapilavastu, Kaushambi, Sankisa and Kushinagar, for such infrastructure development. Countries can avail it to develop country-specific monasteries, guest houses, and other hospitality facilities.

Meshram said that the state has plans to organise country specific buddhist conclaves in order to communicate the state's programmes and incentives better. The government has already allotted 2 acres of land to the Royal Government of Bhutan in Varanasi to develop the monastery and other facilities, he said.

Meshram also spoke about the tourism policy 2022 of the state which he said is one of "the most lucrative" tourism policies in the country in terms of fiscal and non-fiscal incentives as well as end-to-end handholding of projects from registration to operations.

Chief secretary of the state, DS Mishra also spoke about the Buddhist heritage of the state where Lord Buddha has spent a large part of his life and places which are associated with major events of his life. He said that the connectivity with major destinations has improved with two international airports of Varanasi and Kushinagar and other smaller airports of Kanpur, Prayagraj, etc. "We have a significant amount of land available for investments for hospitality facilities," he said, and said that there are officials assigned to take care of all the requirements and demands associated with charters, land banks and investments.

Ambassadors of Thailand, Singapore, Bhutan, Myanmar, Mongolia, etc spoke at the Bodhi Yatra conference and extended all support to the UP government in promoting tourism into Buddhist centres of the state.