

# Eco-tourism is not an add-on for us; it's central to UP's 2047 vision, says minister

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**Lucknow:** Uttar Pradesh presents a clear picture of how conservation and eco-tourism are beginning to reinforce each other on the ground. The state's forests, wetlands and wildlife zones are now emerging as an example of how restored habitats, community participation and responsible tourism can move forward together.

Over the last three years, the UP Eco-Tourism Development Board invested Rs 161 crore in natural destinations, which was Rs 21.04 crore in 2022-23, Rs 68.56 crore in 2023-24, and Rs 72.30 crore in 2024-25. The work focused on low-impact, eco-friendly infrastructure such as nature trails, birdwatching points, viewing towers, resting



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gazebos, signage, small cafeterias and children's activity zones. These facilities were created without disturbing the ecological balance, giving visitors a better experience.

At the same time, wildlife presence in the Terai belt

showed a strong rise. Forest department teams played a key role in this turnaround through increased patrolling, water source development, grassland work and continuous monitoring. The rising presence of tigers and rhinos in suitable habitats

reflects the stability created by this groundwork. Forest areas like Dudhwa, Pilibhit, Katarniaghat, Amangarh and Sohagibarwa are steadily drawing more visitors. Alongside the Terai, regions like Braj, the Ganga belt, Bundelkhand, and Vindhya are benefiting from structured conservation initiatives.

A key strength of Uttar Pradesh's model is community involvement. Nature guides trained in Dudhwa, Pilibhit and Katarniaghat help visitors interpret wildlife and forest behaviour. The Tharu community has been connected with tourism through traditional food, craft and homestay experiences, creating income lines that encourage long-term protection of natural heritage.

Under the vision of 'Vik-

sit UP @ 2047' plan, UP aims to allow tourism to grow without harming sensitive habitats, maintain clean, regulated and responsible nature destinations, keep tourism revenue within local communities, expand school and college learning tours, promote visitor awareness, not crowding and protect habitats through monitoring.

"Eco-tourism is not an add-on for us; it is central to Uttar Pradesh's 2047 vision. If conservation is strong, tourism grows; if tourism is responsible, conservation becomes stronger," tourism and culture minister Jaiveer Singh said.

He added that UP's forests attract a large number of nature lovers and that the priority is to keep their experience safe, responsible and memorable.